

The Virgin Islands Consortium

JFL Receives \$2 Million For Systems Improvement, New Human Resources Chief Hired

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ST. CROIX --- The Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center's (JFL) governing board met at the facility's 3rd floor classroom for its monthly board meeting on Wednesday at 5:00 p.m., where it was revealed that the hospital had received \$1.96 million from the \$7 million approved by the 31st Legislature and [signed by Governor Kenneth Mapp](#) for the Systems Improvement Agreement (SIA) efforts between JFL and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

The funds, according to JFL CEO Kendall Griffith, is an indelible part of passing CMS's inspections, expected to take place in August. And at a recent press conference held at the hospital's Cardiac Center, Griffith said the hospital had made "great strides" and

“continues to improve” since the SIA was made effective over four months ago. He said JFL has “heard CMS” and had initiated staff training in various areas, in addition to making key staff appointments. Griffith did not specify, however, how many of the tasks had been completed or how much of the funding the hospital had received to complete those tasks.

In relation to Human Resources, the hospital hired Frank Abednego as the department's new chief. Abednego was unanimously approved by the board and will begin work on May 12.

According to Griffith's report, the hospital is awaiting \$1 million refund from CIGNA, which will be used to rebuild the mental health unit. Griffith said the psychiatric holding area in the emergency department is expected to be in operation within the next two weeks.

Other discussions at the meeting included the recent all-day [WAPA power outage that affected the hospital](#) for approximately 4.5 hrs because its generators failed. To prevent the incident from reoccurring, the hospital has put in place a preliminary action plan that includes:

- 1: Correcting the fuel supply issue.
- 2: Expediting the repair of generator 2.
- 3: The centralization of disaster supplies.
- 4: Comprehensive review and improvement of to the current disaster plan.

For the long term, JFL intends to replace the fuel line from holding tank to generators, add emergency lighting and conduct a complete assessment of internal communication challenges.

In other action, the hospital's board unanimously approved the following items: Approval of [Leidos Consultants](#), approval of invoices for Greeley Consultants, and the approval of invoices for Ropes & Gray Consultants, among other measures.

The board tabled the medical staff's report that sought the approval of new physicians to its department. The applicants, already approved by the medical staff, include Brandy Danks, PA-C, Dept. of Emergency Medicine, Water Rohloff, MD, Dept. of Medicine/Nephrology, Brian Bacot, MD, Dept. of Emergency Medicine and Orreth Case, MD, Dept. of General Surgery.

JFL's next budget hearing is scheduled for August 13, according to Griffith's report. The board has been invited to testify.

Present at the meeting were Board Chairman Anthony Ricketts, Joyce Heyliger, Troy DeChabert Schuster and Philip Arcidi, board treasurer.