MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE HELD VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM PLATFORM ON THURSDAY 26th AUGUST, 2021 @ 10:00 A.M.

PRESENT

		St. George South-East **Chairman**
Honourable Gregory Bowen, MP	-	Minister for Finance, Planning, Economic Development, Physical Development, Public Utilities and Energy
		St. David
Honourable Oliver Joseph, MP	-	Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Business and CARICOM Affairs
		St. Andrew South-West
Honourable Yolande Bain-Horsford, MP	-	Minister for Sports, Culture and the Arts, Fisheries and Co-operatives
		St. John
Honourable Alvin Da Breo, MP	-	Minister for Trade, Industry and Consumer Affairs
		St. George-South
Honourable Nickolas Steele, MP	-	Minister for Health and Social Security
		Carriacou and Petite Martinique
Honourable Kindra Maturine-Stewart, MP	-	Minister for Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs, Local Government and Legal Affairs
		St. Patrick East
Honourable Pamela Moses	-	Minister within the Ministry for National Security, Public Administration, Youth

		Development, Home Affairs, ICT and Disaster Management wrf Needy Assistance, Uniform Allowance, Special Projects and ICT
		St. Mark
Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste Curwen, MP	-	Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation, Climate Resilience and the Environment
Honourable Kate Lewis, MP		***St. Andrew North-East***
		Minister within the Ministry of National Security, Public Administration, Youth Development, Home Affairs, ICT and Disaster Management wrf Youth Development
		St. George North-East
Honourable Tobias Clement, MP	-	Parliamentary Representative for St. George North-East & Leader of the Opposition
		St. Andrew South-East
Honourable Emmalin Pierre, MP	-	Minister for Education, Human Resource Development, Information and Religious Affairs
		St. Andrew North-West
Honourable Delma Thomas, MP	-	Minister for Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment and Minister wrf Hospital Services and Community Health Services
		Town of St. George
Honourable Peter David, MP	-	Minister for Agriculture, Lands and Forestry

St. Patrick West

Honourable Anthony Boatswain, MP	-	Deputy Speaker and Parliamentary Representative for St. Patrick West (Excuse Tendered)

St. George North-East

Honourable Tobias Clement, MP	-	Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition

ABSENT

St. George's North-West

Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell, PC, MP, JP	-	Prime Minister and Minister for National Security, Public Administration, Youth Development, Home Affairs, ICT and Disaster Management

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. Andrew Augustine	-	Clerk of Parliament
Mrs. Raquel Morgan	-	Recording Secretary (Office of the Houses of Parliament)
Ms. Janelle Palmer	-	Recording Secretary (Office of the Houses of Parliament)
Mr. Gayvon Mark	-	IT Officer (Office of the Houses of Parliament)
Mrs. Isha Abraham	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag). (Ministry of Finance)
Mr. Justin Hazzard	-	Chief Budget Officer (Ag.) (Ministry of Finance)
Mr. Mike Sylvester	-	Permanent Secretary (Ministry of Finance)

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COMMENCEMENT

The Chairman, Honourable Gregory Bowen called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

PRAYERS

Prayer was said by Honourable Emmalin Pierre, Parliamentary Representative for St. Andrew South-East.

WELCOME

The Chairman acknowledged the staff from the Ministry of Finance and the Clerk and staff of the Houses of Parliament. The Chairman welcomed the Leader of the Opposition onto the meeting via zoom platform.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Chairman requested that the Agenda be adopted and the Committee adopted same.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

The Committee considered the Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance, held in the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's on Wednesday 18th November, 2020 at 9:00 a.m..

MOTION FOR THE MINUTES, AS HAVING BEEN READ

A Motion for the Minutes, as having been read, was moved by Honourable Alvin Da Breo and was seconded by Honourable Nickolas Steele.

CORRECTIONS AND AMENDMENTS OF MINUTES

1. Page – 6 Third paragraph, the word '"**Curwent"**was corrected to read "**Curwen".**
2. Page – 9 Seventh paragraph, third line, the word "**yaer"** was corrected to spell **"year".**
3. Page – 15 Last paragraph, second line, the word "**thousand**" was corrected to read **"million**".

MOTION FOR THE CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

A Motion for the confirmation of Minutes held on Wednesday, 18th November, 2020 was moved by Honourable Oliver Joseph and seconded by Honourable Yolande Bain-Horsford.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no matter arising from the Minutes.

CONSIDERATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 1 OF 2021

The Committee considered, VOTE-by-VOTE the Supplementary Estimates as appeared on the supplemental and agreed to take the final approval of the estimates as one block.

VOTE 12 - POLICE - $999,705.00

Payment of Salaries

Honourable Anthony Boatswain questioned the numeration outlined for the supplementary budget for that Vote.

Mr. Justin Hazzard advised that the supplementary estimates was sought for payments of increments, additional recuits (staff) and insufficient allocations on the original Budget.

The Chairman stated that it was necessary for Ministries and Departments to comprensively justify their Vote amount in order for Supplementary Budget Estimates to be approved.

Honourable Anthony Boatswain said that he was not totallly satisfied since he saw it as a form of underbudgeting, however, would accept the explanations offered.

Agreed.

VOTE 20 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - $38,434,719.00

The Leader of the Opposition commented on the management of the previous Stimulus Package and the numerous problems incurred with the disbusrment of funds made to various entities and bodies. He inquired as to what criteria would be used to ascertain who would benefit and by how much, with the new Stimulus Package in the sum of $15 miillion.

The Chairman explained that it was a CDB funded project and therefore the issue needed to be discussed and agreed upon.

Permanent Secretary, Mike Sylvester explained that an appraisal process had been undertaken, which would be completed by the middle of Septembern 2021 for submission to the Cabinet and to the Bank.

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen expressed that she was concerned that the Leader of the Opposition stated that there were numerous problems associated with the stimulus package. She pointed out that although there were indeed some issues, erroneous information was given, which were resolved.

The Chairman also highlighted that the issues mentioned were addressed by the Prime Minister.

Honourable Tobias Clement suggested that the Hansard should be reviewed for clarity and implored that in going forward, full disclosure should be given and a more efficient system of checks and balances be implemented.

Honourable Anthony Boatswain commented on the loan acquired from the Exim Bank of China to support the Grenada Airport Authority. He inquired as to the payment plan attached to that loan.

Discussions were held on the matter.

Agreed.

VOTE 40 - MINISTRY OF EDUCAITON AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT - $5,171,722.00

Agreed.

VOTE 50 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY - $10,204,000.00

The Chairman made brief remarks.

Agreed.

VOTE 64 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LANDS AND FORESTRY - $100,000.00

Honourable Yolande Bain-Horsford suggested that an underwater survey needed to be undertaken and asked for a sum of US41,500 to be allocated for that purpose.

The Chairman inquired whether it was part of a capital project and stated that they should be able to obtain funding under recurrent expenditure to the sum of $120,000.

Honourable Anthony Boatswain in moving the approval for the Supplementary Estimates, commended the Government and the Ministry of Finance on their work.

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen being the seconder for the Motion also complimented the Ministry of Finance for their dedicated work.

The Chairman acknowledged the sentiments expressed.

A Motion was moved for the adoption of the Supplementary Estimates No. 1 of 2021 by Anthony Boatswain and seconded by Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen.

The Supplementary Estimates were considered and approved in the total amount of $54,910,146.00

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

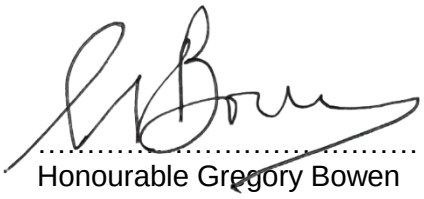
1. The Clerk of Parliament mentioned that a supplemental allocation of funds for salaries for the Office of the Ombudsman in the sum of sixty thousand ($60,000.00) would need to be considered by the Ministry of Finance for the subsequent quarter of 2021.

   Discussions were held and it was agreed that the Ministry of Finance was aware and would arrange to have the matter resolved without it having to go to Parliament.

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion for the adjournment was moved by Honourable Anthony Boatswain and seconded by Honourable Yolande Bain-Horsford.

There being no other business, the **Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.**



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Honourable Gregory Bowen
CHAIRMAN