

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Board Approves Acquisition Of New Generators For Harley Power Plant Costing \$34 Million

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ST. THOMAS -- The governing board of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority rendered its approval to the first phase of introducing new generating units to stabilize the Randolph Harley power plant in St. Thomas, WAPA announced late Friday.

The board's action came at a special meeting on Friday afternoon.

The board approved the authority entering into an engineering, procurement and construction contract with Wartsila, North America for three, seven-megawatt generating units at an approximate cost of \$34 million. "The acquisition of these units will allow WAPA to begin a process of right-sizing the generation needed to more efficiently meet

the demand for electric service in the St. Thomas – St. John district,” said WAPA Chief Executive Officer, Julio A. Rhymer, Sr., noting that the approval also allows WAPA to begin the process of decommissioning older units that are not only limited in their capacity but are costly to operate. “With the advent of LPG fuel to generate electricity in both districts, the revamping of our generation will lead to additional savings due to the more efficient operations,” he said.

Several board members lauded the efforts of the Authority’s management and staff who worked diligently to secure the agreement with Wartsila with the board noting the significance of the day. “Today is a great day for WAPA as it represents the beginning of new generation at the Harley plant and that equates to reliable service. This is yet another step to place WAPA on a path to providing lower electricity costs to our customers,” said Governing Board Chairwoman Elizabeth Armstrong.

Also at the meeting, the board approved a second amendment to WAPA’s Near Term Generation Action Plan and procurement waiver for the Randolph Harley power plant generating facilities.

WAPA Chief Operating Officer of the Electric System, Clinton Hedrington, Jr., told board members the amended action plan was developed with the following considerations: the urgent need for the procurement and installation of generation supply options at the Harley power plant to stabilize current operations; the selection process of new generation assets; a determination of the funding mechanism to support the plan; an appropriate procurement process for near and long term generation; new, short-term generation options; air quality environmental permitting for near term generation option.

And the board approved Mr. Rhymer securing a Letter of Credit with Banco Popular to cover the costs of the leasing of an additional generating unit to not only move the St. Thomas - St. John District towards 100% power production by LPG but to allow the authority to submit its largest generating unit to an overdue maintenance overhaul and fuel conversion.

Board members in attendance at the meeting, held by both telephone and video conference, included Chairperson Armstrong, Vice-Chairman Noel Loftus, Secretary Juanita Young, Gerald T. Groner, Cheryl Boynes Jackson, Hubert Turnbull, Commissioners Devin Carrington and Gustav James and Director Marvin Pickering.

Feature Image: Randolph Harley power plant on St. Thomas. (Credit: Aisha-Zakiya Boyd)