



Social Affairs pilot project



State Secretary of Social Affairs and Labor Tamara van Ark and Commissioner of Social Affairs Rolando Wilson on June 26 launched the pilot project to increase cooperation between the Public Entity Saba and the Social Affairs and Labor SZW unit of the National Government Department RCN. The agreement entails that for a few days per week, the SZW unit will work at the Community Development Department of the Public Entity, providing a one-stop shop window for residents who need social assistance. The State Secretary spoke of a strengthened cooperation. She said that it was good to combine forces because the social assistance and poverty related issues are almost always multi-faceted. Prior to the unveiling, Commissioner Wilson informed the State Secretary about the start-up of the Community Development Department. "The opening of this department was a dream come true," said Wilson. "I am grateful and happy to see that SZW will be in this building so our senior citizens can come here. It is better accessible and they have more privacy," he said. The State Secretary visited the home of Mr. Whitcliff Rawlings and his wife Mrs. Mary Rawlings, and she also went to the home of Mrs. German Nicholson. The elderly told the State Secretary how hard it is to survive on their pension, and how they depend on support of the government. Commissioner Wilson said he was glad to see that the State Secretary truly listened to the problems and showed that she cared. Van Ark visited the Sacred Heart School where she joined a group of pupils and teacher Jarmila Wilson-Berkel to hear about the benefits of the Opportunities for All Children ("Kansen voor Alle Kinderen") program, which includes a healthy breakfast and fruits at school. The State Secretary said that during her visit to Saba in January this year, the people made a "big impression" on her. "People struggle with the high cost of living. I thank them for sharing their stories with me."

Saba package signed



State Secretary of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations Raymond Knops and Commissioner Bruce Zagers signed the Saba Package, a comprehensive administrative agreement to further Saba's development, in St. Eustatius on June 27. The agreement aims to secure and further improve the good cooperation between the Dutch Government and the Public Entity. Through the Saba Package, the two governments commit to deal with the challenges and opportunities on Saba, and to work on these together. According to Commissioner Zagers, the signing of the Saba Package is a good example of a good cooperation between the local government and the national government. "Because of our stable administration and

strong financial management, we were able to negotiate such a package which allows for a different approach for Saba in numerous areas which directly impact our island and people." At the signing ceremony, which was attended by Commissioner Rolando Wilson and State Secretary Tamara van Ark, Zagers emphasized that the Saba Package was a Saba initiative. "This is a document that we can be proud of. Now it comes to putting this package into practice. I see quick wins and topics that have been on the table for some time now." He thanked the Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations (BZK) for its coordinating role and the ministries that supported the individual initiatives. "This is a big moment for us. Saba and the ministries proved before that working together leads to good results for the island. When you have a good cooperation, you can achieve more in the best interest of the people, to improve their livelihood and their security," said Zagers. State Secretary Knops is content with the administrative accord. He applauded Saba's initiative. "This package was a wish of Saba. It is their proposal, and it has the full support of the Dutch Government. Together we commit to make things better for the people." According to Knops, the Saba Package fitted well in the more-for-more approach that he stands for. The Saba Package involves enhancing the island's sustainability and it signifies a practical cooperation. This directly benefits the people. I applaud that. The cooperation with Saba was already excellent and it will continue to be," he said.

Students name water bottling plant Saba Splash, design logo



Zakiya Imani Lake of the Saba Comprehensive School (SCS) and Kaziah Lavia and Trevon Johnson of the Sacred Heart School (SHS) are the winners of the logo and name contest for the new water bottling plant. Saba Splash will be the name that the plant and its products will carry. Commissioner of Water Management Bruce Zagers welcomed the three young people and their parents at the Government Administration Building on July 9 for a short award ceremony. The Public Entity Saba organized two contests: one for the logo and one for the name of the new water bottling plant. Zakiya (14) won the contest to design a logo based on the winning name, Saba Splash. Kaziah (9) and Trevon (12) individually

came up with the identical name, Saba Splash, so both were considered winners. All three youngsters received a Kindle reading tablet and a one-month supply of drinking water when the water bottling plant opens next year. Construction of the building starts later this year. Commissioner Zagers explained in his short address that the water bottling plant will be good for the environment and reduce the amount of water bottles that have to be imported and recycled after use. At the water bottling plant, larger, reusable water bottles will be filled. Zagers encouraged people to accept and support this concept. He congratulated the three winners of the water bottling plant name and logo contest.

New Fire Department Commander



The Island Council paid a working visit to the Netherlands early June. The delegation consisted of Island Council Members Eviton Heyliger, Vito Charles, Hemmie van Xanten, Carl Buncamper and Esmeralda Johnson, and Island Registrar Akilah Levenstone. On June 4 and 5, the delegation was present at the two-day annual conference of the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) in Barneveld. This conference served as a professional development training for the Island Council Members. By means of workshops and training sessions various topics related to the work of an Island Council Member were discussed. On June 6, the delegation met with the Council of State in The Hague. The discussion was centered on how to strengthen the relationship between the Caribbean Netherlands and the Netherlands, and the manner in which The Hague interacts with the islands can be restructured and improved. The Health Insurance Office ZVK in Bonaire, poverty alleviation and the RCN structure were main topics in the meeting with the Permanent Committee for Kingdom Relations of the Second Chamber of the Dutch Parliament alleviation on June 6. All parties agreed that the bureaucracy at the ministries needs to be minimized to a strictly necessary level. National

Albert Gieling is the new interim General Commander of the Caribbean Netherlands Fire Department. He was on Saba for a few days in the week of July 15 to meet with local authorities and to be introduced to the Saba Fire Department. On July 16, Gieling, accompanied by local Fire Chief Julio Every, paid a visit to Island Governor Jonathan Johnson. Gieling, who has been appointed interim Commander per July 1, 2019, said that he was learning about the challenges that the Saba Fire Department and the fire fighters face. Having enough water to extinguish fires is always a challenge, as is getting to certain areas, explained Fire Chief Every. Manpower is a challenge because it is hard to acquire local fire fighters for whom the Dutch language is often difficult. "We also have to look at the fire stations. There are plans to build a new fire station at the airport and we need to upgrade the fire station in The Bottom," said Gieling. He said that for health reasons, it is very important that fire fighters can shower right after a fire due to the smoke and fire residue. Gieling said that as General Commander he would also work on a further strengthening of the collaboration between the Fire Departments in the Caribbean Netherlands and the Fire Departments in St. Maarten, Curaçao and Aruba. The islands cooperate in case of disasters, including large fires and hurricanes.

Island Council visit to the Netherlands



Ombudsman Reinier van Zutphen met with the delegation on June 6. He explained that he is conducting an investigation into poverty in the Caribbean Netherlands in order to provide a better picture of what poverty looks like and how it affects people in their daily lives. On June 7, the Island Council Members met with the Council of Human Rights. Discussed were the exploitation of immigrants, the way elderly people are being cared for and the need for an independent body where people can file a complaint in the area of human rights. Also, on June 7 the delegation attended a workshop highlighting the role of the Island Council facilitated by the VNG. The workshop will continue on Saba late August.

What is the Saba Package?

The recently signed Saba Package contains four main themes: Social Development, Economic Development, Public Order, Safety and Disaster Management, Good Governance. The four themes consist of ten ambitions: eradicating poverty, strong social facilities, lowering the costs of doing business and cost of living, economic impulses, investments in the physical domain, solutions for public order and safety issues, solutions for disaster management issues, the transfer of some tasks from the National Government to the Public Entity Saba (OLS), a service minded and solid government organization, and healthier government finances.

Poverty eradication

-The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (SZW) and OLS start the 'Poverty eradication' pilot, which includes more tailor-made and case specific solutions, strengthening the team on Saba, joint investments of SZW and OLS by working from the Community Development Department.

-OLS and SZW start a labor mediation project for persons with a distance to the labor market.

-OLS drafts a poverty eradication policy, with the input of the different stakeholders, including SZW.

Solid social facilities

-OLS, SZW, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and the Ministry of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sports (VWS) work together to execute the BES(t)4Kids agreement.

-OLS, local partners and the National Government draft an analysis on lacking social facilities.

-VWS implements a number of the Social Support Law (WMO) facilities on Saba such as meal provisions, adapting homes, tailor-made transport and domestic aid assistance.

Lower cost of doing business and cost of living

-The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (I&W), together with Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Maarten, explores options to improve the connectivity.

-BZK and OLS start pilot to reduce the housing expenses via a rental subsidy program for the social sector.

-OLS and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate (EZK) look at ways to reduce the telecommunication cost.

Economic impulses

-OLS continues to promote Saba's image as Unspoiled Queen in the high-end tourist segment. Draft 'Action plan tourism 2019-2021'.

-OLS, EZK, LNV together develop projects to further develop nature parks, land-based and maritime. Including construction, maintenance of trails.

-EZK and RVO advise on the study on new steps in sustainability and the study to diversify and strengthen the local economy.

Investments in and maintenance of infrastructure

-OLS, I&W and Vitens Evides realize a water bottling plant.

-OLS executes the harbor expansion and improvement plan, partly financed by the Regional Envelope, with an advisory role for I&W.

-EZK assists to solve the problems of the first solar park.

Solutions for public order and safety issues

-The Ministry of Justice and Security (J&V) and OLS execute concrete actions to improve public order and safety.

-J&V and OLS will set up projects to reduce drugs dealing and drugs abuse.

-J&V makes capacity available to OLS to assist in carrying out public order and safety tasks.

Solutions for disaster management issues

-The Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations (BZK), J&V, Defense, and OLS work together to implement the recommendations of the evaluation after Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

-I&W, BZK, Defense, J&V and OLS keep working on a further professionalizing of the disaster management organization.

Re-division of tasks

-SZW and OLS evaluate the new system of work permits.

-OLS wants to be responsible for the entire process of work and residence permits. SZW looks at the possibilities.

-SZW and OLS look at ways to increase the role of the OLS in the execution of the special allowance (bijzondere onderstand).

A service-minded, solid government organization

-OLS continues to strengthen the civil apparatus by, among other things, training of personnel.

-OLS, BZK and the Association of Dutch Municipalities VNG keep investing in the quality of government managers and board members. OLS and BZK work on a good governance proposal to strengthen the civil apparatus.

Healthier government finances

-OLS and BZK strive to have structural means in order to cover all structural tasks.

Smoke-free playgrounds

Signs have been put up at playgrounds and parks, asking people not to smoke in these areas. The placing of the colorful signs, depicting happy children faces, are part of the public health strategy to create a smoke-free generation. The law doesn't forbid smoking at playgrounds and public parks, but the Public Entity Saba wants to encourage people to give the right example to children by refraining from smoking. Children copy what they see, and limiting their exposure to people that smoke has been proven to lower smoking rates later on in their lives. The Public Health Department has been providing information at the schools about the harmful effects of tobacco for some years now. Children in grade 5 and 6 are not only being taught about how bad smoking is for their health, but they also learn how they can stand up to peer pressure. The recently published 'Public Health on Saba 2019-2020' document specifically mentions



the creating of more smoke-free places, such as playgrounds, sports facilities and parks. Almost one in four Sabans smoke, which is more than on other Caribbean islands.

Keep Saba Clean a success



Approximately 200 persons came out over a four-week period to participate in the Keep Saba Clean island-wide clean-up campaign. Armed with garbage bags and gloves to protect their hands, groups of volunteers cleaned in and near the villages on Fridays and Saturdays for four weeks, from June 21 up to July 13. Any litter, including large debris, that they came across was collected and put alongside the road, where the Public Works Department picked it up. Among the volunteers was a large group from the Filipino community. Several businesses and organizations took part: Chez Bubba Bistro, Child Focus Foundation/Lipscomb Summer Camp, Do it Best, Juliana's Hotel, Long Haul Grill, Queen's Gardens Resort & Spa, Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF), Saba Electric Company N.V., Saba Reach Foundation, Sea Saba Dive Center and Tropics Café.

Do it Best donated garbage bags in support of the cause, and the SCF not only assisted every week, but also helped in areas that were more difficult to reach, such as the harbor basin and Mt. Scenery. The campaign was a success. In total, over 400 bags of smaller debris were collected and multiple truck-loads of large debris such as galvanize, wood, wire, cable, tires, steel and more. Some of the most unique items found were a tv, a truck bed, an old red Heineken sign, a laptop, a bird house and early 20th century brown glass Clorox bottles. One of the Keep Saba Clean coordinators, Nicole Johnson, said she was very grateful for the assistance of the volunteers and the efforts of the coordinating team. "It was great to see people coming out to help clean. Together, we got lot done and it is all in Saba's best interest," she said. The annual campaign has several objectives. Besides keeping Saba clean and green, which is very important for a sustainable tourism destination, the campaign also serves to prepare for the hurricane season by removing loose lying objects and debris. Thirdly, the clean-up helps to eradicate mosquito breeding places. On June 21 and 22, The Bottom area and Fort Bay were cleaned. On June 28 and 29 the focus was on St. John's and Giles Quarter. On July 5 and 6, volunteers cleaned Windwardside and surrounding area. The last part, cleaned on July 12 and 13, was Hell's Gate, all the way down to Cove Bay.

Agreement to phase out single-use plastics

Saba is one step closer to a ban on the use of single-use plastic products with the signing of the declaration of intent by the Public Entity Saba and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management on July 15. Island Governor Jonathan Johnson and State Secretary Stientje van Veldhoven signed the agreement to phase out single-use plastics, starting next year. Saba is the first Caribbean Netherlands island to do so. The single-use plastics that will be phased out include Styrofoam food containers, plastic bags, cutlery, plates, cups and straws. The Public Entity will draft a plan in 2019



to facilitate the phasing out of single-use plastic products and will be in charge of the execution of this plan, which takes effect in 2020. The Ministry of I&W will make (legal) expertise available to draft this plan and associated legislation, as well as expertise in the area of behavioral change and communication. For this purpose, the Ministry will make 40,000 euros available. Plastic littering is a universal problem and leads to, among other things, plastic soup, large accumulations of plastics in the oceans. Single-use plastics that are imported on Saba are an important source of littering. Island Governor Johnson called the signing of the agreement an “important first step.” The State Secretary said: “Saba has taken the courageous step to stop the use of single-use plastics. Together with Saba, we will strive to end single-use plastics and tackle the plastic soup.” The agreement gives content to the motion that the Island Council adopted in September 2018 which requested the Executive Council to start the trajectory to ban single-use plastics.

Van Veldhoven was updated on the Fort Bay Harbor project. She was given a presentation by harbor project manager Ton van der Plas. Currently, government is exploring the options for an alternative location for the construction of the new harbor at Black Rocks, an area about one kilometer east of Fort Bay Harbor. At the harbor, Commissioner Bruce Zagers provided a general explanation of the harbor operations and activities. At the waste management location, Van Veldhoven was shown the recycling area and the open-air burner waste incinerator. Commissioner Zagers explained the process of waste management and the recycling process of glass, carton, plastics, cans and steel. The State Secretary complimented the Public and the Commissioner on the improvements that have been made in the area of waste management. Van Veldhoven also visited the Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF) where she was informed of the work that SCF does and the different projects that are ongoing, including the coral restoration project.



Sports and Prevention Accord important for Sabans' health



On June 11, Commissioner of Public Health and Sports Rolando Wilson and State Secretary of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sports Paul Blokhuis signed a Sports and Prevention Accord in which parties commit to structurally invest in sports and prevention to improve the health of Saba's residents. The accord, titled "Together towards a healthier Saba" was signed at the Ministry of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sports VWS in The Hague. The ambition of the accord, which runs until the end of 2022, is to achieve a healthier Saba where a healthy life style prevails. A community where children have a good start from which they can benefit from this their entire life, where active adults feel fit, and with elderly people who enjoy many healthy years and can actively participate for as long as they can. With this accord, the Ministry of VWS and the Public Entity Saba want to improve the balance between prevention and care. The Sports and Prevention Accord contains a broad range of measures with concrete objectives and actions in five areas: obesity, problematic alcohol use, smoking and drug use, sports and movement, sexual health, and vital sports and prevention organizations. The measures will be carried out by the Health Department of the Public Entity Saba in cooperation with local organizations. Some of the measures include: additional personnel assistance in the area of public health, prevention and sports, active promotion of a healthy life style, the distribution of fresh fruits at the schools for those children who need this, community sports coaches, special attention for alcohol, tobacco and drugs prevention among the youth, more activities in the area of sports and movement, promotion of anticonception, facilitating an easy testing

of sexual transmitted diseases and structural sex education for youngsters and parents. Commissioner Wilson stated that he was very content with the signing of the accord. "This is an important step forward in creating a healthier Saba where people feel fit," he stated. The Ministry of VWS will make a total of 1.5 million euro available per year for the Caribbean Sports and Prevention Accord for the three public entities Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba. On June 3, Commissioner Wilson and the Public Health Department published the report "Public Health on Saba 2019-2022, A look at Sabans' current health and our vision to promote health further." The report was presented to the public during a townhall meeting on July 10. The Public Health Monitor and Plans for 2019-2022 describes the current health of Saba residents, the major health issues that people face, and lists the items that government will focus on for the coming years: a healthy lifestyle, non-communicable diseases, infectious diseases, a healthy youth. The document, which is available on the website of the Public Entity Saba, has a visual approach and includes many graphics to improve readability.

Carnival schedule presented

Commissioner of Culture Rolando Wilson on July 8 received the official program of 2019 Saba Summer Festival from President of the Carnival Committee Cristal Hassell. Wilson said he was very content that Saba would once again be celebrating its annual summer festival. Carnival starts on July 21 and ends seven days later. This year's theme is "It's you, it's me, it's our festival, our legacy." The first event is the Children's Parade on July 21. On July 22 is the Opening Jump Up, on July 23 the Invasion Night with Triple S Take Over, and July 24, the Junior and Teen Road March Show. On July 25, an international band will be performing, followed by the Calypso Show on July 26. On July 27 is Jouvert and the Grand Parade Day 1. On July 28, Carnival ends with the second day parade, the last lap and the burning of the Momo. Commissioner Wilson said he was grateful that a number of businesses were willing to sponsor this year's Saba Summer Festival. He thanked the promoters for showing interest in the events, as well as the members of the Carnival Committee. He called on the community to come out and celebrate our 44 years of carnival. The St. Maarten radio station Oasis 96.3FM and Saba have teamed up to spruce the interest in coming to Saba



for carnival. On July 19, there will be a raffle on Oasis 96.3FM where people have a chance to win a two-day trip to Saba for two persons. The Saba Carnival raffle is part of the Oasis 96.3 Follow Frenzy campaign. Philipsburg Broadcasting sponsors the Winair tickets and the Saba Tourism Bureau sponsors a two-night stay at Juliana's Hotel for July 26 and 27. Promoter Cornelius Richardson sponsors two entrance tickets for the Calypso Show.

Goat culling program

The Public Entity Saba is taking action against the goat problem through a culling (controlled eradication) program to tackle vegetation loss, erosion and the damage to people's private property. The course of action consists of two parts, a small-scale approach that focuses on inhabited areas for now and a comprehensive approach to clear the entire island of stray goats per January 1, 2020. The Department of Agriculture will start at once with the culling of stray goats in inhabited areas to prevent further damage to private properties. From January 1, 2020, all goats must be registered, tagged and fenced in. Per that date, stray goats throughout the island will be culled, and enforcement will also start on untagged, unregistered and free-roaming goats. Goats cause vegetation loss and erosion. Fed up with goats destroying their yards, people have been asking for a solution. The goats themselves are suffering due to the lack of water and food as a result of the current dry season. Because of this, many goats have died in the past months, not only creating risks in terms of health and hygiene, but also damaging Saba's image as a 'Green Destination'. By law, goat owners on Saba are obligated to tag and register their animals, and to keep them on an enclosed, fenced property. The law also states that goat owners are obligated to provide their animals with the necessary care, such as food, water and shelter.

Furthermore, goat owners violate the law when they allow their animals to walk and graze on other people's property without permission. The destruction that the animals cause is deemed a criminal act by law. Goat owners who want to fence in their animals but lack the financial means, can request assistance from the government. The Public Entity Saba is in close contact with the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) in the Netherlands regarding assistance for the goat culling program. In first instance, the goats will be eradicated through hunting. Other methods of culling are being discussed with experts. Dead goats will be removed and properly disposed of.

Note from the editor

In this bulletin, you will find a selection of some of the articles that have appeared in the media in the past weeks. A lot is happening on Saba, and it is important to share this with the people on Saba and in the rest of the Kingdom. These, and other articles can be found on the website of the Public Entity Saba (www.sabagovernment.com), the government Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/PublicEntitySaba>). The idea is to release similar bulletins in the coming period with other articles that have been published in the media. Questions? Suggestions? Please feel free to contact Communications officer Suzanne Koelega at suzanne.koelega@sabagov.nl