

THE HOUSE
FIFTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 1986

FIRST DAY JOURNAL

Monday, January 13, 1986

In accordance with the provisions of Section III of Public Law 3-96, of the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands, the House of the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, First Regular Session, 1986, was called to order at 1:10 p.m., Monday, January 13, 1986, in the House Chamber, Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Honorable Vicente M. Sablan presided.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: This meeting will now come to order. Representatives-elect to the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, this is the date fixed by the Constitution for the Organizational Meeting of the Legislature. The Reverend Monsignor Ben Martinez will lead us now in prayer.

Monsignor Martinez: Let us pray. Father all powerful and ever living God, we do well to sing your praise forever and to give you thanks in all that we do through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. He spoke to me a message of peace and taught us to live as brothers. His message took form in the version of our Fathers as they fashioned a nation where men might live as one. This message lives on in our image as a task for men today and a promise for tomorrow. We thank you Father for your blessings in the past and for all that with Your help we must yet achieve, we pray for these our newly elected officials, fill them with the Spirit of Your Wisdom, may they always act in accordance with Your Will and their decisions be for the peace and well-being of all. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The credentials covering the fifteen seats in the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature have been received from the Board of Elections and are now compiled with the Clerk of the Fourth Legislature. The Clerk has prepared the official roll of the representatives-elect. The names of those persons whose credentials show that they were regularly elected as representatives in accordance to the Constitution and Laws of the Commonwealth, will be called. As the roll is called following the numerical order of the election districts, the representatives-elect will answer to their names to determine whether there is a quorum present. Clerk please proceed.

The Temporary Clerk called the roll, as follows, and all the incumbent representatives and representatives-elect responded to their roll call respectively:

Election District No. 1:

Representative Edward M. Guerrero
Representative Gregorio B. Sablan

Election District No. 2:

Representative William C. Ada
Representative Pedro C. Arriola
Representative Vicente M. Sablan

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Election District No. 3:

Representative Maximo T. Attao
 Representative Francisco DLG. Camacho
 Representative Benigno R. Fitial
 Representative Pedro R. Guerrero
 Representative Juan S. Torres

Election District 4:

Representative Jose R. Lifoifoi
 Representative Benigno M. Sablan

Election District 5:

Representative Howard I. Macaranas

Election District 6:

Representative Victor B. Hocog

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The roll call discloses that fourteen representatives who have been elected has answered to their names, therefore, the quorum is present today. The next order of business is the swearing-in of the members. I have the distinct honor and privilege to present to the House the Honorable Judge Dela Cruz who will administer the oath of office as provided in the Constitution. Everybody please rise.

Judge Dela Cruz: Will all representatives-elect please raise your right hand and repeat after me. "I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitutions and Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Covenant to establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in political union with the United States of America, the applicable provisions of the Constitution, Laws and Treaties of the United States of America and that I will faithfully discharge my duties to the best of my ability, so help me God. You may now be seated.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: We will allow a few minutes for everybody to sign the oath. The next order of business is the adoption of House Rules. The floor is now open for the introduction of House Rules.

Representative Pedro R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker I have here the resolution adopting the Rules of the House of Representatives of the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Do you have enough copies so that the members can be given courtesy copy.

Representative Fitial: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I also have a resolution here relative to adopting temporary rules of the House of Representatives of the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Representative Vicente M. Sablan: Do you have enough copies?

Representative Fitial: I used to. Copies are on their way.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: I will like to declare a short recess.

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The House recessed at 1:20 p.m..

RECESS

The House reconvened at 1:25 p.m..

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The session shall now come to order. Prior to recess there were introductions of the House Rules. I will like to recognize now the Honorable Pedro R. Guerrero. At this time a motion is in order to move for the adoption of the resolutions.

Representative Pedro R. Guerrero: Mr. Chairman, I move that House Resolution No. 1 be adopted as the House Rules of this House.

Representative Benigno Sablan seconded the motion.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: It has been moved and seconded that House Resolution No. 1 be adopted as the House Rules for the Fifth Legislature.

The motion to adopt House Resolution No. 1 was carried by voice vote. House Resolution No. 1 is hereby adopted as the Official House Rules for the Fifth Legislature.

Representative Gregorio B. Sablan: Mr. Chairman I will like to move for a short recess.

Representative Fitial seconded the motion.

Representative Pedro R. Guerrero: Objection Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: There is an objection raise. Can you be specific with your objection. I will like to entertain the motion that we go on recess until February 10th. Do you have any specific time?

Representative Benigno Sablan: 9:00 a.m..

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: There is a motion for recess until February 10th at 9:00 a.m., and it has been seconded. Those in favor of the motion say "yes."

Representative Fitial: I request the Chairman that the motion be voted by roll call.

Representative Hocog: Mr. Speaker there is a division on the motion.

Representative Benigno Sablan: It has been announced Mr. Speaker.

Representative Gregorio B. Sablan: There is a division Mr. Chairman.

Representative Hocog: Division in the chamber arises Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: If that is the concensus of the members that there is a division on the voting whether we will go on recess until February 10th at 9:00 a.m., I will like to ask the Clerk to call the roll please.

Representative Pedro R. Guerrero: Privilege.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Recognize.

Representative Pedro R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker if I am not mistaken, you recognized my motion and it was carried by voice vote. There is nothing else

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to discuss.

Representative Hocog: Privilege Mr. Speaker. There is something to be discussed in this chamber because in this Honorable Body there has been a division within the vote of whether or not we will suspend the election of officers until February 13th or 10th. I will ask the Speaker to call the roll.

Representative Benigno Sablan: Mr. Speaker you have recognized the motion cast by voice vote.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Let us have a short recess.

The House recessed at 1:29 p.m..

RECESS

The House reconvened at 1:35 p.m..

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The session shall now come to order. Prior to recess the motion was offered on the floor whether or not to recess until February 10th at 9:00 o'clock in the morning and the voice vote was questioned by some of the members. There is a question on the floor whether or not there is a division on the voice vote. Pursuant to our rules that we have just adopted I will like to find out how many members have objected to the voice vote that was carried earlier. (Eight representatives raise their hands) If that is the case I will ask the Clerk to call the roll and we are going to be voting on whether or not we will recess until 9:00 o'clock on February 10th.

The Clerk called the roll. The voting result, six voting yes, eight voting no. The motion to recess until February 10th at 9:00 a.m., in the morning is defeated.

Representative Fitial: Mr. Chairman I now wish to take this opportunity to nominate for the Office of the Speaker, the Honorable Jose R. Lifoifoi

Representative Torres seconded the motion.

Representative Pedro R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker I will like to take the opportunity also to nominate the Honorable Vicente M. Sablan for the Office of the Speaker.

Representative Edward M. Guerrero seconded the motion.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Are there further nomination?

Representative Fitial: I wish to close the nomination Mr. Chairman.

Representative Torres seconded the motion.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: It has been moved and seconded that the nomination be closed for the Office of the Speaker. I will now like to ask the Clerk to pass out piece of paper for the members to nominate their speaker. The official count of the vote, for Representative Jose R. Lifoifoi, eight votes. Therefore he is the newly elected Speaker for the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The Chair will like now to appoint Representative Torres and Hocog to escort the newly elected Speaker to the Chair.

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Let us have a short recess before the new Speaker takes over.

The House recessed at 1:45 p.m..

RECESS

The House reconvened at 1:46 p.m..

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The session shall now come to order. At this moment I will like to present a brief statement.

"Fellow members of the House of Representatives, honored guests, friends, it is of great honor for me to accept the responsibilities of the Speaker of this House. It is a responsibility that I accept with great respect for my colleagues and with my sincere commitment to work for the people of the Commonwealth, Northern Mariana Islands. Those of you who know me, you will note that I am a man of few words. I simply wish to say that I am grateful for everyone's support and that I will work fairly for all of the representatives of all islands, delegations from Saipan, Tinian and Rota. With all due respect for everyone in this chamber, I thank you very much for your support.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The Chair will now entertain the motion for the position of the Vice Speaker.

Representative Torres: The open caucus is proud to nominate Congressman Fitial to be the Vice Speaker.

Representative Gregorio B. Sablan seconded the motion.

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Any other nominations?

Representative Vicente M. Sablan: Mr. Speaker on behalf of the new Minority members for the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, I will like to move and close the nomination.

Representative Benigno Sablan seconded the motion.

The motion to close the nomination for the Office of the Vice Speaker, carried by voice vote.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Congressman Fitial is our new Vice Speaker. The floor is now open for the nomination for the Floor Leader.

Vice Speaker Fitial: Mr. Speaker I will like to nominate for the Office of the Floor Leader the Honorable Gregorio B. Sablan.

Representative Torres seconded the motion.

The motion to close the nomination for Office of the Floor Leader, carried by voice vote.

(APPLAUSE)

Vice Speaker Fitial: Mr. Speaker now I wish to nominate for the Office of the House Clerk, Ms. Frances Sablan.

Representative Torres seconded the motion.

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Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Any other nomination?

Representative Vicente M. Sablan: I move that we close the nomination.

Representative Benigno Sablan seconded the motion.

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Therefore Ms. Sablan is the new House Clerk.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The Chair will like to appoint Mr. Ben Cabrera as the temporary sergeant-at-arms. Ben Cabrera please

(APPLAUSE)

Representative Hocog: Privilege Mr. Speaker. I will like to move for a short recess.

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Let us have a short recess.

The House recessed at 1:50 a.m..

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:15 p.m..

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The session shall now come to order. We are down to Item No. 9 on the Order of Business.

Representative Pedro R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker I am privileged to announce by majority vote of the Minority members of this House the appointment of the Minority Floor Leader the Honorable Vicente M. Sablan.

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Congressman Sablan is now the new Minority Leader.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: We are now in the item for the notification of the Senate and the Governor. Therefore, the Chair is appointing Congressmen Guerrero and Macaranas to officially inform the Senate that the House is now organized and ready to conduct businesses. I will also appoint Congressmen Camacho and Attao to officially inform the Governor that the House is duly organized and ready to transact business. Therefore, the House now stands recessed for five minutes.

The House recessed at 2:18 p.m..

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:40 p.m..

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The Chair will like two members from the House to escort the Governor to the Chamber who is waiting in the Speaker's Office. I will like to appoint the former Speaker Ben Sablan and Congressman Vic Hocog to escort the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor.

I will like the House to recognize the presence of our Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

(APPLAUSE)

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Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Governor we are honored that you are here today and I will like to give you the opportunity to deliver a brief remark.

Governor Tenorio: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased that you invited us to join with you this afternoon, members of the House of Representatives, Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, distinguished guests and friends. Congratulations on your being elected representatives for the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The next four years are equally important and challenging. I humbly and respectfully request your support and assistance so that our people will prosper in the years to come. A short time ago, I, like all the members of the House of Representatives of the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, was sworn to support and defend the Constitution and Law of the Commonwealth, the Covenant and applicable provision of the United States Constitution, U.S. Laws and Treaties. These are not empty words without meaning. The Body of Laws referred to have long and rich histories. Together they form a fundamental system of laws and set us apart from other systems of government. We are truly a government of laws and not a government of men and women. You as law makers have the awesome responsibilities with wisdom, compassion and most of all with time and understanding for your fellowmen. I stand ready to work with you and cooperate with you in any way possible and wish you all a very successful two years. Once again, I will like to extend our sincere appreciation for inviting us to join with you on this very special occasion. Si Yuus Maase.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The Chair will like to recognize the presence of the Mayor of Saipan, Mayor Ada.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The Chair also recognizes the presence of Mayor-elect Quichocho from Tinian.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: I will also like to recognize the presence of all the members' wives in the House Chamber.

(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Lieutenant Governor will you like to say a few words?

Lieutenant Governor Tenorio: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I just want to be very brief. I want to also extend my personal congratulations to the new officers of the Fifth House of Representatives and I will also like to pledge my genuine interest to ensure that we continue to establish a clear communication in the Executive and your House, so that when both Houses are communicating we will do our job right. We have a lot of difficult tasks ahead of us. I just want to mention that you will be involved in one form or another in helping to negotiate outstanding businesses with the United States as well as to dwell into the appropriate ways to extend the seven years of financial assistance through the generous contribution of the United States. We have a difficult task to provide the proper mandate and guidance in expending the funds and insuring that the people of the Commonwealth ultimately benefit. Again, I want to extend my personal congratulations to all of you, republicans and democrats alike, and if you are an independent, the same goes to you. I pledge my full support and my door and I am sure that the Governor's door will always be open. I am sure that there is no block in us communicating so that we can resolve our problems in the future. Again, thank you and may I look forward to visiting with you. Thank you.

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(APPLAUSE)

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: Let us move down to Item No. 12 on our Order of Business. Are there any members who will like to make a statement?

Representative Vicente M. Sablan: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I will like to make a special announcement to all the members, the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor and also all of those who are present here today, to a luncheon at the Legislature Pala Pala, near the beach. I will like to invite everybody on behalf of the new Speaker since he has given me this privilege to make this announcement. With that I move at this time Mr. Speaker that we adjourn subject to the call of the Chair so that we can enjoy our lunch that has been prepared for all of us.

Representative Torres seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn subject to the call of the Chair, carried by voice vote.

The House stands arjourn at 2:45 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted,


Frances Sablan
House Clerk

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIFTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING - JANUARY 13, 1986

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order 1:10 p.m.
2. Opening Prayer
3. Call of the Roll by Election Districts
4. Swearing-In of Members
5. Adoption of House Rules
Recess 1:20 p.m. Reconvene 1:25 p.m.
6. Examination of Credentials
7. Election of Speaker
Recess 1:29 p.m. Reconvene 1:35 p.m.
8. Election of Vice Speaker/Floor Leader/Clerk
9. Appointment of Sergeant-At-Arms
Recess 1:45 p.m. Reconvene 1:46 p.m. Ben Cabrera
10. Announcement of Party Officers
Recess 1:50 p.m. Reconvene 2:15 p.m.
11. Notification of Senate and Governor
Vicente M. Sablan
12. Communications
Recess 2:48 p.m. Reconvene 2:40 p.m.
13. Statements by Members
14. Procedural Motions
15. Announcements
16. Adjournment

2:45 p.m.

January 13, 1986

Organizational Meeting

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: This meeting will come to order. Representatives-elect to the 5th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, this is the date fix by the Constitution for the Organizational Meeting of the Legislature. The Reverend Monsignor Ben Martinez will lead us now in prayer.

Monsignor Martinez: Let us pray. Father all powerful and ever living God we do well to sing your praise forever and to give you thanks in all we do through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. He spoke to men a message of peace and taught us to live as brothers. His message took form in the version of our Fathers as they fashion a nation where men might live as one. This message lives on in our image as a task for men today and a promise for tomorrow. We thank you Father for your blessings in the past and for all that with Your help we must yet achieve, we pray for these our newly elected officials, fill them with the Spirit of your Wisdom, may they always act in accordance with your Will and their decisions be for the peace and well-being of all. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The credentials covering the 15th seats in the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature have been received from the Board of Elections and are now compiled with the Clerk of the Fourth Legislature. The Clerk has prepared the official roll of the representatives-elect. The names of those persons whose credentials show that they were regularly elected as representatives in accordance to the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth, will be call. At the roll is call following the numerical order of the election districts, the representatives-elect will please answer to their names to determine whether there is a quorum present. Clerk please proceed.

The Clerk called the roll according to the numerical order of the election districts. Fourteen members were present.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The roll call disclosed that fourteen representatives who have been elected have answered to their names, therefore, the quorum is present today.

The next order of business is the swearing of members. I have the distinct honor and privilege to present to the House the Honorable Judge Dela Cruz who will administer the oath of office as provided in the Constitution. Everybody please rise.

Judge Dela Cruz: Will all representatives-elect please raise your right hand and repeat after me. "I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitutions and Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands the Covenant to establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in political union with the United States of America the applicable provisions of the Constitution, Laws and Treaties of the United States of America and that I will faithfully discharge my duties to the best of my ability so help me God. You may now be seated.

(Applause)

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: We will allow a few minutes for everybody to sign the oath. The next order of business is the adoption of House Rules. The floor is now open for the introduction of House Rules.

Rep. P.R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker I have here the resolution adopting the Rules of the House of Representatives of the Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Do you have enough copies so that the members can be given ² courtesy copy.

Rep. Fitial: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I also have a resolution here relative to adopting temporary rules of the House of Representatives of the Fifth Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature.

Chairman Vicente M. Sablan: Do you have enough copies?

Rep. Fitial: I use to. Copies are on their way.

Chairman Vicente M. Sablan: I will like to declare a short recess.

The House recessed at 1.20 p.m..

The House reconvened at 1:25 p.m..

Chairman Vicente M. Sablan: The session shall now come to order. Prior to recess there were introduction of the House Rules. I will like to recognize now the Hon. Pedro R. Guerrero. At this time a motion is in order to move for the adoption of the resolutions.

Rep. P.R. Guerrero: Mr. Chairman, I move that House Resolution No. 1 be adopted as the House Rule of this House.

Rep. Benigno Sablan seconded the motion.

Chairman Vicente M. Sablan: It has ^{been} moved and seconded that the House Resolution No. 1 be adopted as the House Rule for the Fifth Legislature.

The motion to adopt House Resolution No. 1 was carried by voice vote. House Resolution No. 1 is hereby adopted by the House of Representatives.

Chairman Vicente M. Sablan: House Resolution No. 1 is hereby adopted as the Official House Rule for the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Rep. Greg B. Sablan: Mr. Chairman I will like to move for a short recess.

Rep. Fitial seconded the motion.

Rep. P.R. Guerrero: Objection Mr. Speaker.

Chairman Vicente M. Sablan: There is an objection raise. Can you be specific with your objection. I will like to entertain the motion that we go on recess until February 10th. Do you have any specific time?

Rep. Benigno Sablan: 9:00 a.m..

Chairman Vicente M. Sablan: There is a motion for recess until February 10th at 9:00 a.m., and it has been seconded. Those in favor of the motion please say "yes."

Rep. Fitial: I request the Chair ^{that} the motion be voted by roll call.

Rep. Hocog: Mr. Speaker there is a division on the motion.

Rep. Benigno Sablan: It has been announced Mr. Speaker.

Rep. Greg B. Sablan: There is a division Mr. Chairman.

Rep. Hocog: Division in the chamber arises Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: If that is the concensus of the members that there is a division on the voting whether we will go on recess until February 10th at 9:00 a.m., I will like to ask the Clerk to call the roll please.

Rep. P.R. Guerrero: Privilege.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Recognize.

Rep. P.R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker if I am not mistaken, you recognized my motion and it was carried by voice vote. There is nothing else to discuss.

Rep. Hocog: Privilege Mr. Speaker. There is something to be discuss in this chamber because in this honorable body there has been a division within the vote of whether or not we will suspend the election of officers until February 13th or 10th. I will ask the Speaker to call the roll.

Rep. Benigno Sablan: Mr. Speaker you have recognized the motion cast by voice vote.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Let us have a short recess.

The House recessed at 1:29 p.m..

The House reconvened at 1:35 p.m..

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: The session shall now come to order. Prior to recess the motion was offered on the floor whether or not to recess until February 10th at 9:00 o'clock in the morning and the voice vote was question by some of the members. There is a question on the floor whether or not there is a division on the voice vote. Pursuant to our rules that we have just adopted I will like to find out how many members have objected to the voice vote that was carried earlier. If that is the case I will ask the clerk to call the roll and we are going to be voting on whether or not we will recess until 9:00 o'clock on February 10th.

The Clerk called the roll. The voting result, six voting yes, eight voting no. The motion to recess until February 10th at 9:00 a.m., in the morning is defeated.

Rep. Fitial: Mr. Chairman I now wish to take this opportunity to nominate for the Office of the Speaker, the Honorable Jose R. Lifoifoi.

Rep. Torres seconded the motion.

Rep. P.R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker I will like to take the opportunity also to nominate the Honorable Vicente M. Sablan for the Office of the Speaker.

Rep. Edward Deleon Guerrero seconded the motion.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Are there further nomination?

Rep. Fitial: I wish to close the nomination Mr. Chairman.

Rep. Torres seconded the motion.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: It has been moved and seconded that the nomination be close for the Office of the Speaker. I will now like to ask the Clerk to pass out pieces of papers for the ~~nomination of the speaker~~ members to nominate their speaker.

The official count of the vote, for Rep. Jose R. Lifoifoi eight votes. Therefore he is the newly elected speaker for the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

(Applause)

The Chair will like now to appoint Rep. Torres and Rep. Hocog to escort the newly elected speaker to the chair.

Speaker Vicente M. Sablan: Let us have a short recess before the new Speaker takes over.

The House recessed at 1:45 p.m..

The House reconvened at 1:46 p.m..

Speaker Jose R. Lifoifoi: The session shall now come to order. At this moment I will like to present a brief statement.

"Fellow members of the House of Representatives, honored guests, friends, it is of great honor for me to accept the responsibilities of the Speaker of this House. It is a responsibility that I accept with great respect for my colleagues and with my sincere commitment to work for the people of the Commonwealth, Northern Mariana Islands. Those of you who knows me, you will note that I am a man of few words. I simply wish to say that I am grateful for everyone's support and that I will work fairly for all of the representatives of all islands, delegations from Saipan, Tinian and Rota. With all due respect for everyone in this chamber, I thank you very much for your support.

(Applause)

The Chair will now entertain the motion for the position of the Vice Speaker.

Rep. Torres: The open caucus is proud to nominate Congressman Fitial to be the Vice Speaker.

Rep. Greg B. Sablan seconded the motion.

Speaker Lifoifoi: Any other nominations?

Rep. Vicente M. Sablan: Mr. Speaker on behalf of the new minority members for the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, I will like to move and close the nomination.

Rep. Benigno Sablan seconded the motion.

The motion to close the nomination for the Office of the Vice Speaker, carried by voice vote.

(Applause)

Speaker Lifoifoi: Cong. Fitial is our new Vice Speaker.

The floor is now open for the nomination for the Floor Leader.

Vice Speaker Fitial: Mr. Speaker I will like to nominate for the Office of the Floor Leader the Honorable Gregorio B. Sablan.

Rep. Torres seconded the motion.

Rep. Benigno Sablan: I move that the nomination be close.

Rep. Torres seconded the motion.

The motion to close the nomination for Office of the Floor Leader, carried by voice vote.

(Applause)

Vice Speaker Fitial: Mr. Speaker now I wish to nominate for the Office of the House Clerk, Ms. Frances Sablan.

Rep. Torres seconded the motion.

Speaker Lifoifoi: Any other nomination?

Rep. Vicente M. Sablan: I move that we close the nomination.

Rep. Benigno Sablan seconded the motion.

Speaker Lifoifoi: Therefore Ms. Sablan is the new House Clerk.

(Applause)

Speaker Lifoifoi: The Chair will like to appoint Mr. Ben Cabrera as the temporary sergeant-at-arms. Ben Cabrera please

(Applause)

Rep. Hocog: Privilege Mr. Speaker. I will like to move for a short recess.

Speaker Lifoifoi: Let us have a short recess.

The House recessed at 1:50 p.m..

The House Reconvened at 2:15 p.m..

Speaker Lifoifoi: The session shall now come to order. We are down to Item No. 9 on the Order of Business.

Rep. P.R. Guerrero: Mr. Speaker I am privilege to announce by majority vote of the Minority Members of this House the appointment of the Minority Floor Leader the Honorable Vicente M. Sablan.

Speaker Lifoifoi: Congressman Sablan is now the new Minority Leader.

(Applause)

We are now in the item for the notification of the Senate and the Governor. Therefore, the Chair is appointing Cong. Guerrero and Cong. Macaranas to officially inform the Senate that the House is now ready to organize and ready to conduct businesses. I will also appoint Cong. Camacho and Cong. Attao to officially inform the Governor that the House is duly organized and ready to transact business. Therefore, the House now stands recess for five minutes.

The House recessed at 2:18 p.m..

The House reconvened at 2:40 p.m..

Speaker Lifoifoi: The Chair will like two members from the House to escort the Governor to the Chamber who is waiting in the Speaker's Office. I will like to appoint the former Speaker Ben Sablan and Cong. Vic Hocog to escort the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor.

I will like the House to recognize the presence of our Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

(Applause)

Governor we are honor that you are here today and I will like to give you the opportunity to deliberate a brief remark.

Governor Tenorio: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I am very please that you invited us to join with you this afternoon, members of the House of Representatives, Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, distinguish guests, and friends. Congratulation on your being elected representatives for the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Today marks another milestone in the eight years history of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The next four years are equally important and challenging. I humbly and respectfully request your support and assistance so that our people will prosper in the years to come. A short time ago I, like all the members of the House of Representatives of the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, sworn to support and defend the Constitution and Law of the Commonwealth, the Covenant and applicable provision of the United States Constitution, U.S. Laws and Treaties. These are not empty words without meaning. The Body of Laws referred to have long and rich histories. Together they formed a fundamental system of laws and set us apart from other systems of government. We are truly a government of laws and not a government of men and women. You as law makers have the responsibilities with wisdom, compassion and most of all with time and understanding for your fellowmen. I stand ready to work with you and cooperate with you in any way possible and wish you all a very successful two years. Once again, I will like to extend our sincere appreciation for inviting us to join with you on this very special occasion. Si Yuus Maase.

(Applause)

Speaker Lifoifoi: The Chair will like to recognize the presence of the Mayor of Saipan, Mayor Ada.

(Applause)

The Chair also recognizes the presence of Mayor-elect Quichocho from Tinian.

(Applause)

I will also like to recognize the presence of all the members' wives in the House Chamber.

(Applause)

Lieutenant Governor will you like to say a few word?

Lieutenant Governor Tenorio: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I just want to be very brief. I want to also extend my personal congratulations to the new officers of the Fifth House of Representatives and I will also like to pledge my genuine interest to ensure that we continue to establish a clear communications in the Executive and your House, so that when both Houses are communicating we will do our job right. We have a lot of ~~task~~ difficult task ahead of us. I just want to mention that you will be involve in one form or another in helping to negotiate outstanding businesses with the United States as well as to dwell into the appropriate ways to expend the seven years of financial assistance through the generous contribution of the United States. We have a difficult task to provide the proper mandate and guidance in expending the funds and insuring that the people of the Commonwealth ultimately benefit. Again, I want to extend my personal congratulations to all of you, republicans and democrats alike, and if you are an independent, the same goes to you. I pledge my full support and my door and I am sure that the Governor's door will always be open. I am sure that there is no block in us communicating so that we can resolve our problems in the future. Again thank you and may I look forward to visiting with you. Thank you.

(Applause)

Speaker Lifoifoi: Let us move down to Item No. 12 on our Order of Business. Are there any members who will like to make a statement?

Rep. Vicente M. Sablan: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I will like to take this opportunity to extend also my personal congratulation to the newly elected Speaker, as well as the newly elected leadership for the Fifth Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature. I will like to pledge to all the members that as the Minority Leader for the Fifth Legislature, we will coordinate our maximum effort to insure that we will work together in the interest of the people of the Commonwealth and that is our pledge Mr. Speaker with the new leadership and the entire members of the legislature. Again, thank you and congratulations.

(Applause)

Speaker Lifoifoi: Let us move down to Announcements.

Rep. Vicente M. Sablan: Yes, I will like to make a special announcement to all the members, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor and also all of those who are here today, to a luncheon at the Legislature Pala Pala, near the beach. I will like to invite everybody on behalf of the new Speaker since he has given me this privilege to make this announcement. With that I move at this time Mr. Speaker that we adjourn subject to the call of the Chair so that we can enjoy our lunch that have been prepared for all of us.

Rep. Torres seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn subject to the call of the Chair, carried by voice vote.

The House stands adjourn at 2:45 p.m..

THE CLERK. This meeting will come to order. Representatives-elect to the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, this is the day fixed by the Constitution for the organizational meeting of the Legislature. The most Reverend Bishop Tomas Camacho will lead us in prayer.

(A prayer is offered.)

THE CLERK. Credentials covering the 15 seats in the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature have been received from the Board of Elections and are now on file with the Clerk of the Fourth Legislature. The Clerk has prepared the official roll of the Representatives-elect. The names of those persons whose credentials show that there were regularly elected as Representatives in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth will be called; and as the roll is called, following the numerical order of the Election Districts, the Representatives-elect will please answer to their names to determine whether there is a quorum present.

The reading clerk will call the roll by Election Districts.

(The roll is called.)

THE CLERK. The roll call discloses that _____ Representatives-elect have answered to their names. A quorum is present.

The next order of business is the Swearing-In of Members. The Clerk has the distinct honor and privilege to present to the House the Honorable Judge Dela Cruz, who will administer the oath of office as provided in the Constitution.

(The oath is administered.)

THE CLERK. The next order of business is the adoption of House Rules. The floor is now open for introduction of House Rules.

(The Clerk recognizes introduction of the House Rules.)
To be introduced by Rep. P.R. Guerrero

THE CLERK. The next order of business is the election of the Speaker of the House of Representatives for the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Nominations are now in order.

The Clerk recognizes the gentleman from Election District No. 3.

Rep. Pedro R. Guerrero, I am directed by the unanimous vote of the Democratic Caucus to present for election to the office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature the name of the Honorable Vicente M. Sablan, a Representative from the 2ND Election District.

THE CLERK. The Clerk now recognizes the gentlemen from the _____ Election District.

Mr. _____, (The Minority candidate for the Speaker is nominated. This should be the person they will later announce as Minority Leader.)

THE CLERK. The Honorable Vicente M. Sablan, a Representative from the 2ND Election District, and the Honorable _____, a Representative from the _____ Election District, have been placed in nomination.

Are there further nominations?

There being no further nominations, the roll will now be called in regular alphabetical order. Those responding to their names will indicate by surname the nominee of their choice.

(Note: If the rules is adopted the vote will be by secret ballot)

The reading clerk will call the roll.

(The roll is called and the usual alphabetical order, the two nominees answering present.) This is subject to change if the vote is by secret ballot.

THE CLERK. The total number of votes cast is _____, of which the Honorable Vicente M. Sablan has received _____ votes, and the Honorable _____ has received _____ votes.

Therefore, the Honorable _____ of the _____ Election District is duly elected Speaker of the House of Representatives for the Fifth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, having received most of the votes cast.

The Clerk appoints the Distinguished _____, the gentleman from Saipan _____ and the gentleman from Saipan _____ as a committee to escort the Speaker-elect to the Chair.

(The Sergeant-At-Arms announces the Speaker-elect, who is escorted to the chair by the Committee of Escort.)

(The former Speaker, as a courtesy, promises to be a loyal opposition--if this can be arranged--and presents the Speaker. If not, the soon-to-be Vice Speaker would be appropriate.)

The SPEAKER address the House.)