



CABINET MEETING
Office of the President
Ngerulmud | 9:10 am – 10:41 am
Monday, February 13, 2017

In Attendance:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr. 2. Vice President Raynold Oilouch 3. Minister Billy Kuartei, MOS 4. Minister Baklai Temengil-Chilton, MCCA 5. Minister Emais Roberts, MOH 6. Minister Charles Obichang, MPIIC 7. Minister Umiich Sengebau, MNRET 8. Minister Sinton Soalablai, MOE 9. Director Brian Melairei, Public Works 10. Kaleb Udui, Jr., Senior Economic Advisor 11. DCOS Rebluud Kesolei | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Hadden Kinton, VP Special Assistant/PIO 13. NDBP Chair Marino Rechesengel 14. NDBP President Claire Harvey 15. Maria Ngemaes, Meteorologist-in-Charge 16. Kikuko Mochimaro, Staff Meteorologist 17. Mayleen Joshua, Weather Service Bureau 18. Anthony Rudimch, Water Project Manager 19. Nace Soalablai, Legislative Liaison Officer 20. Press Secretary Olkeriil Kazuo 21. Isabel Goodall, Administrative Staff |
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Prepared by Rolynda Jonathan, Office of the President

AGENDA	DISCUSSION
Weather Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the weekend, a cold front or sheer line from the Asian region moved low reaching closely to Palau resulting in strong gusts and winds. The National Weather Service recorded 44 miles per hour gust in Koror and 38 miles per hour gusts at the airport on Saturday, Feb. 11. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weather Service emailed forecast to NEMO prior to Saturday - Weather Service reports it is normal practice is to forward weather reports to NEMO. NEMO is then responsible to disseminate to the public. • President: Boat owners and fishermen reported heavy boat damage due to storm surge and strong winds. The public is wondering why they were not forewarned. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President suggests to the National Weather Service to look into the possibility of providing a daily report program on television or twice weekly updates published in newspapers. • Vice President requests for partnership in strengthening communication with NEMO to enable better reporting to the public. In particular special weather reports such as the storm on Saturday must be emphasized clearly for better dissemination to the public. • Suggestion made to provide special weather update on hotline numbers 488-1103/1104 during events such as Saturday for better public preparation.
Update from NDBP on the Agri/Aquaculture Mega Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agri/Aquaculture Broker Jeff Ngirarsaol who has been employed with NDBP for one-week is working with 10 prospective clients. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People from Ngchesar, Airai and Melekeok have expressed interests for farming and poultry project. - Allotment project ongoing. The key issue is finding land. - Dialogue ongoing between associations in Melekeok and women's group in Airai. • Meeting with Thailand Ambassador was successful. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commitments were made to identify farmers to assist with the project.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NDBP to meet with Thai expert at next their visit to Palau in 3 months. - President asks NDBP to follow up discussions, and to follow up on experts who will assist the program on the ground. NDBP to meet with Thai Embassy and Thai technical team in relation to expert assistance. • President: They are not talking about a confined aquaculture program, but a program involving fishers. The concept is to purchase female crabs from fishers for breeding. The method reportedly has a 10% surviving rate, a big improvement from the status quo. Let's get this project off the ground. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We need to follow up on this and also provide some sort of incentive for fishers that will be supplying us with the female crabs for breeding. President instructs Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism to work with NDBP to set aside some funding for this project.
<p>Update from the Ministry of Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Health reports the 500kw generator is no longer operational. One 300kw is still operational and in use. The recommendation is to procure two 500kw to supply power demands of the hospital. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incinerator unit donated by Ngiwal was uncovered at the hospital. Another that was donated by Taiwan was also uncovered. Personnel have been instructed to determine if the units are operational. - MOH is scheduled to meet Director Melairei and the CIP Office on Wednesday, February 15 in relation to hospital parking, prefabricated housing unit to address location problems of the isolation and TB testing units, as well as initialize discuss for the step-down unit for senior citizens. - MOH is in the process of discussing ideas for the construction of a proper storage area for Environmental Health's chemicals for mosquito spraying. The current storage is located in the parking lot area. - MOH is still currently waiting for assistance from Millan Isaak for inventory of property. - Massive cleanup efforts continue at the hospital. MOH has printed new signs aimed at encouraging the public's partnership with maintaining cleanliness in and around the hospital. Additional copies will be printed and shared with other Ministries. - MOH is preparing to host this week's press conference in collaboration with Press Secretary Olkeriil Kazuo. - MOH is working on replacement hiring especially personnel for Finance. • Update of Proposed Legislations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senator Kuartei is working on the diversifying the medical referral committee to expand membership outside of doctors. - Senator Kuartei is also working on a legislation to introduce a fee for the purpose of funding the maintenance and operation of the hyperbaric chamber. - President: The NHI amendment you proposed to utilize a portion of the funding for the hospital, does that require amendment to the legislation? <i>Minister Roberts: It could be done through regulation; however it would be more beneficial to have the amendments executed through legislation. Under progress. MOH is due to meet respective individuals in regards to the matter on February 22nd.</i> President offers support and assistance of its legal counsels in this respect. • Medical Referral to Taiwan and the Philippines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trend is \$30,000 cap limit per patient. However, patients to the Philippines have been known expend beyond the cap. - President suggests reducing the number of referrals to the Philippines and increase the number of referrals to Taiwan to address issue of overcharging on medical costs. - The current challenge is Taiwan does not have a stretcher program. Suggestion made to route non-stretcher related illnesses to Taiwan in the interim while serious efforts is made to establish a stretcher program for the Taiwan medical referral program. - Minister Roberts committed to put more emphasize and preference for treatment at Shin Kong Hospital in Taiwan. Special arrangement between Shin Kong and MOH allows discounted



	<p>service, but at present it is underutilized. All other Taiwan hospitals will be categorized as options.</p>
<p>Update from the Ministry of Justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice President: Because of issues with communication prior to Saturday’s storm, over 100 calls were received by MOJ expressing concerns and inquiring if there was a typhoon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once wind picked up, NEMO was instructed to open office for operation to address public’s concerns and answer any questions. - Multiple requests were made to MOJ for search and rescue efforts of individuals at sea. Instruction was made to hold efforts until morning. NEMO and Marine Law officers were dispatched in the morning and found all fishers to be safe. • The Vice President has signed off on a grant to MOJ with the purpose of establish a network between Immigration, Labor, Public Safety and the Attorney General’s office for free flowing information sharing between the agencies. Vice President has requested AG’s office to advise project coordinators prior to implementation in terms of what information can be recorded on the database. • On Feb. 9, Marine Law held a small ceremony for 17 trainees to completed training program. • Reduction of Fuel Assistance from Japan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MOJ is faced with a challenge of a major reduction to fuel assistance from Japan. Because of low usage of fuel recorded in the last year, Japan has decided to reduce annual fuel assistance of 120,000 gallons to 90,000 gallons. - Vice President is working on ways to restore the assistance. • Ngardmau Substation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Ngardmau substation remains a priority for MOJ. However, lack of police officers is challenge. Perhaps after hiring of additional police officers MOJ would be able to better equip the substation. MOJ to continue working on it. • Proposed Legislation for Zero Tolerance on Drugs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request made for introduction of legislation with strict provisions including immediate termination of police officers found positive drug use. Current process is too lax. • Equal and Increased Salary for Police Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suggests dialogue on salary irregularities between Customs, Immigration, Quarantine and Police Officers - Customs, Immigration and Quarantine receive overtime payment from airlines. Meanwhile, police officers continue to receive normal payment even during odd hours. Increased pay is also a form of encouragement for hiring. President: We’ve had discussions with the agencies in the past that the matter is a scheduling issue. Airlines have become reluctant to pay for overtime charges. - Equal and fair salary structured must be addressed for police officers. - Vice President to work on a directive of zero tolerance on drugs across MOJ. • Request Assistance of Public Safety Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vice President requests for assistance from the whole to address serious building problems at MOJ. The building is rundown and dangerous. Occupants have relocated, but the building itself remains a major safety issue and risk to all. - President requests CIP to condemn the building or issue official notice as a way forward to address the situation immediately. • Certifying Drug Tests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MOH reports its challenges to certify drug testing on island, which presents issues for MOJ in terms of criminal prosecution. - As a result of Palau’s participation in Anti-Doping Program related to sports, PNOC has certified persons under WADA Anti-Doping Agency to administer drug testing. Persons were trained prior to certification. This may be an avenue that can be considered for drug testing related to criminal



	<p>prosecution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MOJ in urgent need of generators. During power outages, staff utilizes flashlights and other similar lights to operate. - MOJ working on re-structuring. Report to submitted to the President once completed.
<p>Update from PPUC on Water and Sewer Projects, and Others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the interim, pipe installation has been ceased until weather improves. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - According to the January 2017 report, the project is 7% ahead of the master schedule. - Number of incidents recorded includes the bomb detection, damage of PNCC lines and water outages. • Power outage over the weekend is due to fallen trees and debris on main lines in Koror due to the weather. Restoration was conducted from hamlet to hamlet. Tree clean-up efforts are ongoing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feasibility study conducted by JICA in January 2017 is aimed at improving lines and addressing the power outage issue. - President: In line with the discussions with the board and management, at some point we want to cross out vegetation as the cause of power outages. The JICA feasibility study is alarming in the sense that 60% of power outages are due to preventable causes. If that can be reduced to about 30%, it will be a major improvement. • As for the sewer project, company from New Zealand that was contracted for the project is preparing to begin construction work. The T-dock location for the new pump station has been fenced and is being prepared for construction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pipe installation was scheduled to commence in front of Bai Ra Meketii, however that portion of the project is on hold until all required equipment arrives. • Public Hearing Scheduled for Sewer Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public hearing as per EQPB requirement is scheduled tonight for 7PM at PHS Resource Center for the proposed sewer pump station in Long Island Park.
<p>Miscellaneous</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPUC/PNCC MOU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President: What's the status of the PPUC/PNCC MOU? <i>Minister Obichang: There's a request to utilize your legal counsels to draft the memorandum of understanding as they no longer trust each other's legal counsels.</i> President: Let's go ahead and instruct our legal counsels to work on this. • Renewable Energy Grant & Streetlight Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President: Has the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Industries and Commerce met the Energy Office regarding the streetlight project. <i>Director Melairei: The instruction was to have Trust Corporation to procure the equipment for this project. Currently waiting for communication from Joe Chilton of Energy Office in order to complete the scope of work for advertising to satisfy the procurement process.</i> - President: A team from New Zealand will be visiting Palau in relation to the renewable energy grant. Perhaps a portion of the funding can be utilized for this project. Follow up on this immediately and prepare accordingly for their arrival. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ President: Have we discussion application of this project with PPUC? <i>Minister Obichang: We are working on arranging a meeting with them.</i> ~ The grant is \$3 million split between Palau, FSM and RMI. Palau may get a little more than \$1 million. The target implementation date for the project is February 2017. • Update from the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working on implementing initiatives under the MAP - Working on programs for Youth Games - Working with Ministry of Finance for Youth Day activities in March 2017 for programs related to career development for youth and elderlies



- As a follow up on the housing program, MCCA working with Airai Governor to address access issues for home construction
- The Ministry is also working on amending Title 19 for changes that affects areas relating to Museum, Historical Preservation and Archive. This is associated with access and benefits.
- Palau has also received an invitation for participation in Yap Games scheduled in July 2017 leading up to the Micronesian Games in June 2018.
- MCCA is also working with partners in terms of the health program grant.

- **Update from the Ministry of Education**

- MOE is working with 4 Peace Corps volunteers. 3 left last week. 1 is currently still on island working with Special Education in the area of sign language. MOE does not have a full-time sign language specialist since the passing of the previous specialist. MOE requires an additional specialist. Will work with Chief of Staff in this respect.
- MOE to work with PNSB for Grand Valley State University applicants. Many students have expressed interest for this opportunity.
- Partnership with Taiwan has commenced with student participation for pottery classes. New Mandarin teacher for PHS started on Monday.
- MOE is scheduled to meet with Senator Kuartei on the teacher certification on Wed., Feb. 15.

- **Update from MNRET**

- Request made for amendment to legislation relating to kemedukl trade. The legislation as it stands removed some of MNRET's authorities.
- Concerns expressed in this connection to the trade of red and black corals.
- PAN Amendments: Amendments must be made to enable PAN officers to provide capacity to monitor resources within their respective state waters. Officers could be deputized through MOJ to police farms, illegal fishing in the state, and possibly detain violators until police responds. President: Let's continue to work on this.
- MNRET has met with state governors on access and benefit sharing.
- MNRET reports receiving letter to Governor Adachi. Will finalize and send it out.

- **Update from MPIIC**

- Meeting with FAA representatives was successful. FAA provided a spreadsheet of funding about \$2 million per country.
- Survey for buoys have been completed. MPIIC is currently working on a plan to address the problem. A report will be produced in relation.

- **Executive Order for Regular Meeting for Scholarship**

- President reminds Deputy Chief of Staff Rebluud Kesolei to draft the executive order requiring regular meetings between Ministry of Education, Ministry of State and the Palau National Scholarship Board on scholarship opportunities

- **Italy Grant Update**

- Technical team will arrive around the second week of March 2017. This in response to needs identified by the NEC report in relation to the drought.

- **Status of UAE Project**

- President: We need a closure on this project. The point is to sign off on what the UAE was responsible to provide and has provided as well as the scheduled delivery of the new power generator.
- Greg Decherong of the Energy Office last week initialized communication with UAE.

- **Mie Prefecture Visit in Celebration of 20th Anniversary**

- The group will be arriving on Friday. Students from Mie Maritime High School have arrived. The school's vessel is open for touring.
- Mie representatives wanted to meet with former President Kuniwo Nakamura. Arrangements are being made.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mie Maritime High School is sister schools with PHS. The Ministry of Education working with PHS for Palau student participation in the programs. - In collaboration with Japan Embassy, a program for Japan Fair is scheduled on Sunday, February 19 at Ngarachamayong. President: We need to fill that event. Make sure there's government representation and participation from students. Distribute schedule of events to everyone. - PNOC is working with program organizers for a walk and pick event prior to the Japan Fair on Sunday, February 19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay of EIF Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bill to postpone the Environmental Impact Fee has been submitted to the OEK. The departure tax remains. We will be meeting with the OEK in regards. • Zika Circulation Letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has been published • Circulation Letter from Tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has been submitted to the Office of the President - President instructs Press Secretary Olkeriil Kazuo to immediately review the letter - President suggests adding Republic of Palau seal • Regulation for Scuba Divers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President requests Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism to draft regulation to restrict the number of scuba divers in dive sites. Work with Koror State Government, as they are responsible for enforcement. • Mid-JCM Meeting & Civil Action Team Turnover <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mid-JCM is scheduled for Thursday, February 16 - CAT turnover is scheduled for Friday, February 17. The Vice President will be speaking on behalf of the government. • Meeting with ROC Ambassador Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minister Kuartei and Vice President Oilouch have met with Ambassador Tsao of Taiwan to seek assistance in relation to traffic situation as well as training for traffic officers. • Kaleb Udui is collaborating efforts with Tax, Immigration and Labor to better understand laws and looking at how tour operators are operating in relation to the use of apartments as hotel accommodations. Udui scheduled to meet with them again today. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President: Have we released a statement in regards? <i>A press release has been disseminated.</i> We need more than just a press release. A notice of sort must be distributed to operators. - Legal counsels to work on the language of the notice for circulation to operators
<p>Reminders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Ministers are reminded to submit their work plans for the first 100 days to the Office of the President. • All Ministers are advised to dress formally in “suit and tie” for official portraits on Monday, February 20, 2017. Note: The portrait session has been postponed to Monday, February 27, 2017. All Ministers will be informed of schedule once confirmed. • The next Cabinet Meeting is scheduled for 9AM Monday, February 20, 2017 in Ngerulmud

***Meeting minutes are subject to change and approval**