



# PUBLIC ENTITY NEWSLETTER

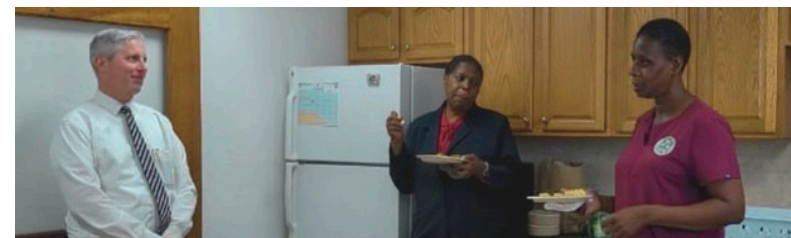


*Issue no. 24*

## ***Public Entity Saba thanks Island Governor Johnson***

On June 30, the Public Entity Saba bid farewell to Island Governor Jonathan Johnson, who has served in the role since 2008. With his departure, Island Governor Johnson also becomes the last Island Governor to have served from since the time of the Netherlands Antilles.

Organizer of the surprise farewell gathering, Sonia Cornet, shared appreciation for Island Governor Johnson who she had the pleasure of working with for 17 years. During the event, she spoke warmly about his kindness, leadership, and willingness to always offer guidance.



## ***Special Island Council Meeting***

Last week, on Thursday June 25, the Island Council also held a special farewell meeting for Governor Johnson. During the meeting, Governor Johnson reflected on his 18 years of service and expressed his gratitude to the many individuals who worked alongside him and helped shape Saba's progress and strengthen its foundations. He thanked the current and former members of the Island Council, Executive Council, Island Secretaries, Island Registrars, and his three Acting Governors.

"To the members of the Island Council, past and present, thank you for your dedication, cooperation, critical questions, commitment to the democratic process, and your service to the people," said Island Governor Johnson.

"To the members of the Executive Council, thank you for the work we have done together, often under pressure and often with difficult choices before us.

To the civil servants and staff who have supported the work of government and the Council over the years, thank you as well. Much of your work is done quietly, but it is essential. The functioning of government depends on the steady commitment, professionalism, and care of our civil servants.

And to the people of Saba, thank you for the trust, patience, support, and honesty you have shown over the years."



## ***Public Entity Saba thanks Island Governor Johnson***

Commissioners Zagers and Heyliger also reflected on their years of working alongside Island Governor Johnson, highlighting his leadership and support.

Island Council members, together with the Island Registrar Akilah Levenstone, shared both personal and professional words of appreciation, recognizing Governor Johnson's integrity, humility, and lasting contributions to Saba.

Island Council member Wilson, who served alongside Governor Johnson longer than any other current council member, reflected on watching his journey and observed him as a young ambassador, who grew into becoming a teacher, school director, and ultimately Island Governor. Wilson also remarked that Governor Johnson's parents would have been immensely proud to see the leader he has become, noting that he followed in their footsteps and that from a young age, he was always committed to serving his community.



To conclude the special meeting, the Island Council presented Governor Johnson with a commemorative plaque featuring the ceremonial Chain of Office worn by the Chair of the Island Council. The gift serves as a lasting reminder of the many council meetings he presided over during his years as Island Governor and Chairman of the Island Council.



## ***Records Management & Archiving Training - SSS islands***

From June 16–19, members of the Archives and Census Department took part in a Records Management training, together with colleagues from Sint Eustatius' and St. Maarten's Archives teams.

The training, led by GO opleidingen, highlighted the growing importance of effective records management and record keeping in today's digital information environment. Modern organizations require archiving systems that are not only compliant and well-organized, but also integrated, digital, and adaptable to these evolving information needs.



These shifting needs position Information Services to sometimes take a more proactive role. In addition, attention was given to the importance of public engagement and how much emphasis is placed on the department's value to the public. The group also explored how archives can be made more accessible and relevant to the community.

The full training programme is expected to be completed by participants by the end of the year, with three additional modules to be completed.

## ***BES Inspiration Week - Culture & Collaboration***

From June 1 to 10, cultural professionals came together for the BES Inspiration Week, organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands (RCN), the Dutch Knowledge Institute for Culture & Amateur Arts (LKCA), the Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie (FCP), and the public entities of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba.



The week provided an opportunity for culture coaches, policy advisors, and other cultural professionals from the three islands to connect, exchange ideas, and experience how culture is lived, preserved, and continuously evolving within each community.

On Bonaire, participants explored the island's cultural heritage through a medicinal plants workshop at Mangazina di Rei, visited the new library to learn about its workshops and community activities, and attended the opening of Luna di Emansipashon (Emancipation Month), which commemorates and celebrates the abolition of slavery.



In Sint Eustatius, the program featured a heritage walk through Oranjestad, cultural evening, a steelpan workshop, an island bus tour, a visit to the Heritage Center, and a historical trail developed through a collaboration between the Department of Culture and Events and STENAPA, highlighting the stories, landscapes and people that have shaped Statia.

Saba's program highlighted the island's rich maritime and cultural heritage through fishing and cooking traditional Saban cuisine with the culture coaches.

Participants also took part in making carnival masks with SHS students, a scavenger hunt of the Adopt-a-Box project, and a guided walking tour of The Bottom and Ladder Bay.



In addition to the island activities, participants took part in workshops focused on youth and talent development, digital thinking and transformation, cross-sector collaboration, and the development of cultural policy.

Reflecting on the week, Policy Advisor for Culture & Education Shaigan Marten emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between the islands.

"By connecting with people in their own communities and seeing their work firsthand, we gained fresh perspectives on our shared goals," said Marten. "This kind of collaboration is extremely valuable for strengthening our partnerships and, ultimately, the cultural identity of each island."



# Black Rocks Harbor Project Hosts Open House

On June 20, more than 100 residents, stakeholders, and visitors attended an open house at the Black Rocks Harbor Project, giving the community an opportunity to see firsthand the progress of one of Saba's most significant infrastructure developments.

Throughout the guided tours, attendees learned about the project's scope, construction process, and the long-term benefits the harbor will bring to the island. The event welcomed people of all ages, reflecting the strong community interest in the project.

Younger visitors also had the chance to climb into the construction machinery, take photos, and learn more about the equipment used on site. Interactive games also made the event both educational and enjoyable, inspiring curiosity about careers in construction and engineering.



Resident Pamela Meijvogel-Whitfield shared how impressed she was by the progress of the project, as she would frequently hike the area with her husband before the project began.

“Seeing how much has been accomplished is truly impressive,” said Meijvogel-Whitfield. “As a Saban, I am very proud to stand here and see this creation of our future of Saba taking place.”

The Public Entity Saba thanks everyone who attended for their enthusiasm and valuable discussions. Together, we continue to build a stronger and more resilient Saba.



## Upcoming Events

- ▶ **Emancipation Day**  
July 1 - 3:00 p.m.  
Princess Juliana Sports Field
  
- ▶ **Inauguration Ceremony of Island Governor Jocelyn Levenstone**  
July 9 - 3:00 p.m.  
Princess Juliana Sports Field
  
- ▶ **PES Health Fair**  
July 22  
Windwardside Parking Lot
  
- ▶ **50 years of Saba Carnival**  
July 24 - August 2  
The Bottom

