



**Governor's Commission on African Affairs
1st Quarterly Commission Meeting**

*March 30, 2026
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.*

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Attended:

Tope Adeyoku – Member
Adebawale “Shola” Ajayi – Member
Adedana Ashebir – Member
Njukang Asong – Member
Dr. Anyinke Atabong – Member
Fatmata Barrie – Member
Dr. Sylvia Dasi – Member
Amsale Geletu – Member
Chukwunonso “Vincent” Iweanoge – Chair
Dr. Terry V. Jones – Member
Maroufath Ogooussan – Member
Maureen Wambui – Member

Commissioners Absent:

Dr. Jasmine Blanks Jones – Member
J. Wyndal Gordon – Member
Dr. Natalie McCabe – Member

GOCI Staff: Gregory Yancey – Chief of Staff & Cheryl Madigan – Executive Assistant

I. Meeting Call to Order at 6:08 p.m. and Commission Roll Call:

Chukwunonso (Vincent) Iweanoge, Chair of the Governor's Commission on African Affairs

II. Motion #1 - Adoption of the Agenda:

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Motion to adopt the agenda.	Dr. Terry Jones	Maureen Wambui	Majority Rules

III. Motion #2 - Approval of Minutes for 11/03/25 – 01/26/26 – 02/23/26

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Motion to approve Minutes.	Maureen Wambui	Adedana Ashebir	Majority Rules

IV. Opening Remarks:

Chair C. Vincent Iweanoge greeted everyone. He wished all the women a happy International Women's Day and thank everyone that attended the testimony event on the HB524 bill.

COS Gregory Yancey welcomed everyone. He spoke on the leadership change in GOCI. Special Secretary Maria Martinez is GOCI's new leader, but she also holds another position, which is a Special



Advisor to the Governor. He spoke briefly on HB524, which didn't crossover. He mentioned that AD Dr. Antwan Brown will be out for at least a month.

V: Mission & Vision Statements:

Commissioner Maureen Wambui's recommendation was motioned for the approval of the mission and vision statement.

Mission: To promote equity, representation, and opportunity for African communities in Maryland through advocacy, collaboration, and policy engagement, leaving no one behind.

Vision: A Maryland where African communities are empowered, resilient, and fully integrated into the state's social, economic, legislative, and civic fabric.

Motion #3 - Approval of Mission and Vision Statements

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Motion to approve Minutes.	Fatmata Barrie	Maureen Wambui	Majority Rules

VI: By-laws Discussion:

This discussion was postponed.

VII: Committees:

a) Business & Economic Development:

Commissioner Njukang Asong mentioned a business conference in partnership with the African Chamber of Commerce. He still will need to schedule meetings.

b) Community (Arts, Culture, Faith):

Commissioner Fatmata Barrie stated that the committee needs to schedule dates for meetings. Greg Yancey mentioned a partnership with Mr. Aiken Akinsaya, which would be a GOCI event during African Restaurant Week that could happen around June 13th. This topic brought up the planning of the Jollof Competition event. There was a lot of discussion, and the event needs to be confirmed when it will take place.

c) Education:

Commissioner Terry Jones wants to step down as the chair of the committee. He is having trouble getting meetings scheduled, but Chair Iweanoge will later have a discussion on this matter.

d) Health:

Commissioner Anyinke Atablong will work with EA Cheryl Madigan to schedule meetings. They want to do the same projects as last year. Commissioner Tope Adeyoju would like to have mini Nourish to Flourish events during African Restaurant Week in June.



VIII: Working Groups:

a) African Heritage Month:

Commissioner Fatmata Barrie stated that they have not met yet. She stated they spoke about the theme for the event, which relates to the 100-year anniversary of a global agreement to end slavery.

b) Maryland 250 Celebration:

Commissioner Adedana Ashebir brought up her concerns with the planning of the Jollof Competition event, which might be part of African Restaurant Week. There was a lot of discussion, and the event needs to be confirmed when it will take place. Mr. Yancey mentioned that there will be a multi-cultural event near September or October and all the commissions will work together to plan this event. Commissioner Maureen Wambui requested a meeting to discuss these new events.

IX: New/Old Business:

- ❖ Commissioner Wambui and Commissioner Barrie would like information on why the HB524 bill didn't pass. She suggested that the commission needs more preparation and they need to push harder. To get more community members to join the efforts.
- ❖ Commissioner Asong spoke about obtaining contact information on African businesses within the State of MD. Mr. Yancey stated to work with other State agencies. He also stated that the commission can create their own contact listing by collecting information from businesses. Commissioner Ashebir suggested that each committee work on their own related contact listing.
- ❖ Commissioner Adeyoju would like to have community members be members of our committees and working groups. Mr. Yancey said the public (community members) can be part of working groups, which are formed by the committee, but they do not count toward the confirmation of a quorum.
- ❖ Commissioner Wambui mentioned social media. She would like to see more posted to GOCI website that compliments their commission. Mr. Yancey stated that GOCI would like the commissioners to submit information on events they attended or it can be information pertaining to your diaspora (a picture of your flag, or favorite restaurant, or a date in history event). The commission should be submitting three (3) items per week. He also spoke on policy making.

X: Closing Remarks:

Chair Vincent Iweanoge thanked everyone that attended.

XI: Adjournment:

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Motion to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.	Fatmata Barrie	Tope Adeyoju	Majority Rules