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***Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs***  
***Special Call Meeting – Virtual ZOOM***  
*Wednesday, October 29, 2025*  
*6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.*

**Meeting Minutes**

**Commissioners in Attendance:**

Ken Alce  
Dr. Melissa Buckley  
Gabriel Christian  
Jeminima Davis  
Maxine Kellman  
Winsome Leslie  
Cylia Lowe  
Luis McSween, Chair  
Dr. Elaine Simon

**Commissioners Absent:**

Samantha Howard, Vice Chair  
Anderson A. Jean  
Habacuc Petion  
Dr. Carla Sewer  
Kassandra Tucker

**Guests:** Opal Smith, Ann Mair, Chantel Williams, Shakirah Hill Taylor, Tia, and Delegate Regina T. Boyce

**GOCI Staff:** Greg Yancey, Chief of Staff (GOCI)  
Silvia Gomez Decja, Admin. Director- Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs (GOCI)  
Cheryl Madigan, Executive Assistant – (GOCI)

**I. Call to Order:**

- ❖ Chair Luis McSween – Meeting called to order at 6:33 p.m.

**II. Opening Remarks:**

- ❖ Chair Luis McSween welcomed everyone. He spoke about how the commission can assist with help for the Caribbean, due to the aftermath of Hurricane Melissa.
- ❖ AD Silvia Decja welcomed everyone as well. She stated that we are here to gather everyone's ideas on how to assist the Caribbean Relief Efforts and requested a prayer.
- ❖ Commissioner Jemima Davis provided prayer.

**III. Discussion on the Caribbean Relief Efforts:**

The meeting focused on coordinating relief efforts for hurricane-damaged areas in the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica. Chair Luis McSween emphasized the need for both immediate and long-term support, highlighting that while initial aid is crucial, sustained efforts are needed for recovery. Commissioner Gabriel Christian provided insights from previous disaster responses, advocating for collaboration through established organizations like the Caribbean Disaster Relief and Recovery Alliance (CDRRA) to ensure efficient use of resources. He shared plans to organize a community-wide meeting with the Jamaican ambassador and various Caribbean organizations to align relief efforts. The group discussed the importance of adhering to needs lists provided by local authorities to avoid sending unnecessary supplies. The conversation ended with plans to share updates and continue coordination efforts. The commission discussed the need for strategic donation efforts and they want to issue a statement acknowledging the devastation in the region, with plans to focus on relief efforts in the next commission meeting.

**III. Motion for Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned due to a lack of quorum (some commissioners needed to leave early).

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Crownsville, MD 21032