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USVI Wind Projects Enter Next Phase with Executed Lease

The projects await further approvals as Advance Power prepares sites on St. Thomas and St. Croix for upcoming construction

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The lease agreement necessary to progress work on the [wind farm projects slated St. Thomas and St. Croix](#) is now in the hands of the Department of Property and Procurement. That was the word from Joel Hart of Advance Power, who provided an update to the V.I. Public Services Commission during its monthly meeting on Tuesday.

“We have formally executed and acknowledged the site lease, and it has been overnighted to Property and Procurement,” Mr. Hart said. Now begins the potentially lengthy bureaucratic process, with approvals needed from the Attorney General’s office, the Senate, and the governor.

“For the permitting and approval process, we can't formally initiate that without having the leasehold and the site leads completed,” Mr. Hart said, while noting that Advance Power is nevertheless conducting preparatory work in anticipation of the completion of the leasing process.

Mr. Hart also told commissioners that the structure of the lease had changed, so that instead of Advance Power subleasing the property from WAPA as originally contemplated, they would be the primary leaseholder in the agreement with Property & Procurement.

PSC Commissioners questioned the total acreage of land on St. Croix and St. Thomas that would be leased under the agreement. Mr. Hart explained that it was too early to provide an exact figure, as the agreement is structured to allow maximum generation capacity on the site. “We’re talking about having the flexibility to locate ...each patch site dependent on the actual engineering as we develop a formal site plan,” he told commissioners. “We’re looking at approximately two and a half acres for carve out for each pad site, more or less. But then... we’ll have easements for interconnection purposes and collection systems and metering and so forth,” he noted. After construction has been completed, an as-built survey would then determine the total acreage occupied by Advance Power. “Anything else would be turned back to Property & Procurement,” Mr. Hart said.

Pressed for more exactitude by several commissioners, Mr. Hart estimated that 10 windmills would be installed at Bovoni Point on St. Thomas, with 20 east of the St. Croix refinery. However, he cautioned that the numbers are “subject to change based on engineering; we want to put as few turbines as we can, but we want to meet the targets that are set out in the PPA.”

There is still internal discussion about whether to use 1.5 MW or 2 MW turbines, which would impact the total number that are eventually installed, Mr. Hart said.