Governor Lemanu Calls Special Meeting

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On Saturday, August 20, 2022, at 9:00am, the Lemanu-Talauega administration held a Special Meeting at the American Samoa Community College Multipurpose Center in Mapusaga.

Governor Lemanu commenced his remarks by introducing the new additions to his Cabinet: “The American Samoa Search and Rescue Agency is responsible for providing search, rescue, fire protection, marine patrol, and emergency medical services, and I have appointed Mr. Galoia Faamasino as Director. The American Samoa Corrections Agency is responsible for the safety and security of persons who are lawfully detained or committed to its care and I have appointed Mr. Tauanuu Senu Faisiota Tauanuu as Director. I would like to commend the Department of Public Safety and the American Samoa Medical Authority for their support in making this possible,” Governor Lemanu stated.

Governor Lemanu highlighted his recent visit to the Manu’a Islands: “This visit was an opportunity to see the situation first hand, and communicate with the residents and village councils in Manu’a. This is a new experience for our people. In Tutuila, we are very fortunate that we do not feel the tremors or hear the rumbling noises from the volcano. However in Manu’a, everyday the families and children feel multiple tremors and they live in fear. I ask for all of you to reach out to them, and support them by any means. There is one district that has made a request to evacuate their families to Tutuila as soon as possible.”

“As we are unceasingly confronted with the impacts of Climate Change and the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is imperative that we continue to collaborate our efforts to keep our communities safe and do what is beneficial for the people of American Samoa. Lieutenant Governor and I wish to extend our deepest appreciation for your diligent services to our people. May God protect American Samoa and continue to guide our leadership,” encouraged Governor Lemanu.

Other mentions by Governor Lemanu included the recent Samoa Heritage Week in Hawaii, Atoa o Samoa Executive Meeting in Samoa, Adopt-a-School Program, Budget Hearings, and other changes for Fiscal Year 2023.
**MANU’A UPDATE**
Director Samana Ve‘ave’a briefed that American Samoa is currently on Advisory Color Yellow, the secondary Advisory Level that indicates a volcano or volcanoes are exhibiting signs of activity. USGS Volcanologist Dr. Natalia Deligne highlighted that the volcanoes are located beneath and/or near Manu’u Islands, and the tremors are continuing. NWS Meteorologist Elinor presented on Tsunami Zones in Manu’u.

**COVID-19 UPDATE**
Director Tuileama Nua outlined the current reports of COVID-19 as of August 15-19, 2022:
There are currently 95 active COVID-19 cases and the Vaccination count is 89.7% of the eligible population who have completed their first dose. Director Nua also briefed that tests are still being administered at the airport for every inbound flight.
Director Nua reported that DOH is currently tracking and preparing a response plan for the recent Global outbreak of the Monkeypox virus.

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
Director Talauega Asaeli announced important dates of events for DOE including the First Day of School that will begin on September 6, 2022. Director Talauega reported that there are maintenance and renovations still ongoing in many schools, and they plan to complete them prior to the First Day of School. Director Talauega thanked the Governor and Cabinet for the Adopt-a-School Program.

**AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
President Rosevonne Pato reported that the first day of instructions will be August 22nd, 2022. ASCC has registered over 800 students for Fall Semester. All facilities are ready for instructions except the Gymnasium that is deemed unsafe. President Rosevonne thanks the Government and Departments for their support during the community outbreak of COVID for the transition to remote method of instructions.

**2022 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION**
Dr. Tapaau D. Aga highlighted the theme for the 6th Constitutional Convention: “Momoli le Savali o fou Faavae i le Atunuu,” which translates to “Deliver the Constitution to the People.” He reported that there will be one hundred twenty nine (129) delegates from the fifteen (15) districts of American Samoa that will participate in the Convention. He also reported that the dialogue of the Convention will be based around the eight (8) amendments brought forward by the Constitutional Review Committee. The Constitutional Convention will begin on August 29, 2022.

After the department presentations, Lieutenant Governor Talauega V. Ale delivered his final remarks. He highlighted the low number of positive COVID cases reported by the Department of Health, and mentioned a few changes to the upcoming Emergency Declaration, “The reported trend are at a comfortable rate, attributing to our decisions to lift some of the mandates regarding vaccination requirements for ASG Employees and for Schools.” Lieutenant Governor encouraged all ASG offices to return to 100% in-office operations and for schools to return to full-time face-to-
face instructions. “I commend cabinet members for their diligence during the COVID-19 response efforts. Although COVID is still here, we are now comfortable to move forward,” remarked Lieutenant Governor Talauega.

In regards to the Manu’a seismographic activity, Lieutenant Governor Talauega reported that there is an evacuation plan for Manu’a in the case of a volcanic eruption or earthquake resulting in a tsunami. “Although we are still collecting information, I advise the cabinet to take the initiative to be disaster prepared for Manu’a,” stated Lieutenant Governor Talauega.

In his closing remarks, Lieutenant Governor announced that there will be a Christmas Program during the Holidays later this year.