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NEW CHAPTER IN FINANCIAL SERVICES GOV'T INTRODUCES INVESTMENT FUND BILL

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

An overhaul of the Investment Funds industry brings changes to its outdated regulatory framework; which if left untouched, poses a risk to the country's reputation as a leading financial services sector.

Moving for Investment Fund Bill 2019 in the House of Assembly yesterday, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest said the more fundamental changes include rewriting what an Investment Fund is for the purposes of



▶ D.P.M. and Minister of Finance, Peter Turnquest



▶ Opposition Deputy Leader, Chester Cooper

■ See page 4...

■ See page 4...

DNA CHAIRMAN WANTS ACTION ON FBI PROBE

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

The Democratic National Alliance's (DNA) newly appointed Chairman Omar Smith yesterday urged the government to remove a "blemish" from an FBI probe into potential bribery and corruption with the Bahamas Department of Immigration.

In a release issued yesterday, Mr. Smith said that Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest expressed shock after the latest

Corruption Perception Index from Transparency International.

He said, "while there has been several allegations of conflicts of interest, cronyism and unethical conduct levied against members of the Free National Movement (FNM) administration, the government seemed to have been surprised that The Bahamas ranking had deteriorated since they assumed office."

He added, "it is unfortunate that following the

■ See page 3...

Dames Police Victimization

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

National Security Minister Marvin Dames has disputed the Opposition's claim that a senior police officer is being victimized.

Progressive Liberal Party Leader Philip Davis yesterday charged that a letter from The Office of The Prime Minister has instructed Assistant Commissioner of Police Clarence Reckley to take vacation, after which retirement.

■ See page 4...



▶ Deputy Commissioner of Police, Emrick Seymour



▶ Senior Assistant Commissioner, Stephen Dean

MIN. CAMPBELL PRESENTS GENERATOR KEY TO THE CENTRE FOR THE DEAF



▶ Minister of Social Services and Urban Development, the Hon. Frankie A. Campbell, (left), is flanked by students of the Red Cross Centre for the Deaf in front of the Generac Generator Minister Campbell donated to Administrators, staff and students of the Centre on Wednesday (March 6, 2019). Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development, Michael Foulkes, is at right while School Principal Sonja Rolle is at back. (BIS Photo/Matt Maura)

Works Minister Allays Fears Of Union

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

Works Minister Desmond Bannister has allayed the fears of Bahamas Electrical Workers Union that once Wartsila comes in to manage the new BPL

plants that Bahamian workers will be left behind.

Minister Bannister said he does not know if that is true.

He said, "we have to be

■ See page 3...

Rights Bahamas Urges Gov't To Speed Up Law Enforcement Initiatives

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

Rights Bahamas Vice Chairman Joseph Darville yesterday urged the government to move swiftly to enforce Marco's Law, deploy Marco's Alert, and create a Sex Offenders

Register.

In a statement issued last evening, Mr. Darville suggested that the government take precautions ensuring that the rights of accused individuals are protected.

■ See page 3...





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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

Illegals Fined Nearly \$20,000 In Grand Bahama

BY LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

Nearly \$20,000 in fines for 15 foreign nationals convicted in a Grand Bahama Magistrates Court on Tuesday.

The group consisted of 12 Haitians, two Chinese and one Colombian, who all appeared before Magistrate Rengin Johnson to answer charges of either illegal entry, illegal embarkation or overstaying.

Delise Gedilis, Anne Edith Tavis, Rose Widney Fils-Aime, Venant

Nixon, Brave Odric, Wislyn Alexis, Guenther Elovidor, Vilnert Lauradin were all convicted of illegal entry & illegal embarkation and were fined \$300.00 each on both counts or if they default payment, serve six months at the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services.

Also charged was Kerlande Cerizier who was convicted of illegal entry and fined \$300.00 or in default of payment serve six months in prison.

Exelane Saint Victor

and Kerby Victor both were convicted of illegal embarkation and fined \$300.00 each or in default of payment serve six months of a prison term.

Rodelyn Lamour was convicted of Overstaying and fined \$3000.00 or in default of payment serve nine months at Bahamas Department of Correctional Services.

Limei Zhang and Jie Zhao who were convicted of overstaying and illegal embarkation and were both fined \$3000.00 for overstaying and

\$300.00 for illegal embarkation. Both were also told failure to pay would result in nine months at Bahamas Department of Correctional Services.

Nancy Melissa Rengifo Barreiro was convicted of overstaying and illegal embarkation and fined \$3000.00 and \$300.00 respectively on each count or in default of payment serve nine months.

According to a press statement from the Department of Immigration, fines were

not paid by Guenther Elovidor, Rodelyn Lamour, Limei Zhang and Jie Zhao and they were subsequently turned over to the Royal Bahamas Police Force for due process.

The statement further revealed that on March 3rd officers of the Defence Force notified the Department of Immigration of a suspected human smuggling attempt at Sunrise Marina in Freeport, Grand Bahama, it subsequently led to the arrest of the two Haitian

nationals who were subsequently charged in court, namely Kerlande Cerizier and Rodelyn Lamour.

"Additionally, on March 3rd members of United States Coast Guard vessel 'Bernard C. Webber' turned over seventeen foreign nationals inclusive of four minors suspected to have made preparatory steps to illegally enter the U.S onboard a twenty-five foot fishing vessel that was intercepted in Grand Bahama waters," the statement read.

Prison Fellowship Goes Beyond Prison Walls

BY LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

The Prison Fellowship Bahamas (PFB) is known for its Christian interaction with prison inmates at The Bahamas Department of Corrections (BDOC). But what does the fellowship do outside of the four walls of the prison?

President of the Fellowship, Rev. Anthony Sands, said yesterday in an interview with this Journal, that the ministry goes beyond helping to reform prisoners, and have made a mark in schools across

New Providence.

"Prison fellowship also by extension has a number of other programs; our school program is a crime prevention program.

"We partner or share partnership with the Royal Bahamas Police Force and with the Bahamas Department of Corrections, where we carry a message of crime prevention and certainly a message of hope to our young people letting them know the impact of crime and violence in our community and how it they can stay away from it," Rev Sands said.

And it is not all preach and talk, the PFB also socialize with families, particularly the children of those incarcerated, according to the Secretary of PFB, Elder Cora McPhee.

"We have two major programs where we feature the children of the inmates.

"We have our Back to School Program, where the children of the inmates are presented with back to school materials and also a social is held. We have the children, [who] we meet with and we have a little fellowship with them.

"And then, we also have what is known as the Angel Tree Program which is at Christmas time and again, we feature the children of the inmates where we purchase presents.

"So, of course the public helps us and our volunteer members contribute towards this aid that we are able to purchase gifts for the inmates children. And again, a fellowship and a spiritual enrichment time is also held at the Christmas time to let them know really what Christmas is all about," Elder McPhee said.

McPhee explained that

the whole idea is to keep the family strengthened.

"Prison Fellowship Bahamas is concerned about family connection, and this is why we minister to the children to keep the strength of the family together.

"This is something that we invite you as the public to support. So we expect to hear from you in the month June so we can be prepared for back to school and in the month November so that we can be prepared for our Angel Tree Program," McPhee said.

PFB is an arm of Prison Fellowship

International out of Washington DC. It is a nonprofit organization, but receives some assistance from Government, Corporate Partners and sponsors.

The fellowship visits five different sections of BDOC, particularly maximum, medium, and minimum security, remand facility and of course female section, conducting spiritual enrichment services.

PFB urges persons with a heart for change and service to pick up applications which are always available to the public.

Still no word on the cause of BPL's fire

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

Six months after BPL's Clifton Pier fire, there is still no word on what led to the blaze that destroyed one of the company's engines.

BPL Chief Executive Officer Whitney Heastie on Monday said the board could not give an update as the government had initiated its own investigation.

Mr. Heastie also at the time said the Minister would be the best person to answer.

When pressed on the issue yesterday, Works Minister Desmond Bannister said,

"As soon as we are able to, we are going to let you know what the sources are.

"The FNM government is a government of transparency and there are some matters that I cannot put in the public domain immediately and as soon as I can, I would be happy to do it," Minister Bannister said.

The Minister did not indicate when the investigation would be completed. He did not confirm if those investigations had started.

Last year, BPL's Clifton Pier plant experienced three fires in the same weekend that resulted in serious damages to the plant.

The first fire occurred that Friday at 10:00PM, the second on Sunday morning around 8:00 AM, and the third around 10:00PM that night.

At time the Minister had little to say on the situation at BPL besides that the government will conduct an investigation to determine the cause of the fire.

BPL CEO at the time appealed to the public to conserve energy. No price tag has been placed on BPL's lost as result of the fire.

Bahamas Electrical Workers Union President Paul Maynard claimed that the cost could be around some \$150 million.

PARLIAMENTARIANS CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



► Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture the Hon. Lanisha Rolle pins a purple ribbon on Speaker of the House the Hon. Dewitt Halson Moultrie in honour of International Women's Day at the House of Assembly, Wednesday, March 6, 2019. International Women's Day will be celebrated on Friday, March 8, and is global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. (BIS Photo/Derek Smith)

Min. Campbell Presents Generator Key to the Centre for the Deaf

Minister of Social Services and Urban Development, the Hon. Frankie A. Campbell on Wednesday, March 6, 2019, presented Administrators, staff and students of the Red Cross Centre for the Deaf with a new Generac Generator to ensure "no interruptions in learning even if there are interruptions in the electricity supply".

The donation of the Generac came just two weeks after Minister Campbell presented Administrators, staff and students at the Bahamas Association for the Physically Disabled (BAPD) School with a new Caterpillar generator to perform the same task.

Minister Campbell presented the key to the generator to School Principal, Sonja Rolle. Minister Campbell was accompanied by Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry

of Social Services and Urban Development, Michael Foulkes; Director of the Department of Social Services, Lillian Quant-Forbes; Assistant Director, Disability Affairs Division, Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development, Gillian Bethel; Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the National Commission for Persons with Disability, Maria Kelley and Darroll Hall, Superintendent, Facilities and Fleet Management Division, Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development.

"My job as the Minister; our job as a Ministry, is to ensure that there is inclusion and accessibility for all, and then, to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to set aside their disabilities and

focus on, and enhance, their abilities," Minister Campbell said.

"I sat here this morning moved because the students gave me the impression that I did something special, but I do not feel that way. I feel that the students just got something that they ought to have had. The opportunity to participate in a moment that will result in no interruptions in their learning even if the electricity goes off, makes this a special day, a special moment for me," Minister Campbell added.

The donation of the generator and "hand-over" of the key was in response to Minister Campbell's visit to the school at the opening of the school year, September 3, 2018, and following an "enlightening conversation" with a teacher on gaining the younger students atten-

tion, and the disrepair of the generator that was on property at the time.

"I wanted to be here for the opening of the school year September past, because it is my fervent belief that the students at this school deserve the same opportunities as all of the other students at all of the other schools," Minister Campbell said.

"I was with the younger ones while being taken on a tour of the facilities and I asked the teacher, at this age, how do you get their attention; how do you keep their attention considering that they cannot hear you and she told me that whenever she wanted to get their attention, she would switch the lights on and off. That made a lot of sense to me.

"On the way out, I looked at what appeared to be a generator and asked if it worked. I was told no. And so I begged

the question, well then if there is an interruption in the supply of electricity to the school, how does that teacher get the attention of the students? I immediately came to the conclusion that something ought to be done to correct that problem," Minister Campbell added.

Principal Rolle welcomed the presentation of the new generator.

"It is my belief that the presentation of this generator will go a long way in ensuring that the children's education continues whenever there are interruptions in the service which is very, very important to them," Ms. Rolle said. "More than anything though, it gives us and our children a sense of love and belonging; that we are not here alone; that we are part of the process of inclusion.

"We are overjoyed this morning that this Minister

of Social Services in the person of Mr. Frankie Campbell came in to visit us on that September 3, day because when he left, all of us were different. We recognized that he was someone with a big heart. He said he would remedy the situation with the generator, and true to his word, he did it and we are so thankful to him."

Established in 1964, the Centre was launched to cater to the growing number of hearing impaired children in The Bahamas. It is a joint effort between The Bahamas Red Cross and the Department of Education, Ministry of Education. The Red Cross provides the facilities while the Department of Education is responsible for staffing and the curriculum.

The Centre caters to hearing impaired children from pre-school to Grade 12.

DNA CHAIRMAN WANTS ACTION ON FBI PROBE

Continued from / PAGE 1...

announcement that a Bahamian delegation was headed to Washington to meet the FBI, there has been no update provided by the government. The Bahamas is a country of laws with due regard for

the rule of law.

The party's Chairman expressed that it is extremely important that this matter is given the "utmost attention and urgency" to demonstrate our commitment to good governance, which is a premise that the govern-

ment rose to power from.

The Democratic National Alliance, he said, calls on the government to address this matter without further delay.

He said, "the full weight of the law should be brought to bear on any and all persons that have

been implicated in this probe. This matter should not be politicized or swept under the rug; the chips must fall where they may."

He added, "while the FNM may feel constrained to ignore the findings of the FBI probe

because it feels it has no moral authority to do so following the actions of its members, we submit that such an approach is not an option. The reputation of The Bahamas and the integrity of our people is on the line."

Mr. Smith also advised

the government to "do all within its power" to eliminate any blemish that this probe may have put on The Bahamas.

He said that he and his party awaits the government's response to these allegations and findings.

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Works Minister Allays Fears Of Union

Continued from / PAGE 1...

able to put that in place and utilize the people who know how to do it, that doesn't mean that our people don't have the ability to learn.

"However, these generators are going to be here next month and the Bahamian people have demanded of us a certain level of excellence and a certain high standard in generation.

"That learning curve is not going to happen overnight, all of us are going to have to be patient

and put the mechanisms in place to make a difference for the workers of BPL and for the Bahamian people, but the Bahamian people come first before anybody else," he said.

Back in November BPL signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Shell North America to build and manage a new plant at Clifton Pier, as well as provide 220 megawatts of power.

The Bahama Journal understands that Wartsila will be providing 132 of the 220 megawatts prom-

ised by Shell.

When pressed by the media on why is BPL footing the 95 million dollar bill, Minister Bannister said, "there's a whole plan that BPL has and I'm sure the CEO and the Chairman would be happy to share all the particulars with you."

The Minister maintains that this contract is a new paradigm that is beneficial to the Bahamian people.

He added that the deal will help to relieve the company of that rental generation concern.

Rights Bahamas Urges Gov't To Speed Up Law Enforcement Initiatives

Continued from / PAGE 1...

This means that they remain innocent until proven guilty.

Mr. Darville then advised the Minnis Administration not to give in to a "witch hunt mentality".

He said, "nevertheless, the heartbreaking consequences of a continued failure to act to protect our children are clear for all to see in the awful headlines that mar the front pages on an alarm-

ing regularly basis. At the very least, the public must be given a timeline for enactment of all three initiatives."

The organization's Vice Chairman also indicated that Rights Bahamas applauds the government on extending the scope of Marco's Alert from "mere traditional media, "allowing for broad dissemination across any phone, pagers, emails, fax, loud speakers and secure encrypted messages through mobile

applications and radio."

These efforts, he said, are a long time in coming, adding that the Christie Administration should have done more to implement them.

However, he noted that the government failed to prioritize these initiatives in a timely manner.

He further urged the government to learn from these mistakes and move swiftly to protect the most innocent among us, "as there is not a moment to spare".

Congress Provides Hope for Death Penalty Abolition

'2018 Signaled Positive Steps toward Universal Death Penalty Abolition'

BY DEANDRE WILLIAMSON
Journal Staff Writer

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM - The global call to end the death penalty was made as the 7th World Congress Against the Death Penalty opened its conference in Brussels, Belgium last Wednesday, with hopes of moving closer to the universal abolition of the death penalty.

In his address at the opening ceremony, Together Against the Death Penalty (ECPM)

Director Raphael Chenuil-Hazan said it is his hope that sooner or later, the United Nations secretary general would solemnly announce the universal abolition of the death penalty, introducing a world free of capital punishment.

"It is time for the 21st century to be the century of the universal abolition of the death penalty," Chenuil-Hazan said. "If you doubt this, look at the support for the states for a moratorium at the UN General Assembly. Three

quarters of the states represented in the United Nations support this resolution to ban the death penalty."

The congress seeks to sensitize the more than 1,000 participants, including abolitionists and politicians, about the consequences of the death penalty, as it is not a deterrent to crime.

Chenuil-Hazan pointed out that the abolition of the death penalty is a good political investment for countries wanting to move away from severe

practice of capital punishment.

"It is an act of honour," he said. "No country has backpedaled. Once the death penalty is on the statute book, the countries don't backslide, public opinion follows."

As countries around the world continue to join the trend and abolish the death penalty, 2018 is considered as a year that brought positive changes to this movement.

In her address at the opening ceremony, Frederica Mogherini,

European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, highlighted the positive changes in 2018 that are steps toward the universal abolition of the death penalty.

"In January 2018, Gambia's president declared a moratorium," Mogherini explained. "In August last year, the Catholic Church declared the death penalty inadmissible in all circumstances with no exception, sending in its way a

message to all Catholic believers all around the world, and in October, the state of Washington became the 20th abolitionist state in the U.S. And last but not least, in December the UN resolution calling for a moratorium on executions was voted by the largest majority of countries ever.

"Almost every single month we had a good encouraging news. Let's try to have a 2019 that's even better than 2018 in terms of positive results."

NEW CHAPTER IN FINANCIAL SERVICES

Continued from / PAGE 1...

licensing and regulation and what it means to carry on these businesses in and from The Bahamas.

"This bold piece of legislation seeks to fill those regulatory gaps with a framework of rationalized definitions of fundamental terms and the realignment of fundamentals through critical functions and responsibilities.

"The proposal is to open the industry in key ways that will allow Bahamians greater access to international service providers to enhance their operations and client offerings.

"Simultaneously, it announces that Bahamian

Investment Fund professionals and the industry are ready to compete internationally," the Minister said.

If passed, it is also expected to improve the ease of doing business within the sector, setting the foundation to attract new business.

"The Investment Fund Bill 2019 represents the introduction of a new chapter in Bahamian financial services."

"Its strong compliance with best practices at international standards, comprehensive in inclusive development process and forward looking approach to market the growth and development promise that it is the right

legislation to ensure this chapter is one in which the investment fund industry continues to flourish in The Bahamas."

As of December 31, 2018, there were 749 licensed Investment Funds and 72 licensed investment fund administrators in The Bahamas.

Opposition Deputy Leader Chester Cooper in his contribution to the debate said that the push to broaden the scope of Investment Funds in The Bahamas bodes well for the industry and opens up the market on an international level through a much-needed modernization, to international best practice.

He added that the legis-

lation seeks to modernize the country's investment fund product offering, readying us to compete more effectively with Cayman Islands, for example.

"The bill will allow compliance with EU requirements, thus giving The Bahamas the ability to qualify for an EU Passport, which would enable Bahamian

Investment Funds to be offered in EU member countries, by EU investment fund managers, while also allowing EU or Bahamian investment fund managers to conduct fund management business in the EU and with EU based funds."

"The legislation allows the ability to appoint international administrators without requiring that

they be licensed in The Bahamas."

Mr. Cooper added that passing the bill alone will not be sufficient, he added that the government must invest in promotion.

He also said that the bill represents what can be achieved when government listens, instead of seeking to dictate in an arrogant manner as we have become accustomed.

Dames Police Victimization



▶ National Security Minister, Marvin Dames

Continued from / PAGE 1...

In addition to Reckley, Deputy Commissioner of Police Emrick Seymour and Senior Assistant Commissioner Stephen Dean are also retiring from the Royal Bahamas Police Force.

ACP Reckley is the husband of Former Deputy Director of Urban Renewal Michelle Reckley, who along with three others, was last month charged before a magistrate on charges of fraud. The four accused are all reportedly supporters of the PLP.

"This is not only so for the Royal Bahamas Police Force, let's not make it a police centric discussion.

"We're in the business of getting the service in order, getting it right, and when people reach the

retirement age, they should prepare for retirement.

"Our job when we're in service is to prepare others to take over from us. There is no ill attempt, there's nothing sinister behind what we're doing here, we're readying our agencies for the future," he said.

Minister Dames added that retirement is evident for anyone who would have served his/her time and that he doesn't wish to turn the issue into a political discussion.

"This is something that we're doing and we're doing in every agency and as a matter of fact throughout government.

"What do you do if you have someone with 90 or 100 weeks' vacation that runs into their retirement,

do we continue to go on like we don't know?"

"Like I said, I met with the Deputy Commissioner Seymour and Senior Assistant Commissioner Dean this morning and they're excited, they're prepared."

"They are prepared and ready to go on leave and that leave will run into their retirement."

"This is what it is about, why are we making this a political discussion? I don't know," he said.

When questioned, Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis declined to comment on the opposition's charges, saying only that if Mr. Davis wishes to say something at a press conference, he can also do so in the House of Assembly and that is where he will respond.

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WARNING SHOT



By Jerry Hutchinson

Dismissive Behaviour Towards the United States – Again!

“If history teaches anything, it teaches that self-delusion in the face of unpleasant facts is folly”

Ronald Reagan

Democratic nations have a moral obligation to protect their citizens. Sometimes this is achieved through diplomacy and moral suasion. In other cases, harsh sanctions, public shaming or war is the only solution. We are not yet at stage where the United States feel that we require heavier a hand but, we are certainly at the naming and naming stage; moral suasion appears not to have worked. In any event, the dismissive and abrasive behaviour of our public officials towards our major source of tourism after the issuance of travel advisory's is troubling and dangerous.

America, like Canada and other nations have a moral obligation to warn its citizens of potential danger in places that they visit. For our officials to dismiss warnings of crimes and other criminal behaviour in the Bahamas especially Nassau, without it appears researching the complaints shows a level of immaturity and self-absorption which is becoming a hallmark of our country. Canada also issued an updated travel advisory on 28 February 2019. Canada's warning reads, “Exercise a high degree of caution in The Bahamas due to high rates of crime, especially in Freeport and Nassau.” Cruise Radio.net

Each travel advisory is met with a series of frantic, ill-advised and self-serving press statements which totally ignores the subject of the advisory and focuses on some supposed slight by the issuing country. How dare they make statements and assumptions on crime in the Bahamas? The most recent statements by our officials are real doozies.

Like this one reported in the Tribune on 26th February, 2019.

“Tourism Minister Dionisio D’Aguilar says he expects some level of “push back” from local officials to a recent US travel advisory, as he expressed dismay over the alert’s timing yesterday. Addressing the warning outside of Cabinet, Mr D’Aguilar said local officials believed US Embassy personnel would regard decreases in local crime as a step in the right direction. The Freeport MP, in noting his overall shock at issuance of the alert, said the use of exaggerated verbiage and the alignment of the Bahamas with countries like Mexico and Jamaica did give even more cause for concern”.

Wow! The last time I checked the US was not only the worlds only superpower but also a friend, ally and the source of our economic success. So, precisely what form the threatened “push back” will take is unclear; but remember words have consequences! As to the timing of the advisory, warnings are issued when they are issued. If the timing of the release is inopportune, then so be it; nations will protect their citizens as they feel fit. The US will certainly not be bullied like the cruise lines. Another unfortunate statement by the Minister was this one.

“I mean to lump us in the same category as Mexico and Jamaica; to us seems a little harsh and we thought a lot of the verbiage in the advisory was an exaggeration,” he added. Precisely what is meant by this assertion eludes me. Crime is crime wherever it occurs; crime proliferates in areas where there are “soft targets” such as naïve, vulnerable tourists and citizens. Unfortunately, tourists from many nations have been victims of assaults and worse in the Bahamas. The proximity of the Bahamas to the US makes it the destination of choice. For example, it is English speaking, has good communications, relatively short flight times, familiar foods and a historical US consular presence.

Not to put too fine a point on it, I really don't give a damn about another country's crime; I don't live there. I am more concerned with crime in the Bahamas and how we can mitigate its malign effects on visitors, our citizens, and by extension protect our “golden goose”. It should be readily apparent that the Bahamas tourist related crime rate would mirror that of other popular tourist destinations. So, there is nothing sinister here; we just happen to have the same crime problems as Jamaica and Mexico and, travel advisories are historically issued around the US Spring Break period which is taking place now.

Then, perhaps under the influence of multiple microphones and television lights the Minister doubled down and made this utterance.

“The Ministry of National Security is looking to see exactly how many foreign visitors experienced some sort of crime activity or crime incident. We feel that it is negligible, so we are going to push back a little bit. We are now dialoguing with the US Embassy and we are going to push back,” he said.

We think that even though there may be areas, pockets of crime; really the effect on foreign visitors to a country is so negligible that it doesn't warrant the very strong language that they said in that crime advisory. So, conversations will continue.”

Some thoughts here. We are complaining that tourists are assaulted but the numbers are negligible; what is the basis for this assertion? I would have thought that dialogue with the Embassy would have been the first option preferably before making statements to the media. But, that's just me, my logical mind and

sense of process. This sense of process leads me to my next statement. Shouldn't Bahamian diplomats who are versed in these matters been allowed to discuss the US security concerns with their counterparts?

Putting these aside lets drill down on other parts of the Ministers statements. Bahamians know and by extension visitors to our shores are aware that sexual assaults and robberies are of enormous and ongoing concern for US authorities. Recent reporting in the Nassau Guardian of December 20,2018 revealed that there were 55 rapes as at 18 December 2018, an increase of 12%. We know from international research that sexual assaults and rapes are underreported by victims. There are possibly hundreds of victims in our society and beyond who have not reported crime especially sexual assaults. Victims who urgently require our support and help and who if untreated may fall into despondency, shame, lack of self-esteem, depression and who may self-harm. These victims most likely include citizens of foreign countries as well given the millions of tourists who visit the Bahamas each year.

These statistics align with those of the Women's Crisis Centre which on Thursday 28th February 2019 stated: “The Bahamas has an “epidemic” of sexual violence, according to Director Sandra Dean-Patterson who made the remark as the organisation plans to launch a campaign, #SilentNoMore, to destigmatise sexual abuse and encourage victims to share their stories”.

The reality is that unless a crime is reported to and recorded by police there was statistically no crime committed. Indeed, police crime statistics are so suspect that many countries conduct independent crime surveys to confirm or refute them. The most notable is the British Crime Survey. We have no way of knowing what victims of crime in the Bahamas report when they return home. But their families and friends and US authorities do. As former US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld once said, “We Don't Know What We Don't Know”. It is however certain, that many of these are reported to consular officials located in the country in which their citizens were victimized; so, we must be careful with our words.

In the event, stating that the impact of crime on visitors is negligible is a hope not grounded on facts. Nothing positive will come from engaging in a public war of words with the US each time a travel advisory is issued. There is just too much that we don't know but, foreign law enforcement might. As an example, how do local hotels deal with crime reports especially allegations of sexual assault? Do they as a matter of business practice offer to refund the guests vacation expenses and, do they treat the report with the concern and compassion it deserves? How many victims of crime have left the Bahamas after making a report to private security; return home thinking that it would be forwarded to police and never hear from it again? How many properties, seeking to protect their brand give guests reports on crime short shrift? These are some of the matters unknown to local authorities which may be driving the increasingly strident travel advisories from the US and Canada.

Travel advisories will continue to be the bane of our existence until we correct the problem. Officials must accept that there are unacceptable levels of crime in the Bahamas whose many victims includes tourists; there is no getting around this fact. The United States have a solemn and moral obligation to ensure the health and safety of their citizens at home and abroad; just as we have one to ours. So, why pillory them if they take their obligations more seriously than we do?

What we are seeing being played out here in real time is driven by a fundamental misunderstanding of the United States and its people. Many Bahamians, including this writer attended university in the US. Alas, some did not learn much outside of the contours of their courses. They are informed by reality shows and the like which, are entertainment although part of American culture but, not really grounded in reality. I submit that it is not until you are associated and train with American icons like, Col. Jeff Cooper, Dr Richard Kobetz, G. Gordon Liddy, etc; spend weeks in their presence, engage in conversations, share MRE, s and hardship with other trainees in the field, that you truly begin to understand American culture. Consequently, Bahamians misunderstand and therefore underestimate just how tenacious Americans are. Unlike British Caribbean colonies, which got so-called freedom for the asking, Americans fought for their rights and freedoms. If they feel that their rights have been abridged or that their citizens are being victimized, the US will react and strongly. They are relentless; they will not stop until satisfaction is obtained and matters resolved. So, if we believe that bluster, ill-considered remarks and voluntarism ignorantism will dissuade the US State Department from issuing travel advisories on the Bahamas, we are wasting our time.

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Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

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E D I T O R I A L

THE MISERY INDEX

The misery index is an economic indicator, created by economist Arthur Okun. The index helps determine how the average citizen is doing economically and it is calculated by adding the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate to the annual inflation rate. It is assumed that both a higher rate of unemployment and a worsening of inflation create economic and social costs for a country.

Some economists posit that the components of the Misery index drive the crime rate to a degree.

In the Bahamas, the Misery index is high and rising due to a number of factors. Everywhere one goes, there are numerous complaints of how residents are frustrated by systems that have been broken or a bureaucracy that has created obstacles to progress. Take for instance, the thousands of Bahamians who complain about how they are treated at the Passport Office while seeking E-Passports.

Due to new policies and regulations, people who have had passports for decades are now made to do research to find the birth certificates of their mothers and grand mothers in some cases.

On The Radio Show Issues of the Day on Love 97, a forty-six year old man who never had a passport claims that he has been running around for the last six months trying to get the documentation in place for a passport. His mother was born in Cat Island and is now deceased. His grand mother passed away decades ago and no one can find anything establishing that they were born in the Bahamas. He said he went to a funeral home looking for a death certificate of his mother and was even given the run around there. He is still without a passport.

Then there was a disabled woman who is 79-years old and is seeking a passport. She had all of her documents together, but was told that her marriage certificate had to be updated by the Registry of Records. But she said that the document she presented which was more than 50 years old, was duly stamped by a government official. She had to pay extra sums to get the documents for the authorities.

There are countless tales of woe and hassles that Bahamians get when dealing with Commercial Banks in the Bahamas. Residents are turned away everyday because they are not in possession of passports. Other identification cards like a driver's license or a National Insurance card are not sufficient to cash a check in the Bahamas any longer.

A blind man from Fox Hill went into a bank with his grand daughter to cash a cheque. He was turned away because he did not have his passport with him, even though he had the other documents. This man had to return to his home for his passport in order to get funds to purchase food.

The story that was most sad is about a young man who is on dialysis at the Princess Margaret Hospital. He related that he was in a room with twenty other patients and he needed some assistance. He claimed that there was only one male nurse on the floor attending to them. He was in distress, blacked out and fell to the floor, while hooked-up to the machine with a needle in his arm. He complained about the poor quality of service, lamenting that someone must bring solutions to the problems in that department of the hospital.

To compound these matters, there is tremendous financial distress among the citizenry with no apparent relief in sight for too many. The question is what should happen, how can the misery index be reversed in a society that has become a hard-edged place for so many.

Far too often, public servants are inattentive to the plight of the citizenry and do not take their responsibilities seriously. In addition, rather than making life easier and seek improve the quality of life for the average Bahamian, they apparently seek to find ways to make life more difficult.

Governments are elected to improve the quality of life for the citizenry and must ensure that those who work for the government are sensitive to the needs of the masses.

This calls for Common sense government. Our country needs a government that is more responsive. We need a government and even entrepreneurs in the private sector that produce fewer regulations and more incentives. We need more common sense in dealing with the marginalized and the poor.

That kind of change in government is important for three reasons. First, government needs to change along with the people it serves. After all, we have new challenges in a new global economy. There is a need to have rapid movement of money and capital, and a revolution in information technology. In that environment, the model that we have used to deliver government service must be faster and more responsive to the needs of people.

Second, we need to help people along so that they can live up to the fullest of their potential. Stumbling blocks must be removed. We must not be penny-wise and pound foolish.

Third, we need to cure the anxiety and alienation many people feel toward their government. People will regain confidence in government if we make it work better. We need to make quality management the culture of government, so that no future administration can fail to embrace it. It has to become part of their daily lives, the breathing, working habits of every manager in the government of the Bahamas.

THE BAHAMAS
Sun, Sand, Sea and the
The Bahama Journal
NO BETTER READING

WSC Officials Tour Construction of New Providence Wastewater Treatment Plants and Pumping Stations

Water and Sewerage (WSC) officials led media representatives on a tour of construction sites of wastewater treatment plants and pumping stations in New Providence, Tuesday, March 5.

The Major Works Contract comprises Malcolm Park Major Pump Station, Fox Hill Pre-treatment Facility, Lynden Pindling International Airport (LPIA) Major Pump Station and Flamingo Gardens Major Pump Station.

They are included in the loan agreement signed in December 2011 with Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to fund the implementation of the WSC Support Program – New Providence Water Supply and Sanitations Systems Upgrade.

During a briefing, WSC Chairman, Adrian Gibson explained that the Corporation signed a million (\$18.7) contract with Island Site Development (ISD) for the rehabilitation of small pumping stations and the construction of several wastewater treatment plants in New Providence.

He said WSC embarked on the development of a long term Wastewater Master Plan (2015 to 2035) to address wastewater collection, treatment, disposal needs and the rehabilitation of critical sewerage infrastructure in New Providence.

Malcolm Park Main Pump Station was the first step. According to Kurt Smith, Manager, ISD, the new Malcolm Park Main Pump Station is 65 per cent complete.

The construction of the station is intended for collection from the sub-basin and to pump the wastewater (after screening) into a 600 feet deep disposal well.

It will provide service for customers from Bay Street through Nautica and Vista Marina in the west, to Dicks Point in the east, and Shirley Street from Montague in the east and Frederick Street in the west. Parts of St. Albans Drive, Virginia Street, Delancy Street, West Street, George Street and Marlborough Street are also included.

“This site is very active,” said Mr. Smith. “We are hoping to complete it by end of March. We are also having electrical work done. Everything that we need to have this project substantially completed is

being put in place so that we can have it done by the end of this month.

“We knew that this would be an environmentally sensitive site but from our construction activities nothing went into the water body. We did all of our disposal of water off-site and not in the sea-body. We were in dialogue with WSC and knew that was an ongoing concern so we took every measure not to have anything like that to happen for this site.”

The Master Plan was completed in October 2015 from which it was decided what was to be addressed as a part of the immediate or critical works.

“The long term objective of the Master Plan is to divide the island into three drainage areas with three regional wastewater treatment plants

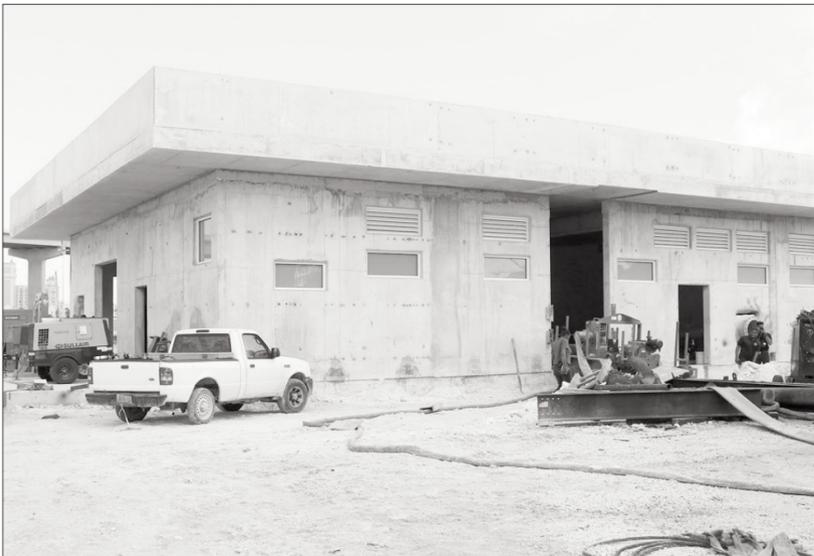
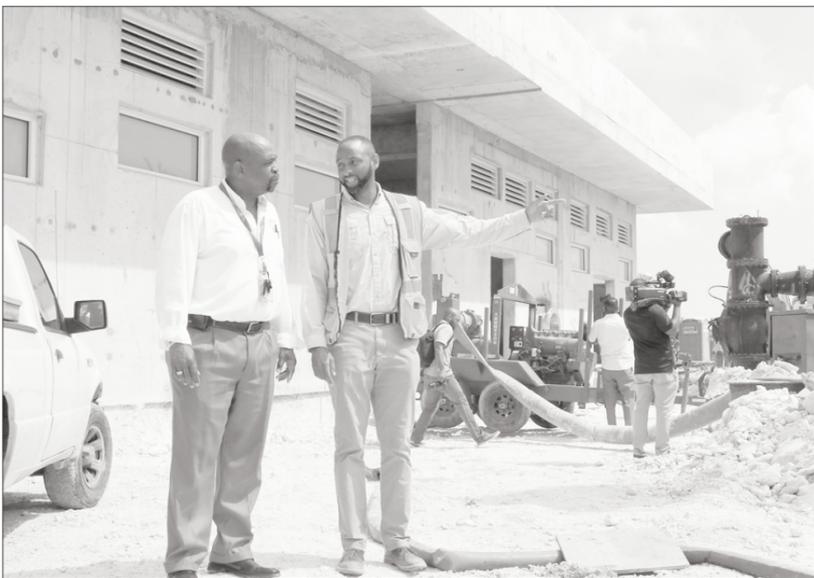
(WWTP). The regional plants will be at the Airport Industrial Park Plant to service the western drainage area, Gladstone Road Plant (under construction) for the central area and the Fox Hill plant (to be constructed in the long term phase) for the eastern area. This will help to reduce maintenance cost to the Corporation and increase the efficiency of the wastewater collection and disposal system,” said Mr. Gibson.

Construction was divided into two parts: small works (from January 2017- January 2018) addressed small lift stations, and major Rehabilitation of 10 sewage pumping stations, installation of 1000 feet of mains, installations, of standby generators, landscaping and other related Works.

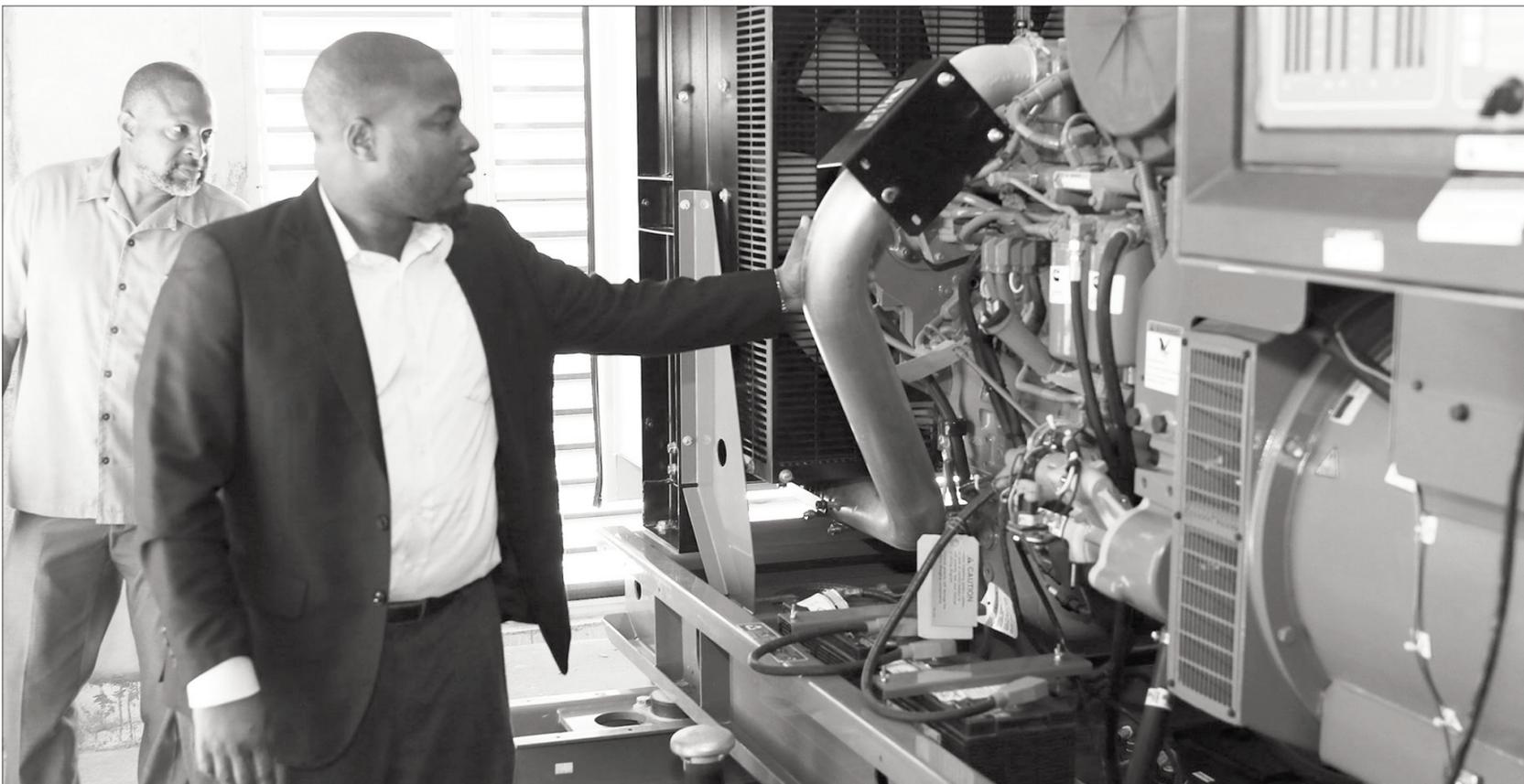
Ten sites were completed. They are Nassau Street, Rawson Square, Supreme Court, Vista Marina, Lewis Street, Fox Hill, Pinewood C, Pinewood Plant, Flamingo Garden C, and Big Pond Stations. The contract also included the procurement of 48 sewage pumps, five standby generators and 28 control panels for use at various locations.

The contract for Major Works was signed on March 30, 2017. Approximately three months later work began and is scheduled to be completed by the end of March.

WSC officials also toured on-going works at the facility in Fox Hill and Major Pump Stations at LPIA and Flamingo Gardens.



► Photos show scenes from the Water and Sewerage tour of Malcolm Park Major Pump Station. (BIS Photos/Patrick Hanna)



► The Hon. Adrian Gibson, Chairman, WSC and MP for Long Island is pictured along with representatives of the Corporation and Island Site Development during a tour of WSC construction sites throughout New Providence. (BIS Photos/Patrick Hanna)

Investment Funds Form a Critical Component of The Bahamas' Financial Services Toolkit

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance the Hon. K. Peter Turnquest said investment funds form a critical component of The Bahamas' financial services toolkit.

"At 31st December 2018, there were 749 licensed investment funds and 62 licensed investment fund administrators in the jurisdiction," DPM Turnquest explained in his address on the Investment Funds Bill, 2019 in the House of Assembly, Wednesday, March 8, 2019.

He tabled the Bill in the House, Wednesday, February 29, 2019, and it proposes to modernise the vital investment funds industry in The Bahamas by introducing an overhauled legal and regulatory framework that is compliant with international standards and best practices, and is replete with improved provisions to protect investors and lay the foundation to attract new

and increased business to The Bahamas.

The DPM said the investment funds industry has been exemplary of Bahamian innovation in financial services, giving birth to the world-leading Specific Mandate Alternative Regulatory Test Fund product in 2003, known by the industry as the SMART fund and, more recently, the Investment Condominium, a groundbreaking, bespoke legal structure for Bahamian investment funds.

"Despite the industry being a centre for Bahamian financial services innovation however, the legislation and regulations governing the sector have become outdated, and now pose a risk to the reputation of the jurisdiction as a world-leading international financial centre."

DPM Turnquest presented the major changes the Bill will introduce.

He noted that among the more fundamental of

the changes the Bill proposes, is to rewrite what an investment fund is for the purpose of licensing and regulation, and what it means to carry on investment fund business in or from The Bahamas.

"The result is that the conditions that would require or trigger a fund or its various operators, managers, related parties, etcetera, to be licensed, have been changed in the proposed legislation."

DPM Turnquest said the definition of an investment fund in the new Bill is a "unit trust, company, partnership or investment condominium that issues or has equity interest, the purpose or effect of which, is the pooling of investor funds with the aim of spreading investment risks and achieving profits or gains from the acquisition, holding, management or disposal of investments."

He said unlike the previous definition, there is no other requirement for a connection or "nexus"

to The Bahamas built into it. Under the provisions of the Bill, licensing as an investment fund is triggered by an entity that fits the definition of an investment fund carrying on, or attempting to carry on business in or from The Bahamas.

DPM Turnquest noted that regarding what it means for an investment fund to be carrying on business in or from The Bahamas, the definition has been expressly included in the proposed Bill and now applies to an investment fund that is incorporated in The Bahamas, or offered for sale to non-accredited

investors in The Bahamas.

He explained that non-accredited investors refers to individual investors, rather than institutions such as banks and insurance companies, who do not meet specified wealth criteria, such as having a net worth in excess of \$1 million, or making an individual income of \$200,000 annually, for example.

"This provision ensures that the triggers for licensing and regulation are oriented to the protection of those most vulnerable, and needing perhaps the greatest pro-

tection from a regulatory perspective – ordinary persons for whom an investment gone wrong as a result of misconduct or other infractions of securities laws will have the greatest financial impact."

DPM Turnquest said, "Also of note, these new definitions mean that investment funds are eligible for licensing based on the activity they conduct or intend to conduct and who will be impacted by those activities, and not on whether or not certain service providers to the fund are located or licensed in The Bahamas."

Retired Florida Doctor Wins A Bahamas Vacation and Painting by Bahamian Artist Jamaal Rolle



► Dr. Rand (centered) is presented with documents for his Bahamas vacation and art painting from executives of the Bahamas MOTA Plantation office, from left to right: Tina Lee, District Sales Manager, Phylia Shivers, Sr. Marketing Executive; Betty Bethel-Moss, Director of Sales and Marketing; and Elke Pettiford, Marketing Representative.

PLANTATION, Florida – March 3, 2019 – Retired otolaryngologist, 85 year old, Dr. Leon Rand, of Hollywood, Florida was the lucky grand prizewinner of a vacation in the Bahamas for two on Silver Airways, along with an acrylic painting on canvas, by iconic Bahamian artist, Jamaal Rolle. Dr. Rand, who registered for the grand prize with the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and Aviation's (MOTA) sales team, during the recent Art Fort Lauderdale

Show, stopped by the MOTA Plantation office this past Thursday, to collect his prize.

Dr. Rand has visited The Bahamas twice before; the first time while on his honeymoon, more than 30 years ago with his then ex-wife. On that visit he recalled a close and surprising encounter in the elevator of the then Nassau Beach Hotel, there he met legendary Bahamian actor, Sir Sidney Poitier. The second visit occurred during a cruise stop in

Nassau, a few years later, while he was a physician on Celebrity Cruise Lines.

"The Bahamas is such a beautiful country and its people are so warm, friendly and courteous," he says. I am still in shock but overjoyed about winning this fabulous prize. I look forward to visiting The Bahamas again real soon, and will do so with my fiancé, Carmen, who actually was the one that took me to the Art Fort Lauderdale Show," he said.



PUBLIC NOTICE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL PLANNING

The public is hereby notified that the Town Planning Committee has scheduled a public meeting for interested persons and organizations to discuss the application on behalf of The Estate of the Late John F. Morley to rezone a tract of land, approximately twenty-three (23) acres in size, for commercial land use.

The subject property is zoned for low-density residential land use and is bounded on the north by John F. Kennedy Drive, bounded on the south by Munnings Road and immediately west of South Westridge Estates.

Please note that the meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 14th March 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the public meeting room of the Department of Physical Planning.

The file (PSA/139/2017) is available for viewing at the Department of Physical Planning, located in the Aventura Plaza on John F. Kennedy Drive, during normal working hours.

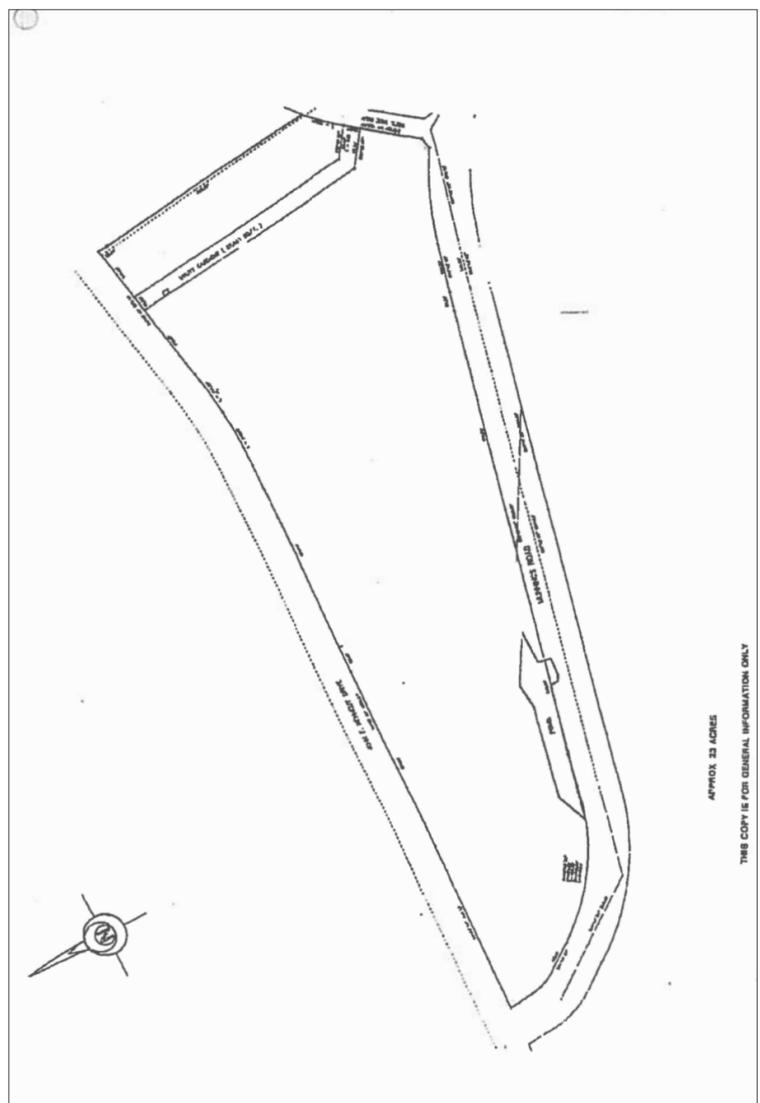
Interested persons and organisations are invited to review the information on file and provide written comments to the Acting Director of Physical Planning within twenty-one (21) days of the date of this notice.

Submissions should be made via P.O. Box N -1611 Nassau, Bahamas or fax (242) 328 - 3206.

Further inquiries should be made to the Acting Director via Tel: (242)322-7550/2 or (242)328-3202 or CHARLESZONICLE@BAHAMAS.GOV.BS

Signed

Charles B. Zonicle
Acting Director of Physical Planning



Bahamas based Company managing \$22.5 million fund for Grand Cayman Hotel



▶ A \$22.5 million loan from Sterling Global Financial Sterling Mortgage income Fund will bridge finance re-development of the 5-star Grand Cayman Grand Hyatt.

A \$22.5 million loan from a fund managed by Bahamas-based Sterling Global Financial will bridge finance the development of the much-anticipated 357-room Grand Hyatt Hotel and Residences on Grand Cayman, a 5-star resort that is expected to deliver additional lure to the famous 7-mile beach on the Caribbean isle.

The announcement was

made this week by Sterling Global Financial Chairman David Kosoy.

“We at Sterling pride ourselves in relationship building and attention to client needs. In practical terms, that means speed of response, assurance of financial sustainability and expertise in execution,” said Mr. Kosoy. “With the proposal for the Grand Hyatt in Grand Cayman, it took our team

10 days from introduction to advancing a first mortgage on the project that will generate major economic thrust to the island and produce a 5-star property with residences as well as traditional hotel rooms.”

The mortgage will be placed through Sterling Mortgage Income Fund which generated an 11.33% annual return on investment in 2018 for

accredited investors in the alternative debt investment asset class.

The Grand Hyatt is one of several resorts Sterling Global Financial funds are assisting with in the region and beyond, including the \$300 million Sterling Hurricane Hole Marina project in The Bahamas, Sky Beach in Eleuthera (Bahamas) and a third in Abaco, also in The Bahamas.

Located on seven prime acres of beachfront, once completed Cayman’s Grand Hyatt resort and residential offering will include a 12,000 square foot wellness spa, three swimming pools, six food and beverage venues, luxury retail and 25,000 square feet of indoor conferences space and meeting areas that will constitute the largest facilities of their kind in the Cayman

Islands.

Headquartered in Nassau, Bahamas, Sterling Global Financial is a diverse financial umbrella corporation that encompasses income and opportunity funds, private banking, trust services, financial administration and wealth management. Sterling funds have earned numerous awards for return on investment and stability.

Dept. of Labour Host Its First Job Fair For The Year

In keeping with the Government’s commitment to create job opportunities for Bahamians, the Department of Labour is pleased to announce that it will hold its first ‘Labour on the Blocks’ Job Fair for the year, this coming Saturday, March 9, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the C.R.Walker Senior High School on Baillou Hill Road.

Staff of the Department of Labour and a number of local businesses will be on hand to meet, interview and hire interested job seekers. As usual the Minister of Labour, Senator the Honourable Dion Foulkes along with senior executives from the Ministry and Department of Labour will be in attendance to meet and assist job seekers.

Mrs. Patrenda Russell-Brice, Deputy Director of Labour commented, “Last year’s ‘Labour on the

Blocks’ experienced a tremendous success in partnering with various local businesses to employ Bahamians in search of jobs. This year the Department of Labour intends to double its efforts to bring about positive successes in the labour market for Bahamian job seekers and we invite both job seekers and employers to join us on this journey to success.”

Mrs. Russell-Brice noted that in the past many job seekers were hired on the spot. She encouraged job seekers who plan on attending Saturday’s ‘Labour on the Blocks’ Job Fair to come fully prepared.

Persons attending the ‘Labour on the Blocks’ Job Fair are asked to bring their NIB smart Card, a valid Government- issued ID such as a passport or voters card and copies of their resumes.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT



Reform Transition Coordinator for Public Financial Management and Performance Monitoring Reform

Institution: Inter-American Development Bank
Country: The Commonwealth of The Bahamas
Project: Public Financial Management and Performance Monitoring Reform
Project Number: BH-L1035
Loan Number: 3340/OC-BH
Process/Bid No.: 3.2.1
Sector: Public Financial Management
Deadline: March 14th, 2019

The Ministry of the Finance (MoF) of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and intends to apply part of the proceeds to payments under the Public Financial Management and Performance Monitoring Reform Project (PFM/PMR) for a Reform Transition Consultant to develop a framework for change management for Budget, Treasury and IT Divisions of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and implement change reform across the project’s four (4) components.

Main activities include:

The main purpose of this consultancy is for the development of a framework for change management for Budget, Treasury and IT Divisions of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and implementing the change reform across the project’s four (4) components. The consultancy is expected to guide employees through the change process and proffer recommendations for resistance management strategies. In addition, the consultancy would have to support the roll out of the transformation and modernization programme of IFMIS which must be structured and aligned in order to address the various areas which could affect staff.

The Reform Transition Coordinator is expected to support the Project Manager, Component Coordinators, International Change Management Experts, and Internal and External Technical Experts, facilitating collaboration within and across teams, to successfully adopt and transition into the integration of systems for PFM and HR management, deliverology, new statistical reforma and procurement reform within the GoTB.

Work with selected training institutions to embed capacity training sessions. The GoTB now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing services. Interested consultants should provide their CVs and information demonstrating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff etc.) The implementation period for the consultancy will be for one (1) year, full-time, with the possibility of being renewed based on satisfactory performance evaluation.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the IDB’s: Policies for the Selection and Contracting on National Consultants financed by the IDB **GN-2350-9** and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in these policies. Interested consultants may obtain further clarification on the technical aspects or scope of services from Denise Dorsett, Procurement Specialist, Ministry of Finance, denisedorsett@bahamas.gov.bs. Expressions of Interest must be submitted by e-mail pfmpr@bahamas.gov.bs Re: Reform Transition Coordinator on or before March 14th, 2019, at 4:30 pm

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