

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, MT. WHELDALE, ST. GEORGE'S  
ON FRIDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2023 AT 10:00 A.M.**

**PRESENT**

***St. Patrick East***

Honourable Dennis Cornwall, MP - Chairman and Minister for Finance

***St. David***

Honourable Dickon Mitchell, MP - Prime Minister & Minister for National Security, Home Affairs, Information, Disaster Management & Public Administration, Minister for Infrastructure and Physical Development, Public Utilities & Civil Aviation and Transportation

***St. George South-East***

Honourable Philip A. Telesford, MP - Leader of Government's Business & Minister for Social & Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs

***St. Patrick West***

Honourable Joseph Andall, MP - Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade & Export Development

***St. Andrew South-West***

Honourable Lennox John Andrews, MP - Minister for Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, ICT, Creative Economy, Agriculture & Lands, Fisheries & Cooperatives

***St. John***

Honourable Kerryne Z. James, MP - Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy

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***St. George North-East***

- Honourable Ron Livingston Redhead, MP - Minister of State wrf Youth & Sports within the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture

***St. Andrew North-West***

- Honourable Delma Thomas, MP - Member

***St. South St. George***

- Honourable Andy Williams, MP - Minister for Mobilisation, Implementation and Transformation

***St. George North-West***

- Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith C. Mitchell, PC, MP - Leader of His Majesty's Opposition

***St. Mark***

- Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, MP - Member

***Town of St. George***

- Honourable Peter David, MP - Member

***St. Andrew North-East***

- Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters, MP - Member

***St. Andrew South-East***

- Honourable Emmalin Pierre, MP - Member

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**ABSENT**

***Carriacou & Petite Martinique***

- Honourable Tevin Andrews, MP - Minister for Carriacou and Petite Martinique  
Affairs and Local Government  
(*Excuse Tendered*)

**IN ATTENDANCE**

- Mr. Andrew Augustine - Clerk of Parliament
- Ms. Charmaine Blackette - Senior Human Resource Officer
- 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)
- Mr. Mike Sylvester - Permanent Secretary (Ministry of Finance)
- Mr. Justin Hazzard - Chief Budget Officer (Ag.) (Ministry of  
Finance)
- Ms. Chaevanne Britton - Chief Policy Analyst

**COMMENCEMENT**

The Chairman, Honourable Dennis Cornwall welcomed everyone to his first meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance as Chairman. He informed the meeting that an amendment was made to the Supplementary Estimates for 2023 which was sent to Members for approval.

**PRAYERS**

An opening prayer was said by Honourable Philip Telesford, Parliamentary Representative for St. George South-East.

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**CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES**

The Chairman proposed that the Minutes of Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2022 be taken as read and approved. Discussions were held on moving the Motion for the Minutes to be read and approved.

Honourable Joseph Andall moved the Motion for the Minutes to be taken as read.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Minutes taken as read.**

**CORRECTIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE MINUTES**

Page 10, paragraph three - Replace "one" with "on".

**MOTION FOR THE CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES**

A motion for the confirmation of the Minutes held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2022 was moved by Honourable Dickon Mitchell and seconded by Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

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Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen raised the matter on the need for fire tenders for the Constituency of St. David and St. Mark and inquired of the status and progress made in providing fire tenders to relevant constituencies.

Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell indicated that Government was pursuing the procurement of fire tenders for all of the outer parishes which would include St. Mark. He indicated that a fire tender was already obtained for St. David.

**Page 7 - paragraph 8**

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition reiterated the need for a response to the request for a breakdown of all the categories under Vote 27 before the up-coming Budget Presentation.

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The Chairman advised that he did not have an answer to the question asked and said that efforts would be made to provide answers before the subsequent Budget Presentation for 2024.

Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell promised that explanations and responses to matters arising that were not provided from the Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2022 of the Finance Committee would be addressed and provided to Members within fourteen (14) days.

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Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen raised the matter of access to Government services provided by the Constituency Offices to the public at large on a holistic and balanced level. She explained the difficulty experienced when she was unable to respond to questions posed by constituents. She said it would be beneficial for Parliamentary Representatives to be provided with information on available services, so that they would be better able to serve their constituents.

The Chairman said he did not have an answer to the question posed, but stressed that all Parliamentary Offices were expected to serve the citizens of the nation and not persons affiliated with any one political party. He mentioned that Parliamentary Representatives should be able to respond to questions posed that served the population.

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition and Honourable Emmalin Pierre made supporting comments to the matter raised by Honourable Modeste-Curwen.

The Chairman responded to the comments made and Honourable Ron Redhead mentioned that the services offered by the Government could be accessed by citizens through the Ministries which were opened to the public during the week.

Further discussions were held on the matter and Honourable Joseph Andall suggested that Government Ministries and Departments that provided basic safety net programmes make available to all Parliamentary Offices, a list of all the programmes offered.

Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters spoke on the matter and sought clarification on whether Government was responsible for the operations of Caretaker Offices. She mentioned that no office was allocated in her constituency and inquired as to where her constituents should be directed to apply for or request services needed.

The Chairman responded and the Prime Minister mentioned that the list of services available to citizens could be made available to all MPs. The Prime Minister added that the Government was not responsible for providing a physical location in each of the constituencies to access services and believed that MPs also had a responsibility to seek information that would benefit their constituents.

Honourable Peter David expressed the need for a more balanced approach from the Government in addressing the matter of delivery of Government services to constituents.

Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters reiterated her question on whether Government was responsible for Caretaker Offices and questioned where her constituents should go in view of the fact that her constituency did not have a Caretaker Office.

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The Chairman indicated that Caretaker Offices were not the responsibility of Government and mentioned that the Houses of Parliament was responsible for providing all MPs with a Parliamentary office.

Honourable Peter David mentioned that Caretakers were not an official terminology and was therefore not the responsibility of Government.

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The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition spoke on the high increase in Vote 18, under Items 211 and 213 and sought an explanation for the increase.

Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell reiterated the point that explanations and responses to matters arising that were not provided from the Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2022 of the Finance Committee would be addressed and provided to Members within fourteen (14) days.

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The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition said he had the same concern under Vote 21 and the Chairman said the concern was noted.

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen queried the matter of a deposit of funds in the Consolidated Fund from the Indian Government to complete the project discussed in St. Mark.

The Chairman said that he would take responsibility to verify the information and make it available to the Member for St. Mark.

Further comments were made on the matter.

Honourable Joseph Andall pointed out that the Member for St. Mark had written to him and he had provided her with a response on the matter. He gave a commitment to work with the Member, the Ministry of Community Development and any other Government Ministry or Department to help bring the project to a speedy conclusion.

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen expressed her appreciation for the response and commitment of the Member for St. Patrick West towards the completion of the project.

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**CONSIDERATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES  
FOR THE YEAR 2023**

The Chairman informed Members of one amendment made to the 2023 Supplementary Estimates which was sent out. He requested that Members consider the subsequent copy of a 2023 Supplementary Estimates set out Vote by Vote hereunder for approval.

**VOTE 10 - OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER - \$7,750,000.00**

The Chairman introduced the following items under Vote 10:

- I. Hosting of a CARICOM Meeting between August and September and Hosting of CARICOM Technical Working Group in October to be chaired by Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell - \$250,000.00
- II. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Celebration Project - To mark the Jubilee Celebration of Grenada's 50<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary - \$7,500,000.00

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition expressed his concern with the sum allocated for the Jubilee Celebration of Grenada's 50<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary. He indicated that what should be budgeted on the Supplemental Estimates ought to be the allocation for 2023.

Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell explained that the sum allocated was not merely a celebratory approach to mark the occasion. He provided a breakdown of the activities planned and stated that a National Organising Committee was established to spearhead the observance of Grenada's Independence from September 2023 to the end of 2024. He spoke on the importance of each Parish being able to engage in activities and celebrations that reflected the uniqueness of the Parish as the independence activities were rolled out over the next several months.

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition emphasised the need for a breakdown of the estimated cost of the activities so that he could understand the figure quoted as a supplementary estimate for the year 2023.

The Chairman indicated that budgetary allocation and processes would have to be met before the 2024 Budget, hence the inclusion of the allocated sum in the Supplementary Estimates of 2023. He indicated that the monies allocated would be spent during the period before the actual date of the Independence.

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition mentioned that what was required was an estimate of what was required for the 2023 Expenditure and mentioned further that the 2024 Budget should have the allocations needed for the activities planned for 2024. He therefore requested a breakdown of the cost of the different activities so that appropriate comments could be made on the matter.

The Chairman advised that the 2024 Budget would be presented before the end of 2023 and explained the difficulties that would arise if the allocations were included in the 2024 Budget based on the processes that occurred thereafter to ensure Government spending.

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The Prime Minister made comments and mentioned that some of the detailed estimates may not be available at that time in view of the fact that events were still being planned and organised. He stated that the allocation ensured that Government was in a position to cover financially all activities as the detailed budget was realised.

Honourable Peter David expressed his concerns over the estimated amount and requested a breakdown of the allocated sum to defend the estimated allocation for the 50<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary of Grenada.

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition again requested a detailed breakdown for the supplementary estimate of \$7,500,000.00.

The Chairman committed to provide the breakdown of the estimated sum discussed. He stressed the need for Parliamentarians to be responsible in their deliberations to ensure that information was not distorted to the general public.

**Agreed.**

<b>VOTE 16</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE &amp; EXPORT DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$684,603.00</b>
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The Chairman introduced the following item under Vote 16:

Agri-Food Sector Development and Strengthening of the National Food Safety System in Grenada.	-	\$684,603.00
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**Agreed.**

<b>VOTE 17</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE UNIT</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$153,505.00</b>
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The Chairman introduced Vote 17, AMLIVE developed by RiskTECH Solutions to purchase and implement a web-based e-reporting and case management solution.

**Agreed.**

<b>VOTE 18</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY, HOME AFFAIRS, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, INFORMATION AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT</b>		
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- \$ 4, 455,588.00

The Chairman introduced the following items under Vote 18:

- I. Settle outstanding debt with Canadian Bank Note for Grenada's Border Management System and Printing of Passport Books. - \$ 1,900,000.00

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition made comments.

- II. To facilitate the payment for additional security needs as well as an increase in the rate per hour for Security Contracts for all Government Assets - \$ 2,555.588.00

**Agreed.**

**VOTE 20 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE - \$67,531,151.00**

The Chairman introduced the following items under Vote 20:

- I. To facilitate the relocation of the Ministry of Finance and other Government Departments/Divisions housed at the Complex to address Occupational Safety And Health (OSH) issues, including moulds, leaking roofs, etc. - \$419,000.00

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition spoke on the steps taken in other countries to allow more remote working, which was a way for Government to cut costs associated with constructing and renting buildings.

The Chairman noted that whilst Government had taken steps to digitalise the Public Service, the process was a tedious and time consuming one and mentioned that it was important for Government assets to be maintained.

- II. To provide additional allocation to cover the payment of cost of living subsidies (LPG) Electricity subsidies, etc. - \$6,371,306.00

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance gave a reminder to the Clerk to provide him with a copy of the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meetings in order to ensure that follow up work could be done on outstanding information.

The Chairman inquired of the Clerk on whether there were any issues that prevented the Minutes from being circulated to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

**(The Clerk replied to the Chairman in private)**

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Honourable Philip Telesford suggested that a time be set for the circulation of the Minutes, to ensure the Ministry of Finance had sight of it before meetings.

The Chairman inquired as to what would be a reasonable timeframe for the Minutes to be completed and circulated.

Discussions ensued and the agreement was made for the Minutes to be completed and circulated 14 days after a meeting.

III. Acquisition of Assets/Investments - \$60,000,000.00

The Prime Minister said he anticipated a query surrounding the details of the allocation and advised that a detailed breakdown would be provided. He advised further that Government was looking into acquiring a new location for the Police Headquarters since its continued presence on Fort George was preventing the conclusion of the Tourism Competitiveness Enhancement Project. He advised the meeting further that Government had negotiated the purchase of the FLOW/Cable & Wireless Building to house the Police Headquarters.

The Prime Minister informed the meeting that Government had prioritised the construction of a modern Teaching Hospital, which required the acquisition of lands for the construction of the hospital. He said it was anticipated that within the year, Government would have to make payment to acquire the lands in order to construct the hospital, hence the allocation.

The Prime Minister further informed the meeting that Government would have to settle the Kimpton Kawana Bay issue, which would require payment from the Government in order for the site to return to construction phase.

The Prime Minister advised of the 20 acres of land on Grand Anse Beach, which was leased to the Issa Nicholas Group, which therefore made Government the landlord. He mentioned that the Freehold to the reversion was transferred to Time Bourke Holdings, which was receiving rental fees from Issa Nicholas. He stated that effectively the people of Grenada were not benefitting from the situation and as such, Government was in engagement with Time Bourke Holdings to have the matter resolved.

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition made comments and noted that the allocation was significantly high.

Honourable Philip Telesford suggested that a breakdown be given for key areas of the different sums allocated, as it would provide for more appreciation of the sums put forward.

The Leader of His Majesty's Opposition agreed and said he would appreciate a complete breakdown of the estimated allocation for all the areas that the expenditure covered.

IV. Purchase of Vehicles - \$500,000.00

V. Subventions to State Bodies - \$240,845.00

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**Agreed.**

**VOTE 26 - MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
PLANNING, TOURISM, ICT, & CREATIVE ECONOMY - \$60,000,000.00**

The Chairman introduced the following items under Vote 26:

I. SAEP	-	\$ 1,300,000.00
II. OECS Regional Tourism Competitiveness Project	-	\$10,900,000.00
III. Creative Industry Symposium 0119504 (Grant)	-	\$ 135,845.00
IV. Digital Governance For Resilience (DG4R)	-	\$11,400,000.00

**Agreed.**

**VOTE 28 - MINISTRY OF CLIMATE RESILIENCE, THE  
ENVIRONMENT & RENEWABLE ENERGY - \$ 2,500,000.00**

The Chairman introduced Vote 28, Climate Smart Infrastructure Development Project (Loan).

**Agreed.**

**VOTE 30 - MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT,  
PUBLIC UTILITIES, CIVIL AVIATION & TRANSPORT  
- \$25,100,000.00**

The Chairman introduced Vote 30 which comprised of the following categories:

I. To provide additional allocation to compensation for land Acquisition	-	\$1,000,000.00
II. To provide additional allocation under the Construction, Refurbishment & Ext. Gov't Buildings Project	-	\$4,000,000.00
III. To provide additional allocation for the St. John's River Flood Mitigation Project (Phase 2) - Bridges	-	\$2,000,000.00

Honourable Peter David inquired of the status of the project and referenced the back walls to be done. He noted that after the flooding that occurred a few weeks ago, the project showed that it was beneficial since it helped to save lives and property.

Honourable Peter David sought to find out whether the project was sufficiently financed to complete the walls and if it wasn't, if additional funds be put in. He queried further, whether the \$2 million

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allocated would be sufficient to complete the two bridges and whether the entire road from the cemetery up to the end of River Road would be refurbished.

Honourable Peter David said based on the fact that work on the project had stalled, trepidation had arisen in the minds of citizens. He again sought clarity on whether the two million dollars would complete the project as envisaged or if there was need for additional funds and inquired of the estimated time for completion of the project.

The Prime Minister said that the \$2 million would not complete the project and mentioned that the questions asked by the Member were asked in Parliament and the Leader of His Majesty's Opposition was provided with written responses. He stated that he would furnish the information to the MP for the Town of St. George which will give him a better understanding of the status of the project.

He expressed that the two bridges and the repaving of the road were the three outstanding pockets of the project and reinforced that the project had not stalled save to the extent of the work to be done on the two bridges.

The Prime Minister explained that there was a vast variation from the figures of the consultant who designed the bridges and that of the tenders who bid on the project which had almost doubled ranging from \$17 million to \$33 million for each bridge.

He stated that the consultant was asked to re-price and review the bids provided by the contractors. He spoke further on the Construction Industry which was unregulated and noted the issues that taxpayers faced in getting value for money.

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen spoke on the tremendous benefit of the project for the residence and other users of that area who suffered over the years. She said she was happy to hear the comments and hoped to get full closure when that part of the work was completed.

IV.	To provide additional allocation for Asphalt Works	-	\$5,000,000.00
V.	To provide additional allocation for Concrete Work	-	\$3,000,000.00
VI.	To provide allocation for the Moliniere Landslip Rehabilitation Project	-	\$3,000,000.00
VII.	To provide additional allocation for Project Design Services	-	\$2,500,000.00
VIII.	To provide additional allocation for the redesigned Seamoons Cultural Centre Project	-	\$2,100,000.00

The Members discussed the Seamoons Cultural Project.

The Prime Minister question whether there was a need for the supplemental Budget.

The Chairman asked for the way forward in terms of approval of the vote.

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance expressed that the allocation should be approved since the submission came from the various Ministries and Departments with an explanation that the monies were necessary to complete the project to year end.

IX. To provide additional counterpart funding for the Natural

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Disaster, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Programme –  
Extreme Rainfall/Gouyave Flood Mitigation Project (CDB-Loan) - \$2,500,000.00

**Agreed.**

**VOTE 35 - MINISTRY OF SOCIAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING &  
GENDER AFFAIR - \$5,669,158.00**

The Chairman introduced the following items under Vote 35:

I. Grenada Home Improvement & Resilience Project – To  
continue the implementation of the House Repair  
and indoor bathroom construction Programmes - \$5,000,000.00

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen said she was happy to see the project continue and said it would be good to see more equity throughout the country.

II. Grants & Contributions - To provide additional subvention to  
Child Protection Authority and other elder care and child care  
institutions - \$485,558.00

III. Out sourced – To accommodate payments for the SEED  
recertification process - \$ 183,600.00

Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters inquired about the recertification process and whether it was for personnel to get the work done or for restoring the \$150.00.

The Chairman responded that it was stated clear enough for the recertification of the process and not increasing the provision.

Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters asked specifically where the money would be spent.

The Chairman stated that it was to pay staff to do the recertification.

Honourable Emmalin Pierre inquired whether the staff was additional support staff or to pay staff for overtime.

The Chairman asked the Minister for Social Services to respond and Honourable Philip Telesford advised that it was for additional support staff.

**Agreed.**

**VOTE 40 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH, SPORTS & CULTURE**

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- \$10,899,498.00

The Chairman introduced the following items under Vote 40:

I.	Admin (SOC 224-Supplies and Materials)	-	\$ 150,000.00
II.	Renovation and Extension Programme Schools	-	\$ 8,249,498.00
III.	T. A Marryshow Community College (SOC 262-Grants and Contributions)	-	\$ 2,500,000.00

**Agreed.**

**VOTE 50 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH, WELLNESS AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS**  
- \$2,300,000.00

The Chairman introduced Vote 50 by the following categories:

I.	Contracts, Outsourcing & Other Services	-	\$ 350,000.00
II.	General Hospital:		
	a. Recurrent Expenditure	-	\$ 350,000.00
III.	Purchase of Medical Equipment	-	\$ 160,886.00

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen asked to be provided with a list of the equipment.

The Chairman advised that he would ask the Minister for Health and Wellness to provide the information which would be shared at the next meeting.

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen said she hoped to get the information before next year.

**Agreed.**

**TOTAL SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION - \$148,990,234.00**

**CAPITAL GRANT \$981,334.00**  
**CAPITAL LOCAL \$105,149,498.00**  
**CAPITAL LOANS \$27,300,000.00**

**RECURRENT EXPENDITURE \$15,559,402.00**

**GRAND TOTAL \$148,990,234.00**

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**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Prime Minister advised that severe weather was expected within the next 24 hours and stated that NaDMA was expected to give further update on the weather.

Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen spoke about an initiative of the Grenada Women's Parliamentary Caucus to source funding for training extended to all Parliamentarians which would have to be used by October 2023 and could benefit all Parliamentarians.

The Chairman thanked every Member for their participation and support at the Finance Committee Meeting, being his first meeting as Chairman of the Committee. He also thanked the Ministry of Finance Staff, the PS and his Budget Officers for the support that they had given and the Clerk and his staff for their support in terms of making sure that the proceedings of the meeting was recorded.

He also advised that lunch was provided at the Parliament's lunch room.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A Motion for the adjournment of the meeting was moved by Honourable Ron Redhead and seconded by Honourable Peter David.

There being no other business, the **Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.**



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Honourable Dennis Cornwall, MP  
**CHAIRMAN**