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WAPA Approves Quote to Pave Long Reef Road; DPW to Reimburse

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A portion of Long Reef Road By. KIA GRIFFITH FOR VI CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — During the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority'S public Governing Board Zoom meeting on Thursday afternoon, WAPA approved a quote of \$223,300, set aside from the \$14.5 million CARES Act funds for the spot-repair, level and overlay of Long Reef Road with asphalt.

In response to a member of the board asking why this quote was up for consideration, Lawrence Kupfer, Executive Director of WAPA, replied, “We disturbed more than the edge of the road.”

The initial scope of the project to install pressure-reducing valve stations along Long Reef Road included paving the trench only. However, the road is currently in disrepair and requires

restructuring, said Board Chairman Anthony Thomas, who also serves as the commissioner of Property and Procurement.

Mr. Thomas said that WAPA will not be responsible for restructuring the road and dealing with drainage issues, as both are the responsibility of the Department of Public Works (DPW).

“Drainage is not WAPA’s problem,” Mr. Thomas stressed.

Brian Leonard, design and construction manager for water systems at WAPA, said WAPA requested that DPW assist the authority with the paving. However Public Works said it could not assist at this time since it only has \$50,000-\$60,000 on hand.

The action to repave the road came after several complaints were made to DPW, WAPA, and the Office of the Governor, forcing WAPA to pay for the repair work with the hope that it will be reimbursed by DPW. Mr. Thomas told board members that a written agreement will be secured with DPW to ensure reimbursement.

Jean P. Greaux, director of corporate communications at WAPA, confirmed that WAPA will complete paving of Long Reef Road by August 31, 2020.

In a release issued Thursday, WAPA said it continues to be criticized for the road condition as the utility was the last entity working along the roadway, despite its being in a general state of disrepair prior to the waterline installation project.

Under terms of the arrangement with VI Paving, low areas of the road will be spot-fixed, and the entire road surface will be overlaid with asphalt.

A previous article published [by the Consortium on Tuesday](#) shared the growing frustration, specific complaints, and common pleas made by frequent travelers and residents along the oft-traveled path.