

**BOOKER WASHINGTON INSTITUTE
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KAKATA – LIBERIA**

**MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 11, 2008 BOARD MEETING
HELD AT
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
BROAD STREET
MONROVIA, LIBERIA**

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The December 11, 2008 acquaintance meeting of the Board of Governors was held in the Office of the Minister of Education at 3:00 p.m.

I. OPENING STATEMENTS:

Invocation was offered by S. Osiboi Yahmion, Proxy for the Chairman of the Liberia Business Association followed by self introduction of members. Dr. Joseph D. Z. Korto afterward welcomed everyone present and spoke of his delight in having the Board meeting which was too long overdue. He mentioned the accusation by the Margibi Legislative Caucus that the Ministry of Education was playing lip service with BWI, a situation which might have been a result of inadequate information about the circumstances. However he pointed out that he has been working with the Office of the President about writing an official letter of appointment to members of the Board.

II. HOUSE KEEPING:

Dr. Korto further suggested that December 11 be an acquaintance meeting since this was the first time many of the members were meeting one another. Minister Samuel Kofi Woods countered that, since a board meeting was not held for too long, members should at least address pressing issues as may be presented by the Principal. Hence the meeting proceeded by the will of the majority present.

Alumnus Kenneth Y. Best then asked if there was a mandate from the President of Liberia to the Board of Governors. It was then decided that there was a need for a meeting with the President of Liberia so that she formally congratulates the members for their appointment and perhaps a mandate would emerge.

Hon. Peter Korvah suggested the need for continuity in attendance by Members of the Board. Minister Korto subsequently suggested that each member designate a proxy to attend Board meetings and that the proxies should accompany their principals to the next meeting scheduled for January 13, 2009. Hon. Tarpeh of the Ministry of Youth and Sport named Deputy Minister Edwin Tetteh as her proxy.

Emmett Crayton referred to the leadership clause in the 1976 Act which stipulates that the President of Liberia as Chairman Ex-Officio, the Minister of Education as Member Ex-Officio and the Principal of BWI as Secretary/Executive Officer of the Board were ineligible to for elected positions on the Board. In response to a question about the chairmanship, the Principal pointed out that the situation goes back as far as Bishop Bennie D. Warner's Chairmanship. As an elected representative of the United Methodist Church on the Board, he took the board chairmanship to Capitol Building when he ascended to the Vice Presidency of Liberia. This trend continued through the Vice Presidencies of the Late Thomas Wehsen to the Late J. Nicholas Podier and lastly the Late Harry Moniba. However upon his appointment as principal of BWI, Dr. Evelyn S. Kandakai as Minister of Education was chairing the meetings and this tradition continues today.

It was at this point that Minister Woods suggested a review of procedures of the board thus leading to suggestion by Minister Korto for house-keeping to review of the way the Board should be operating. In response to a question about meeting schedules, the Principal indicated that the 1976 Act doesn't stipulate how often meetings should be held. The Principal however informed the Board that the tradition has been to hold meeting at the end of each semester.

Minister Woods was then appointed as the Chairman of a committee to formulate operational procedures/guidelines for the Board. Members include Hon. Kenneth Best, the Principal and the BWIAA.

III. DISCUSSION OF PRESSING ISSUES:

Principal Mulbah S. Jackollie stated two pressing issues:

1. Staff development to replace aged staff and those with virtual obsolete skills and knowledge; and,
2. Inadequate and inconvenient classrooms which needed immediate attention. The situation gave rise to need for proposal to include staff recruitment and training.

1. Staff Development

The Ministry of Education and Arcelor Mittal expressed interest in seeing details of the staff development and recruitment needs for some consideration. The Principal promised to submit a proposal in the shortest possible time. Hon. Arthur Fumba of the Minister of Finance urged that the proposal includes result/outcome statements.

Hon. Kenneth Y. Best expressed a need for the Ministry of Education to grant scholarships to BWI for staff development. Dr. Marcus Slewon, Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education requested that BWI submit priority areas for training for consideration by the MOE. He also indicated that he would like to see draft curriculum for college for revision by NCHE. In response, Dr. Korto mentioned that the BWI Technical College was just in infancy stage as it was just a proposal. Therefore, the Board should concentrate on strengthening the current program. At this point, Min. Woods suggested that whatever is done now should target the long term interest of taking BWI where it is expect to be in the near future. He further suggested public-private engagements as essential for the success of BWI.

Hon. Fumbah agreed and expressed a necessity to engage various corporations doing business in Liberia to strengthen programs/departments at BWI as was done in the past citing the Basic Metal Training of the Machine Shop as an example. On this issue, the Principal reflected on a proposal with Arcelor Mittal about same and stated that BWI is indeed a reservoir of technicians in auto mechanic and building construction trades for Arcelor Mittal's operations. Arcelor Mital and Firestone have provided scholarships for BWI students who in return work for their respective entities either on interns or permanent employees after graduation.

Hon. Kenneth Y. Best asked Min. Woods whether the ILO could be of help to BWI in the process? Min. Woods responded in the affirmative and promised to discuss the issues with and connect the Principal with ILO for direct discussions.

Min. Korto suggested to the Principal to think about the possibilities of recruiting staff from neighboring countries in the short term. The Principal should make inquiry on cost and possibilities for consideration in next fiscal budget.

He admitted that the MOE has been acquiring bilateral scholarships from friendly governments periodically but have awarded these scholarships to GOL ministries and agencies stating the Ministry of Public Works as an example including other technical arms of GOL. He indicated that, with staff development plan, BWI will be considered whenever such opportunity arises in the future.

Hon. Kenneth Y. Best, in consideration of the urgent need for staff suggested that the Ministry of Education as well as the Board be more proactive in soliciting scholarship instead of just waiting for goodwill offers. The Alumni Association of North America (BWIAANA) should be contacted to help in this light (if possible).

Min. Tarpeh informed the Board about other vocational institutions for example MVTC, LOIC, and Don Bosco and was noted by the Board.

Emmett Crayton of BWIAA interjected that the association has been providing support to the Administration in the form of teaching staff but only in the Business Department. However, full time job engagement was not allowing full support. Hon. Best then suggested that a program be set up to accommodate those BWIAANA members who may want to return to assist BWI on short term basis.

Joe Matthew of Arcelor Mittal reflected on the return of people in the diasporas to Liberia due to global financial crisis thus offering an opportunity for tapping on such human resource base.

To conclude discussions on staff development, Min. Korto asked the Principal to submit a staff development package containing two components for consideration by the Board:

1. Training for the long term; and,
2. Recruitment of staff for the short term.

Hon. Fumbah asserted that this package should have no limitation; as such the Principal should state whatever is necessary. The Principal should also concurrently engaged Firestone, LAC, etc as was done in the past for scholarships and other forms of assistance.

2. Classroom Improvement

In response to a question by Min. Korto concerning the capacity and status of the new Science & Technology Building, the Principal responded as follows:

- a. When completed, the building will contain 21 classrooms, 3 science laboratories, accommodate Maintenance Department, host of staff offices and maintenance warehouses,
- b. Basement containing Maintenance Department, three warehouses, generator room and utility room completed,
- c. Completed ground floor containing seven classrooms, a science laboratory space and host of staff offices including gender friendly lavatories
- d. Work was ongoing on casting of first floor level.
- e. Approximately US\$200,000 already spent.
- f. Requesting entities and individuals to adapt sections of the building, eg. Classroom for completion.

Min. Korto concluded that the completion of this building was a challenge to all of us. Min. Wood requested the funding gap on the building which will be provided by the Principal.

Hon. Tarpeh inquired about a website and the Principal stated the site as bwitech.org.

Hon. Fumbah asked about accommodation on campus for foreign or local professionals. In response, the Principal indicated that the former Principal's Building is being partitioned/reconditioned to a Guest House with 10 rooms each with bathroom. There will be general living room and kitchen.

Emmett Crayton suggested that the next Board meeting be held at BWI campus to sight-see and the President should attend that meeting. It was a consensus that the next meeting be held on January 13 to review the operational guidelines. Thereafter the President will be encouraged to attend the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by Min. Korto and closing prayer offered by S. Osiboi Yahmion at 4:20 p.m.

PRESENT AT THE MEETING WERE

NO	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
1	Mulbah S. Jackollie	BWI	06516160	mulbahjackollie@yahoo.com
2	S. Osiboi Yahmion	LIBA	04460870	Myenterprise_lib@yahoo.com
3	Emmett Crayton	BWIAA	06937071	emcrayton@yahoo.com
4	Joseph Matthew	Arcelor Mittal Lib.		josephmatthew@arcelormittal.com
5	Michael Slawon	MOE/NCHE	06660067	dr_slawon@yahoo.com
6	Joseph Korto	MOE	06424978	joekorto@yahoo.com
7	Samuel Kofi Woods	MOL	077014812	kofiwoods@yahoo.com
8	Kenneth Y. Best	Daily Observer	06812888	kennethbest@liberianobserver.com
9	Arthur W.B. Fumbah	MOF	06490120	afumbah@yahoo.com
10	Peter N. Korvah	MOA	06513937	peterkorvah@yahoo.com
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