

First 100 days

Governor John Esha
“World Park – 2023 and Beyond”

An update to the “**FIRST 100 DAYS**” legislative agenda as conveyed in my inaugural speech in January of 2012 which is designed to lay an aggressive and essential foundation to enable us to achieve our desired future.

1. Nomination for cabinet officers.

Twelve (12) cabinet nominees were submitted to the Legislature for Advice and Consent.

❖ Only six (5) of the twelve (12) nominees have received Advice and Consent of the Legislature. They are:

1. The Director of the Department of Education;
2. The Director of the Department of Treasury and Administration;
3. The Pohnpei State Public Auditor;
4. The Administrator of the Office of Economic Affairs; and
5. The Administrator of the Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture.
6. Election Commissioner

❖ Three (3) of the nominees were rejected by the Legislature. They are:

1. The Nominee for the Department of Public Safety;
2. The Nominee for the Department of Health Services; and
3. The Nominee for the Department of Land & Natural Resources.

Based upon consultations with the Legislature, the above nominees have been resubmitted to the legislature for reconsideration.

❖ Three (3) of the nominees are still pending action by the Legislature. They are:

1. The Nominee for the Office of Social Affairs, Mrs. Janet Panuelo of Nett;
2. The Nominee for the Pohnpei Transportation Authority (PTA), Mr Sadorino Martin of Kitti;

3. The Nominee for the Pohnpei State Attorney General, Mr Juda Johnny of Sokehs.

2. **The Executive Reorganization Bill.**

We are currently operating under the Executive Re-organization Act of 2000, with certain minor amendments. Pohnpei and the Pohnpei Government have significantly changed during the past 12 years. The past four year has given me a very good understanding of how the Executive Branch needs to be structured effectively in order to implement the World Park concept.

- ❖ Despite my plea to 8TH Legislature for approval, this august body had file this important bill in its recently held Special Session which I had called to specifically address this issue in addition to a few more pressing issues.

3. **The Tax Reform Bill.**

- The Five FSM Governments, working together over many years, have come up with a comprehensive tax reform package that can lay the foundation for fiscal independence when 2023 arrives. Last Year, the FSM Congress enacted the first piece of the tax reform package, the Unified Revenue Authority Act, and the four States need to pass enabling legislation by April 19, 2012 when the Unified Revenue Authority is scheduled to begin its operations.
 - ❖ At present, we are informed that the Yap, Chuuk and Kosrae Legislatures have already passed enabling legislations with regards to the FSM Unified Revenue Authority (UR) as part of the anticipated tax reform package.
 - ❖ I submitted a Bill to accommodate the April 19, 2012 deadline for Pohnpei State yet this legislation failed to be enacted within the deadline. Recommendations were made by the Legislature to address this legislation in their upcoming Second Regular Session or in a convened Special Session.

4. **Purchase of a Field Trip Ship.**

Last year, I established a Field Trip Ship Special Task Force to review the challenges associated with the replacement of the Micro Glory and proposed the purchase and financing of a Field Trip Ship. The vision of World Park is a unified vision that includes all the people of Pohnpei, including the people from the outer islands, and I have urged the Legislature to act on this issue in a timely manner. This is a great demonstration of the systematic connects fostered by the World Park concept.

- ❖ In 2011, The Special Task Force completed their work and the results were submitted to the 7TH Pohnpei Legislature. The

Legislature was not in concurrence with the proposed legislation due to differing views regarding the manner and method of the financial aspect of the proposed legislation. I will strive and continue to lobby for this important piece of legislation and I am optimistic that I will eventually gain the support of the Legislature's support in this matter.

5. The School Lunch program – I will submit a comprehensive bill to fully implement the school lunch program.

The school lunch program embodies the cross- sector vision of the World Park. It has been proven to help our children do better in school, it is proven that the introducing our children to healthy, local food is the best thing we can do to reduce or eliminate the long- term risks posed by non- communicable diseases, and it will help farmers and fisherman. The school lunch program has been a cornerstone of my platform and it clearly has the mandate of the people of Pohnpei. The time for full implementation is now.

- ❖ The school lunch program is in its 3rd year of service to the public elementary schools. It began its service to 10 elementary schools and has gradually increased.
- ❖ There are 31 elementary schools. At present, the school lunch program is being administered in 20 elementary schools (4,484 students), 3 high schools (2,745 students) and 20 Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centers (606 students) in Pohnpei.
- For the Outer Islands of Pohnpei, one (1) elementary school is serving school lunch and five (5) are without lunch.
 - ❖ Out of the entire school population, only 26% of the students are not getting school lunches while 74% is currently participating in the school lunch program.
 - ❖ 21 out of 25 principals on the main island of Pohnpei support the school lunch program, a 90% overall support.
 - ❖ It is estimated that an amount of \$108,271 is needed for 36 days of solid lunch.
 - ❖ The remaining public schools namely Sekere, Nett, Ohmine, Salapwuk and Seinwar Schools do not participate in the school lunch program for any or a combination of the following reasons:
 - a) Lack of or inadequate kitchen facilities
 - b) Lack of PTA and/or volunteer support
 - c) No cafeteria

- d) Consensus reached by PTA not to participate in the program.

This Administration intends to eventually have all public pre-schools, elementary, and secondary schools included in the school lunch program.

6. Reduction of Government Working Hours from a 40 hour work week to a 30-5 hours Government work week.

The intended purpose of the reduction is to provide an opportunity for additional income for government employees by releasing them early from work so they can do some farming and fishing work to earn extra income to support their families.

7. In addition to the Legislative agenda outlined above, I have reactivated the Economic Planning Commission created by Title 5, Chapter 3 of the Pohnpei Code.

During the one hundred 100 days that have passed, the Economic Planning Commission was reactivated, with members being chosen and was organized. The members of the Commission does not require the advise and consent of the legislature. The core of its mission is focus on Pohnpei's fiscal situation, at the key productive sectors of fisheries and aquaculture, agriculture, and tourism and at critical public infrastructure.

- ❖ The responsibilities of the Commission are outlined in 3 PC 5-103 as follows:

(1) Recommend development priorities of the state government and assist in the preparation of the Integrated State Five-Year Development Plan incorporating these strategic priorities, goals, and programs;

(2) Review the short-term plans and work programs of agencies and departments in the key development sectors and make recommendations to ensure that sectoral implementation is consistent with the overall plan goals and strategies, and to ensure that such implementation is undertaken efficiently with sufficient technical and financial resources and clearly quantified outputs, sectoral goals, and time schedules of implementation; EXCEPT that it is understood that each department and office, and the appointed head thereof, shall be responsible for the formulation and implementation of short-term operational plans and all normal administrative implementation matters within the purview of the department or office, as defined by statute or executive order;

- (3) Monitor plan implementation, providing policy guidance, and recommend adjustments as required to policies, organizational arrangements, priorities, and strategies to maximize the attainment of the plan goals;
- (4) Provide ongoing analysis of the state's governmental services, organization, and personnel, and make recommendations to improve the same;
- (5) Oversee the preparation of the annual operating and capital development budgets of the executive branch and agencies;
- (6) Oversee, generally, the current and proposed major development projects within the state, providing particular analysis and recommendations on all such projects and proposals which require government funding, subsidy or policy and regulatory concessions;
- (7) Recommend policies and strategies to increase the role and productive output of the private sector in the economy of the state;
- (8) Recommend policies and strategies to develop the human resources of Pohnpei, commensurate with the life-style choices of the communities and individuals;
- (9) Review government-funded and -operated services and operations with a view toward reducing governmental financial costs while maintaining necessary services in an economically efficient and equitable manner, emphasizing, in this effort, the revision or development of user fees and charges and the commercialization, privatization or divestiture of government services and assets;
- (10) Recommend state policies and strategies with regard to national, regional, and international cooperation, both government and non-government, to increase external assistance and investment in Pohnpei in a coordinated manner and in accordance with overall state priorities, to create more efficient commercial trade and resource utilization mechanisms, and to improve the delivery of externally funded aid and investment in Pohnpei;
- (11) Review existing tax and tariff laws and administration in relation to development issues, at the state, national, and local levels, and make recommendations regarding the revision of such laws and administration;

(12) Establish mechanisms for regular communication of the activities, recommendations and analyses of the Commission to the other branches of the state government, other governments, and institutions, to the Pohnpei communities and to the local foreign business communities;

(13) Coordinate the compilation and dissemination of data, statistical summaries, and information on all vital socio-economic indicators necessary for monitoring of social and economic development progress and for financial and commercial appraisal and assessment of the Pohnpei economy;

(14) Recommend appropriate legislation to implement the goals and priorities set by the Commission, and establish mechanisms for close and ongoing communications with and submissions of legislation to the Legislature; and

(15) Undertake such other reviews, functions, and tasks as are referred to the Commission by the Governor or the Pohnpei Legislature.

8. Summary findings of the Energy Task Force on the current power crisis in Pohnpei.

- The power generation crisis Pohnpei is currently facing is due to the fact that only 5 of the seven generator in Nahnpohnmal Power Plant are now operational, but at 50% of their installed capacities due to age and lack of proper and timely maintenance.
- The Nanpil Hydro Plant has not been operational to provide backup power for over ten years.
- The Nanpil Hydro Power plant needs immediate rehabilitation and all 7 generators in Nanpohnmal power plant must be replaced with new generators without further delay.
- Approximately 20.5 million dollars is needed for the overall recovery of the power crisis: 7 million immediately to stabilize the current power situation and 13 million for a sustainable long power generation system.
- PUC does not have the financial strength to shoulder the cost of the recovery plan alone.
- Outside assistance is definitely needed and fortunately several companies have indicated their interest to assist PUC with the power crisis but unfortunately the PUC enabling law must first be amended in order to allow independent power producers to participate in the recovery plan.

- Without the needed reform to the PUC law, the crisis will continue and a “Fatal Accident may happen anytime”