

## Millenium Challenge Account- Belize ('MCA-Belize')

Ordinary Board Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2025, scheduled for 9:00 am

### 1. **Calling of Meeting to Order:**

This regular meeting of the Board of Directors of MCA-Belize was called to order by Mr. Joseph Waight at 9:30 am at the Eleanor Hall Building. Notice of the meeting was previously issued in accordance with the MCA-Belize bylaws to all members of the Board of Directors on February 25, 2025, together with the proposed agenda and relevant materials.

### 2. **Attendance**

The following members were present at the meeting:

- **Mr. Joseph Waight**- The Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment; Chairman; and voting member of the Board.
- **Mr. Carlos Pol**- Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for Economic Development and voting member of the Board.
- **Mr. Jose Urbina**- Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for Energy and voting member of the Board.
- **Mrs. Dian Maheia-Castillo**- Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for Education and voting Member of the Board.
- **Ms. Katherine Meighan**- member of the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry and, as such, a voting member of the Board.
- **Ms. Maria Zabaneh**- member of the Grant Aided Managing Authority of Schools (GAMAS) which has been identified as a civil society and, as such, a voting member of the Board.
- **Mrs. Nadia Caliz**- The President of the Belize National Teachers' Union and a voting member of the Board.
- **Mrs. Adele Catzim-Sanchez**- Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for human development and non-voting member of the Board.
- **Mrs. Kareesh Archer**- member of Autism Belize which has been identified as an academic and educational organization and, as such, is a non-voting member of the Board.
- **Dr. Marcia Bouloy**- Executive Director of MCA-Belize and non-voting member of the Board.
- **Mr. Creig Kinch**- General Counsel of MCA-Belize, Secretary to the Board and non-voting member of the Board

- **Dr. John Wingle**- MCC Resident Country Director and Millennium Challenge Corporation ('MCC') Observer (via Microsoft Teams).
- **Ms. Brenda Maldonado**- MCC Regional Program Officer and MCC Observer (via Microsoft Teams).

The following guests were also present at the meeting:

- **Kayla Gabourel**- Energy Officer, Energy Unit, Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance
- **Jean-Pierre Giroux**- MCA-Belize, Managing Director- Energy Project (present during Energy Project presentation only)
- **Juan Rancharan**- MCA-Belize, Environmental and Social Protection Director (present during Energy Project presentation only)

### 3. **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Joseph Waight proposed that the agenda for the meeting, which was circulated with the notice of the meeting, be adopted. This proposal was unanimously agreed to.

### 4. **Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**

Mr. Joseph Waight proposed the adoption of a resolution to accept the previously circulated minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Board of Directors held on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. The resolution was moved by Mrs. Adele Catzim-Sanchez and was seconded by Mr. Jose Urbina. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

### 5. **Update on Executive Order: "Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid"**

Mr. Joseph Waight provided the Board of Directors with an update on the Executive Order issued by President Donald J. Trump to reevaluate and realign the United States Foreign Aid policy. Mr. Waight reported that the Executive Order has, in effect, led to a ninety-day pause on the activity of the MCC. He also indicated that the Executive Order has resulted in the suspension of any new activities of MCA-Belize and the Compact, as well as the suspension of any payments related to the operations of MCA-Belize and payments to contractors for work done after the Executive Order took effect on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Ms. Maria Zabaneh questioned whether the Government of Belize could take the opportunity during the ninety-day pause to renegotiate the Compact. Mr. Joseph Waight and Dr. John Wingle confirm that the objectives of the Compact are fixed and cannot be renegotiated. Dr. John Wingle indicated that, however, the Board has a role during the implementation phase to determine how to achieve those objectives.

6. **Assumption of Financial Obligations.**

Mr. Joseph Waight advised the Board of Directors that during the ninety-day pause on MCC activity, the Government of Belize has undertaken to finance the operations of MCA-Belize and the payment of specific contractors whose payments have been affected by the pause. Mr. Joseph Waight indicated that the question remained once the pause has been lifted and the Compact resumed, whether the Government would be reimbursed by the MCC for payments it made during the pause.

7. **Adoption of Resolution to further amend the Grid Code Advisor Contract by way of second Amendment to the Contract**

Mr. Joseph Waight moved the adoption of a resolution to amend, by way of second amendment ('Amendment No. 2'), the Grid Code Advisor Contract with Thomas Ackermann ('the Contract') to:

- Include two new deliverables to the base services, namely (1) Draft Distribution Grid Code and (2) Final Distribution Grid Code, with an amount of \$25,600 each, increasing the base service contract amount from \$100,000 to \$151,200.
- Increase the overall contract amount from \$110,000.00 to \$161,200.
- Extend the base services period from six months to ten months.

After debate, the resolution was adopted as follows: "**RESOLVED**, that the Board hereby approves, subject to receipt of final approval and no objection from MCC, the proposed Amendment No. 2 to the Contract..."

The resolution was adopted by the unanimous consent of voting members.

8. **Update on TVET Policy and National Student Assessment System**

Dr. Marcia Bouloy provided the Board of Directors with an update on the TVET Policy and National Student Assessment System. She advised the meeting that the first deliverable was achieved as the draft TVET policy was submitted on February 6, 2025, to the Ministry of Education for approval. Dr. Marcia Bouloy indicated that concerning the National Student Assessment System, consultations with stakeholders were completed in February 2025 and that the consultant, Ginger SOFRECO, is in the process of reviewing the findings of those consultations. Dr. Marcia Bouloy also revealed that MCA-Belize received submissions from the consultant concerning Deliverable 1- the National Student Assessment System Implementation Plan and Deliverable 2- the INSAMS Design

Report and that Education & Workforce Development Specialist for MCA-Belize was in the process of reviewing same.

**9. Update on Energy Project**

Mr. Juan Rancharan, Environmental and Social Protection Director with MCA-Belize, and Mr. Jean-Pierre Giroux, Managing Director- Energy Project with MCA-Belize, updated the Board of Directors on the Energy Project. Mr. Juan Rancharan provided the Board of Directors with an overview of the Energy Project and gave an update on Activity 1- Advisory Services for the Development of New Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers ('IPP'). Mr. Jean-Pierre Giroux provided the update on Activity 2- Grid Code Modernisation and Activity 3- Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework. Concerning Activity 2, Mr. Jean-Pierre Giroux advised that MCA-Belize received parts I, II, and III of the Grid Code and MCA-Belize was in the process of providing comments on same to the consultant. Mr. Jean-Pierre Giroux indicated concerning Activity 3 that the first two deliverables were submitted by the consultant and accepted by the Public Utilities Commission ('PUC'). He advised that the final two deliverables were currently being finalised by the consultant for delivery. He indicated that as the consultant's work will not be completed by March 31, 2025, which is the current end date of the consultant's contract, MCA-Belize will seek a two-month extension of that contract.

**10. Update on BEL Battery Storage Procurement**

Mr. Jose Urbina provided the Board of Directors with an update on BEL's battery storage procurement. He indicated that BEL is looking at capital investment and installation of a 20MW Battery Storage System broken down into two 10MW systems, which will be located at two separate sites. He advised that BEL is currently preparing its bid documents in this regard.

**11. New Business (Any other business)**

There was no new business.

**12. Adjournment**

Mr. Joseph Waight moved for the adjournment of the meeting, which was unanimously accepted by the voting members. The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 am.

**Minutes submitted by:** Creig Kinch

**Minutes approved by:** 