



Negril Chamber of Commerce

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Minister of Local Government Meeting Minutes

Rayon Hotel

August 10th, 2018 @ 11am

Matters Discussed

Solid Waste Management: Mr. Grizzle noted that prior the meeting Minister McKenzie was given a tour of Negril in which looked a lot cleaner than it normally looks because word was out of the Minister's arrival. Mr. Salmon highlighted the need of a transfer station which would lesson the trips the trucks would have to make to Montego Bay and back. The Minister agreed that the dump is far away from Negril, lack of trucks is also a concern, but his Ministry is in the process of securing more trucks, one of which will be designated for Negril. He also noted the level of indiscipline in the way we dispose of our garbage.

The Minister noted that close to one hundred million has been provided in this year's budget to put the first transfer station in Trelawney due to the challenges faced in terms of distance. He said the second transfer station would be located in this part of the island. He also said that between now and the end of 2019 early 2020 there will be the establishment of the second transfer station.

The concern of commercial garbage was raised where it was noted that the national Solid Waste Management Authority collects more commercial garbage than residential garbage in which its first mandate should be that of collecting residential garbage. Commercial businesses should have their own private contractors. The Minister said that one of the schemes of revenues for the NSWMA is to collect commercial garbage in order to sustain itself financially. The Minister advised that the Chamber should engage the business community in terms of properly managing their waste before his team goes to the extent of taking action.

The Minister questioned Mr. Garnet Edmundson of NSWMA the frequency of garbage collection. Mr. Edmundson reported that there is one unit working in Ngeril at the present moment which has a tracking device where the truck may be located at any time. He also noted that there are private units that help from time to time. He said that the collection backlog at times is due to the distance the truck has to travel. He said that the government

truck is able to lift skips while the sub-contracted trucks are not able to; hence, the reason the government truck is used to pick up commercial garbage.

The Minister said that the government will revert the NSWMA in what it ought to be – a regulatory body.

Mr. Wallace suggested that the NSMWA ensure that all commercial entities, no matter how small, have a system in place for the collection of their garbage.

The Minister raised that the government will be launching a project to promote the separation of garbage and recycling. He said that some communities in the corporate area have begun pilot projects and they have been working well.

State of Negril Town: The concern of plans being past was raised and their aesthetics as some buildings have been past and the way they look do not fit within the environment. The Director of Planning based in Hanover advised that the development order speaks to zoning which focuses on the use of the area. She said that while aesthetics is important, order does not speak to restriction of the design of a building. Mrs. Roumel suggested that this is something they need to implement.

The Minister said that a new building bill was passed and the density in terms of height has changed. He noted that the local body here in Negril could have resisted this. Mrs. Roumel noted that plans that were not passed here in Negril actually got passed in Kingston. The Minister noted that the local board has to pass plans before they go to Kingston. It was noted that when there are developments, there should be a notice to build card posted at the location in which anyone has the right to enquire. It was raised that this is not being done, however, it is the mandate of the municipal cooperation to ensure that the sign is displayed.

Ms. Stewart of the Negril Greenisland Local Planning Authority (NGIALPA) noted that they need to be strengthened so that they are able to do more things within the area and not having to go through the municipal corporation as they are stretched as it relates to resources. The Minister noted that he would look into the matter. He further said that the whole development of Negril is on the card which would include extending the boundaries of Negril. This would be for the sole purpose of development. He said that communities spanning Hanover and Westmoreland should be engaged in the discussion as to how far the border should be extended for the development. He said that this [discussion] would come around in a few months.

Mrs. Roumel raised the notion of the New Negril and Old Negril. She said that while we are not against development, what is crucial the issue of the carrying capacity – water, infrastructure, sewage, etc. She also noted that we are killing our reef and once our reef is dead, we have no beach and once we have no beach, we have no business. Mrs. Roumel

raised the concern that there is a lack of housing for hotel staff. The Minister assured that all these issues are currently being discussed in parliament.

The Fruit and Vegetable Market: The proposed design done by the Chamber was displayed. Each stall would have their own solar panel and water harvesting system. Mr. Issa noted that each cubicle would be able to be divided into two or four and would be able to accommodate up to eighty (80) vendors. He said that this could serve as a showcase for the farmers of western Jamaica. It could be an attraction where people could visit. He also said that currently the vendors are all over the place and they are creating an eyesore in Negril. Mr. Issa noted that the land has already been identified and the project cost is estimated to be US\$350,000.00. He asked the Minister to lobby on our behalf to the Tourism Enhancement Fund to get the funding to start building this year or next year. Mr. Grizzle supported this by noting that we already sent a request to TEF and also asked the Minister to push this initiative. The Minister said that the Chamber should send him the plans so that he can have his technical team look at same and once the fundamentals are in place, it will be established.

Negril Municipality: Mr. Grizzle noted that Negril needs its own municipality to manage its own affairs as we are neglected. He said that the time has come when consideration should be given for us being a municipality. The Minister highlighted that to attain municipal status, Negril first has to have all the necessary services that is required such as health services, security, infrastructure, poor relief, cemetery, market, own building department, planner, surveyor, etc. He also said that Negril must be able to operate on its own and generate its own revenue. The Minister noted that the Prime Minister asked him to fast track the municipal status of Negril. Minister McKenzie said in order to do that Negril has to prove its worth of being self-sufficient. He noted that the population size is also taken into consideration which hinges on the notion of expanding the boundaries of Negril.

He said the town centre approach would provide an option of the type of approach that we would want, but we would still retain the privilege we enjoy from Hanover and Westmoreland in terms of the resources and services which are required. The town centre concept is below a municipality where there is a private sector group, civil society group, corporate agency group and a town manager which is called a city manager in other environments. Seed funding for this would come from existing municipalities for two (2) years until the town centre becomes self-sufficient. It was noted that with a town centre model we would be able to organize, advocate, be able to explain, express and act on issues that concerns us, but you must have the cooperation of the people.

Mr. Grizzle said that we are up for discussion as to what may be the best way for us to achieve a certain amount of control of our destiny – what our town looks like and what we do in our town. Our aim is to have a successful resort that would benefit the whole country.