



Governor's Commission on African Affairs
SPS-II Commission Meeting
February 23, 2026
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Attended:

Tope Adeyoju – Member
 Adedana Ashebir – Member
 Dr. Anyinke Atabong – Member
 Fatmata Barrie – Member
 Dr. Sylvia Dasi – Member
 Chukwunonso “Vincent” Iweanoge – Chair
 Maureen Wambui – Member
 J. Wyndal Gordon – Member

Commissioners Absent:

Amsale Geletu – Member
 Adebowale “Shola” Ajayi – Member
 Njukang Asong – Member
 Dr. Jasmine Blanks Jones – Member
 Dr. Terry V. Jones – Member
 Dr. Natalie McCabe – Member
 Maroufath Ogooussan – Member

GOCI Staff: Dr. Antwan Brown – Administrative Director & Cheryl Madigan – Executive Assistant

I. Meeting Call to Order at 6:18 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.	J. Wyndal Gordon	Maureen Wambui	8Y – 0N – 0A

III. Motion #2 - Approval of Minutes

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Motion to approve Minutes.	J. Wyndal Gordon	Maureen Wambui	8Y – 0N – 0A

IV. Opening Remarks:

Chair C. Vincent Iweanoge greeted everyone. He stated for the commissioners to keep in mind the upcoming meeting dates.

AD Dr. Antwan Brown welcomed everyone. He will forward the draft of the bylaws for the commission to Review and make suggestions for changes at the next meeting. He also stated that the commission will need to come up with the mission and vision statements. He asked the commission to present three social events per week that they have had as a commission or have attended outside events, so these can be posted for GOCI’s media posting.



V: Mission & Vision Statements:

As mentioned in AD Dr. Brown's opening remarks that we are still waiting for suggestions. Chair Iweanoge asked that the commissioners submit their suggestion to EA Cheryl Madigan, and the deadline date is March 3rd.

VI: Committees:

Chair Iweanoge asked to go over the committee members listing and all commissioners provided confirmation of what committee that chose to work on. Chairs of the committees will decide later on the Vice Chairs of the committees.

a) Business & Economic Development:

Commissioner Njukang Asong was not present to report. Commissioner Sylvia Dasi said that they have not met. She mentioned that there will be a business seminar in September.

b) Community (Arts, Culture, Faith):

Commissioner Maureen Wambui spoke on the African Heritage Month bill HB524. She asked commissioners to sign up for the support of the bill, which will be February 17th and the hearing will be on March 13th at 1:00 p.m. Everyone will need to open an MGA account to sign up. Please refer to AD Dr. Brown's email dated February 17th. Delegate North spoke via Chair Iweanoge phone. She stated the main goal is to show the importance to recognize African Heritage statewide. It will be good to provide data, anecdotes, etc. to support this bill. She also stated using contributions made to Maryland by regions of the State. Commissioner Ashebir suggested using Employment on how the African diaspora has become doctors and nurses.

c) Education:

Commissioner Terry Jones was not present to report.

d) Health:

Commissioner Anyinke Atablong stated that there will be a meeting on this coming up Wednesday, but they would like to coordinate something with the Caribbean Affairs commission.

Chair Vincent stated that each committee and working group will need to submit a report after each meeting that is held.

VII: Working Groups:

a) African Heritage Month:

Commissioner Maureen Wambui stated that they have not met yet.

b) Maryland 250 Celebration:

AD Dr. Brown stated that there is a plan to have all commissions collaborate an event at Howard Community College. He also brought up the idea of the Jollof Rice competition. Commissioner Sylvia Dasi recommended to partner with someone within the African Restaurant week.

VIII: New/Old Business:

- ❖ Commissioner Dasi informed everyone of the International Women's Day event to be held at Matings West on March 27th and it's a ticketed event.
- ❖ Commissioner Tope Adeyoju stated that two organizations would like to know if the commission would be able to collaborate with them. First, there is World Bank-Spring Meeting being held in



DC, on April 13th – 18th. The second, is the Ghana Week in DC 2026 will be held in October. This will be supporting a soccer tournament that might be held in Montgomery County. He suggested having a Donor Relations Campaign, which company's headquarters that are based in Maryland, but are doing business in Africa, would provide dividends to us, but we need to obtain closer ties with them. There will be a pre-inauguration on March 26th for the Nigerian American Chamber of Commerce in Maryland. He also suggested reaching out to big companies for sponsorship support.

- ❖ Commissioner Adedana Ashebir suggested a collaboration or help to promote the South African National Men's Rugby Team. This game is being held in Baltimore on September 12th. She would like clarification on the steps to collaborate with restaurants or vendors for Restaurant Week. She informed everyone of African Advocacy Day on March 6th. She recommended having clear remarks for the testimony of bill HB524. She asked if the commission could create a subcommittee for Fundraising, and AD Dr. Brown responded yes and it should actually be a form as a working group.
- ❖ Commissioner Sylvia Dasi asked for a script on how to response to requests from the community concerning support for functions, and Dr. Brown stated that GOCI doesn't have funding to support community requests, but we can help provide resources with other state agencies, which probably would not necessarily pertain to monies. He would like to be informed of the requests before providing guidance. She suggested to have a non-profit organization handle the fiscal sponsorship for the African Heritage Month and other events.

X: Closing Remarks:

Chair Vincent Iweanoge thanked everyone that attended and encourage them to sign up for HB524

XI. Adjournment:

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Motion to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.	Vincent Iweanoge	Sylvia Dasi	8Y - 0N - 0A