

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting
Zoom Conference Meeting ID No. 858 1004 6858
26 October 2022

1. Call to Order. Ms. Katherine Custodio, WWF-Phils, was elected to preside over the meeting. After determining the presence of a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm.

Present:

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| 1. Ms. Katherine Custodio, WWF-Phils | Presiding Officer |
| 2. Hon. Sergio S. Tapalla, LGU- Cagayancillo | Member |
| 3. Ms. Angela Querubin, Saguda Palawan | Member |
| 4. Ms. Glenda Cadigal, PCSDS | Member |
| 5. VAdm Alberto B Carlos PN, WesCom | Member |

Absent:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Gov. Dennis M. Socrates, PGP | Member |
| 2. PENRO Felizardo B. Cayatoc, DENR | Member |
| 3. CG Commo Rommel A Supangan | Member |
| 4. Capt Allan M Javier PN (GSC), NFW | Member |

Guest:

1. LCdr Ronne Riel Grimpola PN
2. CG Ltjg Jemar Talingting

2. Review of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting/Matters Arising Out of the Minutes.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 September 2022 was reviewed and adopted. The matters arising out of the minutes were as follows:

Highlights/Major Concerns	Actions Taken
Update on Phase II, ranger station construction	The PhP58M was transferred by DENR to the Province on 25 Oct 2022
PASu authority to sign MOA with OCEANA plastics campaign	MOA signed by PASu
Cagayancillo share in tourism collection	Awaiting fund utilization report prior to release
7 th AHP Meeting, 30 Oct - 4 Nov 2022	Travel arrangements of participants in order
2022 Donors	Expected funds not yet received
MPR Training	Scheduled for 17-19 Nov 2022
Proposal on temporary closure of TRNP to private yachts	To be presented this meeting
Damage to TMO	Repairs conducted at a cost of 22K

3. Agenda

3.1 Realignment of funds for ranger salaries. The salaries of the four TMO marine park rangers are charged to the grant of the Jimenez Group of Companies (JGC). However, JGC has only released PhP800,000.00 of its PhP3M commitment 2022 and it does not appear that the funds are forthcoming. Since the expense is not in the approved 2022 budget, the PASu requested that TPAMB funds be realigned for ranger salaries for the last quarter.

Grace Barber informed the Committee that since there are funds available from the cost item 'Salaries' which can be used for ranger salaries, only the amount of PhP66,000.00 will be taken from another cost item but still under MOOE, e.g., savings from allowances, utilities, etc. No additional funds outside of the approved 2022 budget are needed.

The Presiding Officer requested a copy of the budget variance for clarity. The same was sent through the chat. Ms. Glenda Cadigal suggested that the workplan of TMO show the budget needed with annotation on the fund source.

The Committee resolved to reallocate savings from the 2022 budget to be used for salaries of rangers because funds from JGC has not been received. The resolution will be presented to the TPAMB for ratification.

3.2 Proposal: Temporary closure of TRNP to private vessels. The PASu reported that there are currently nine moorings for six small boats. At least two more small boats operating in 2023. An average of 10 private boats visit/season, mostly coinciding with peak season of late April to late May. With at most three private boats entering the park at the same time, dive operators complain about a shortage of moorings.

The PASu presented the following as the rationale for the temporary closure of private vessels:

- Low tourism collections from private yachts
- Compete in the use of moorings with regular operators
- High administrative cost, and;
- Low detection rate for non-compliance

VAdm Carlos, WesCom, said that it is the obligation of park authorities to provide adequate moorings and shoulder the administrative cost of managing tourism. He added that it is also the function of the law enforcers to detect non-compliance and private vessel owners should not be penalized by being disallowed from entering the park. Further, if the collection is too low, entry fees may be increased. The PASu said that there were problems with moorings and that there are no longer suitable sites to install new moorings because of the topography of the atolls.

It was agreed that commercial dive operators be prioritized during the peak season. If the maximum number of dive boats have been reached at a given period, TMO may withhold granting an entry permit to private vessels, but this will be on a case-to-case basis only.

3.3 Report re trip to Indonesia. Of her trip to Nusa Penida Indonesia on 7-13 September 2022, the PASu reported that there was minimal government intervention in the management of scuba diving tourism and operations. She added despite of this, the sites are in good condition perhaps because the population is dependent on the same industry, e.g., tourism. She reported that marine plastics are also fast becoming an issue despite of the isolation of Nusa Penida. She said the price to visit Nusa Penida is much less than visiting Tubbataha, hence it is preferred by tourists. The presence of charismatic species, e.g., mola mola and manta rays, is another factor.

3.4 Cagayancillo tourism share. The share of the Municipality of Cagayancillo for 2022 is PhP878,505. The PASu reported that the Municipality has submitted most of the requirements except for the audited Fund Utilization Report, which has been submitted to the COA. She requested for the issuance of a resolution authorizing the release of the share contingent upon the submission of all requirements. The Committee unanimously agreed.

4. Other Matters

4.1 Recognition of WWF-Phils former chairperson. Ms. Custodio said that for the 25th anniversary of WWF-Philippines on 29 November 2022, they hope to honor Mr. Vince Perez, longtime and former Chairperson of the WWF-Philippines Board of Trustees. She proposed the installation of a marker at the ranger station with his name as a way of recognizing his contributions to Tubbataha in terms of fund raising and other means of support. The PASu added that Mr. Perez was very active in Tubbataha and continues to support the park to this day. The Committee unanimously agreed to grant the request.

4.2 TRNP General Management Plan (GMP) and Financial Plan. The PASu reminded the members that the TRNP Management and Financial Plans were sent via email to the members of the TPAMB on 17 October 2022 for comments. The Financial Plan was already approved by the Board and was sent for the reference of members. She requested that comments and suggestions to the GMP be sent before 24 November 2022 so that the same may be presented during the TPAMB meeting.

4.3 Security Measures. VAdm Carlos informed the Committee that the Western Command is beefing up security operations in eastern and southern Palawan. The Command is collaborating with the Naval Forces West and the Philippine Coast Guard in this endeavor.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 pm.

Prepared by:


ANGELIQUE M. SONGCO
Secretary

Attested by:


KATHERINE CUSTODIO
Presiding Officer