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Port Authority Governing Board Re-Elects Leadership, Approves Expansion to Ongoing Airport Projects

Willard John continues as chairman in unanimous decision by V.I. Port Authority Governing Board

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The Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix.

During its first meeting of 2024, V.I. Port Authority Governing Board demonstrated confidence in its executive team by re-electing Willard John to the chairmanship, Derek Gabriel as vice chair, and Kevin Rodriguez as its secretary.

Board members also approved an expansion to work currently being conducted at the Henry Rohlsen Airport. And it approved the renaming of the Cyril E. King Airport Parking and Transportation Center in honor of a former long-serving employee.

The board considered and approved the request to issue a new task order to American Infrastructure Development for additional design and construction services for the apron 5B rehabilitation project at the Henry Rohlsen airport. The Federal Aviation Administration reportedly informed VIPA that there were additional grant funds available for capital works if there was a project already identified and “ready to go”, according to mechanical engineer Tafari Nelson.

The apron 5B project had not been included in the original bid package from the contractors, and as VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe explained, the new task order for just over \$143,000 would ensure that the additional project would be ready to receive the new FAA grant funds, rather than VIPA having to wait for a new grant cycle within which to apply.

A second adjustment was also approved, this time for the project to rehabilitate parts of the Alpha West taxiway on the Cyril E. King airport. An existing edge drain system, consisting mainly of cast iron piping, will be replaced with new PVC piping at a cost of just under \$89,500. With the additional works now being approved, the expected completion date for this rehabilitation project has moved from January to April of this year. A change order of almost \$17,000 was also approved for additional signage associated with the same taxiway, to resolve compliance issues that were noted during the course of construction work.

VIPA’s Governing Board also approved a change order of \$35,800 for overheads associated with the temporary cessation of work at the Loredon Lawrence Boynes Sr. dock in Cruz Bay, St. John. The work stoppage, according to Mr. Nelson, was to ensure the safety of the traveling public during the holiday season.

After a general session that lasted almost three hours, board members retreated into executive session, during which they discussed several legal matters, including changes to the collective bargaining agreement between the agency and one of its worker unions, and a settlement agreement between VIPA and Inter-Island Boat Services.

In executive session, the board also agreed to name the Parking and Transportation Center of the Cyril E. King airport on St. Thomas after Dale A. Gregory, VIPA’s former Director of Engineering, who served the authority for almost forty years.