



## PRESS RELEASE

Dateline: St. Johns, Antigua.

**The Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce  
Biannual General Meeting at the Cortsland Hotel  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024,  
16:00 to 17:30.**

Among the agenda items were addressed:

- Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Feb 2022
- Report of the Board of Directors for 2022 - 2023;
- Overview of the Plans for 2024 - 2025;
- Election of Officers and Directors of the Board.

The results of the election were as follows:

| Representative                | Company                             | Position                         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Mrs. Wenise Davis             | Antigua Wireless Ventures (Digicel) | President                        |
| Mr. Mario Colindres           | Goddard Catering Group              | First Vice President             |
| Mrs. Ladesa James-Williams    | CIBC                                | Second Vice President            |
| Mr. Bertram Alexander         | Accuserve Financial Solutions       | Treasurer                        |
| Mrs. Jackie Ferracho-Williams | Flower World Limited                | Director                         |
| Mr. David Kinnell             | Caribbean Alliance Insurance Co Ltd | Director                         |
| Dr. Errol Samuel              | Microcom Ltd                        | Director                         |
| Mr. Sushil Satpute            | Henderson's (2004) Limited          | Director                         |
| Yves Ephraim                  | Pegasus Technologies Inc.           | Immediate Past President         |
| Mr. Martin Cave               |                                     | Executive Director (non-elected) |

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## **Chamber Post Biennial General Meeting on the Economy (ABST)**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024**

**Time: 18:00 to 20:00**

**Cortsland Hotel**

As part of its **Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices Pillar**, following the BGM, the Chamber held a public discussion on the effects of the recently increased ABST on the business community.

The panelist from the **Public Sector**: the Commissioner of Inland Revenue-Mr. Ralph Warner; Director of Prices and Consumer Affairs-Mr. Orrin Steele; Senior Statistician Statistics Division-Mr. Jerry Aska; Debt Manager, Ministry of Finance-Mr. Peter Abraham Jr.

And from the **Private Sector**: Director of Tax Services, Grant Thornton-Mr. Neil Coates.

The discussion was moderated by the treasurer of the Chamber, Mr. Bertram Alexander. The two-hour session was extremely informative, as the audience was very pleased as they were served by the breadth and depth of knowledge of the panelists, from both private and public sectors.

During the question-and-answer session, the audience was thoroughly engaged as they expressed concerns and even disappointments with the process of government's recent increases of the ABST and the amendments of the reporting periods.

There were also concerns about the way the information about the changes is coming to the public: not giving sufficient response time, and the cost of adjusting to accommodate those changes. Concern was aired about the lack of meaningful engagement with taxpayers before increasing our tax burden.

The members of the Chamber recognize our fiscal responsibility to contribute to the maintenance of the services they have but would wish to have better consultation.

The Chamber also wishes to acknowledge the cordial relationship it has with the Inland Revenue Department, as well as other government departments, divisions, and ministries. The Chamber sincerely desires that there will continue to be the type of access which will redound to richer level of consultations, which should enhance the ease of doing business, and so reduce the cost of doing business as well.

The new board looks forward to the term of office ahead as the Chamber seeks to serve the country in a bigger and better way through more engagement by and advocacy of the private sector.

=====ENDS=====

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