



Press Statement

Sandys 360 PATI Request

Lt. Col. the Hon. David A. Burch, OBE (Mil), ED, JP, MP

Minister of Public Works

July 25th, 2019

Good afternoon and thank you for coming.

Much has been written and said recently about the Sandys 360 saga.

Before I head down that road though – I think it is important to remind you of the distinguished history of Sandys Secondary School. Let me first declare my double interest – firstly, I am a graduate of that institution before it was a Middle School and secondly one of the founders of the school in 1927 to provide secondary education for black children in the West - was my great aunt – the legendary Nurse Alice Scott.

She was a registered nurse who founded a nursing home and a tennis club, a suffragette and was one of the first women in Bermuda to run for a seat in Parliament. She became a legend in the west end after co-founding the Sandys Secondary School. She was its driving force for many years, even mortgaging her home in its early years to raise funds to keep the school open.

No doubt that the Sandys 360, Bermuda Sports, Aquatic & Enrichment Center (its full name) was started with those same intentions. A non-profit organization and an active community center that offered a host of health development activities and other community programs. The center essentially catered to the community around the western end of the island. It started in 2002 with the objective of opening a swimming pool, a fitness center and a gym to cater to the students of Sandys Secondary Middle School and was built on the school campus grounds.

In its heyday it grew far beyond a basic community center, enhanced all its facilities and catered to several thousand members. Although it worked on membership, anybody, including visitors could access the facilities by paying a daily rate. A variety of programs and activities were offered for all ages including youth, adults and seniors.

It is important to remind of that historical background since all the noise around the current situation suggests mal-intent – not withstanding it ended in disaster.

I'm going to now catalogue events leading up to today and I ask that particular note be taken of dates:

22 Dec 12 - Trevor Moniz is appointed Minister of Public Works
22 May 13 – Minister holds meeting with Sandys Trustees
14 Nov 13 – Trustees engage KPMG
3 Apr 14 – KPMG Report Delivered
28 May 14 – Pat Gordon-Pamplin appointed Minister of Public Works
15 Jan 15 – Craig Cannonier appointed Minister of Public Works
“On or around the 16th day of December 2015” – PATI Request made
18 Jul 17 – Colonel Burch appointed Minister of Public Works
27 May 19 – Information Commissioners decision issued

The former government rejected a PATI request to release the report stating it was exempt from disclosure because it was provided in confidence.

I will leave it to others to ask why a PATI request lied dormant for almost 3 years without even a whisper - then suddenly in 2019 an order for its release is issued.

I am advised that Trevor Moniz, at the May 2013 meeting, agreed with the Trustees to provide their grant funding if they commissioned KPMG to conduct the review, the cost for which was estimated in the engagement letter at between \$120,000 and \$150,000.

With regard to the total funding to Sandys 360 – I am advised that funding came from a number of government entities – the request was referred to the Ministry of Finance who have access to all Government financial disbursements.

With all that said, I can report today that following further legal advice - consultation with the Trustees and KPMG – I will instruct the Department of Public Lands and Buildings to release the redacted report electronically immediately following this conference. It is a 101 page report that those who wish to print it may do so. The redactions have been carried out in accordance with the directive of the Information Commissioner and all refer to Personal Information exclusions per (section 23 (1) of the PATI Act.

Clearly this is something that 2 OBA Ministers of Works could have resolved rather than the ridiculous circus they have engaged in of accusing the present government of hiding something particularly in light of their recent utterances to release the report.

I am pleased to release the report following the revised legal advice from the Attorney Generals Chambers who conducted the review.

Thank you.