



Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs
3rd Quarterly Commission Meeting
Virtual ZOOM
Thursday, September 11, 2025
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners in Attendance:

Ken Alce, Member
Gabriel Christian, Member
Jemima Davis, Member
Samantha Howard, Member
Winsome Leslie, Member
Cylia Lowe, Member
Luis McSween, Member
Habacuc Petion, Member
Dr. Carla Sewer, Member
Elaine Simon, Member
Kassandra Tucker, Member
Ambassador Curtis Ward, Chair

Commissioners Absent:

Dr. Melissa Buckley, Member
Anderson Jean, Member
Maxine Kellman, Member

Guests: John McKenzie, Dr. Aurora McKenzie, and Althea Grey-McKenzie

GOCI Staff: **Lawrence Walker, Executive Director - GOCI**
 Silvia Gomez Decja, Admin. Director - Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs (GOCI)
 Cheryl Madigan, Executive Assistant - GOCI

I. Call to Order:

Ambassador Curtis Ward, Chair – Meeting called to order at 6:08 p.m.

II. Opening Remarks:

- I. Chair Curtis Ward welcomed everyone. He wants well wishes to Commission Dr. Melissa Buckley on her recovery.
- II. Administrative Director (AD) Silvia Decja welcomed everyone and introduced the new commission members.
- III. Commissioner Rev. Jemima Davis provided a prayer.

III. Motions: Approval of Minutes:

Motion	1st	2nd	Vote
Approval of 02/06/25, 07/10/25, and 08/21/25 minutes	VC Luis McSween	Gabriel Christian	10Y-0N-1A



IV. Working Groups:

a. Maryland Caribbean Voices Forum (Virtual) updates:

Commissioner Samantha Howard stated that the Save the Date (Oct 30th) has been created and that they are seeking recommendations for panelists (4-6). She and Commissioner Dr. Melissa Buckley will be moderators. Upcoming planning meeting will be on October 14th. Cheryl Madigan to send out the flyer and presentation to the new commissioners.

V. Committees:

- ❖ **Health** – Commissioner Samantha Howard provided no report but did provide the update on the upcoming Virtual Forum.
- ❖ **Business/Economic Development** – Commissioner Kassandra Tucker would like to do a Caribbean Business Roundtable, and she did provide a report. Commissioner Ken Alce would like to join this subcommittee.
- ❖ **Education (Workforce Development)** – Commissioner Gabriel Christian provided a report. He spoke on the activities he has been involved with.
- ❖ **Community (Arts/Culture/Interfaith)** – Luis McSween, no report provided. He praised Commissioner Christian on the work he does. He spoke about the events he had attended.

VI. New Business:

- ❖ Commissioner Carla Sewer would like to send flowers to Commissioner Dr. Buckley, Commissioner Luis McSween will handle this task.
- ❖ By-laws – Chair Ward stated that he would like the new commissioners to view the draft of the by-laws.
- ❖ Chair Ambassador Curtis Ward provided his exit remarks and the Commissioners and GOCI staff provided Fairwell remarks. Executive Director Larry Walker provided prayer.

VII. Old Business:

- ❖ No old business mentioned.

VIII. Public Announcements & Upcoming Events:

Items were mentioned in the sub-committee reports.

VIII. Motions: Adjournment of the Meeting:

Motion	1st	2nd	Vote
Adjournment of meeting at 7:40 p.m.	Gabriel Christian	Winsome Leslie	11Y-0N-0A