

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Port Authority Board Approves Construction Of Arrival Building At Gallows Bay Dock, Modifies Taxi Pickup Fees

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ST. CROIX -- A month after [implementing a hiring freeze](#), the Virgin Islands Port Authority (V.I.P.A.) Governing Board, has revised its Marine Operating and Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2017. The revised budget has projected revenues totaling \$30.4 million, operating expenses totaling \$22.7 million and the capital budget expenses totaling \$2.7 million.

As part of the meeting held on Wednesday, V.I.P.A. awarded a bid of \$1.4 million to GEC, LLC -- same company awarded the Paul E. Joseph Stadium contract -- to

demolish and construct a new arrival building at the Gallows Bar Marine Facility on St Croix. The project will take approximately 12 months and will be funded mostly from bond monies and the remainder from the V.I.P.A budget, according to the authority.

The board modified V.I.P.A.'s marine tariff to eliminate the \$0.25 passenger fee between St. Thomas and St. John, and the marine tariff which currently charges a pre-arranged taxi pick up fee of \$7 per pick up. The fee was amended to \$7 for a single pick up and \$13 for a day pass for multiple pickups.

The board approved the hiring of a bankruptcy attorney to assist with the preparation of a response to a letter received from Boyson Inc. It also approved the hiring of Pro Mar to correct the dredging error in the Crown Bay Channel, with a \$250,000 threshold to complete the project. Staff were also authorized to enter into discussion with the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority for an alternative Henry E. Rohlsen Airport (H.E.R.A.) photovoltaic system.

Attorney General Claude Walker said in February that the freeze came as a means of keeping in line with Governor Kenneth Mapp's order calling for cuts throughout the government—not because the port authority was facing financial woes. The freeze issued a list of directives to the V.I.P.A staff, which included a review of all outstanding hiring offers by the executive director to determine if V.I.P.A. should proceed with the hiring.

In other action, approved by the board on Wednesday were the following:

Approved a payment plan from O'Neale's Transport, Inc., for past due operational fees and finance charges in the amount of \$86,400.28.

- Term beginning April 1, 2017 at a 6% interest rate.
- \$5000 payable on the first of each month

Agreed to the recommendation to accept past due finance charges and operations fees from LIAT, Ltd., due from 2007.

- A 50% finance charges and 50% operations fee totaling \$26,222.42
- A write-off of the remaining amounts totaling \$26,222.41

Approved Task order No. 10A to American Infrastructure Development (AID) in the amount of \$60, 379.20.

- To Perform Phase 3 of the H.E.R.A. Apron rehabilitation

Approved the procurement of materials needed from Sherwin Williams to perform runway markings on Runway 10-28 and Taxiway Alpha at the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport—in the amount of \$130,609.50.

Approved the negotiation of a contract with Angie Brewer & Associates, LLC., to manage the \$10.67 million TIGER Grant received by the V.I.P.A in 2016.

A contract was awarded to the Virgin Islands Paving in the amount of \$278,200 to perform repairs to the pier lighting system at the Ann E. Abramson Marine Facility in

Fredericksted, St Croix.

The Executive Session of the V.I.P.A implemented a procedure to ensure the timely processing of payments to vendors, as well as a board request that the executive director provide a report on V.I.P.A bond-funded projects.

Board members present were:

1. Laurel Hewitt-Sewer, St. John Private Citizen - Chairperson
2. Dr. Yvonne Thraen, St. Thomas Private Citizen - Vice Chair
3. Claude E. Walker, Esq., Attorney General - Secretary
4. Beverly Nicholson-Doty, Tourism Commissioner
5. Gustav James, Public Works Commissioner (absent)
6. José A. Penn, EDA Chairman 7. Roberto Cintron, P.E., St. Croix Private

Feature Image: High view of the Gallows Bay Marine Facility. (Credit: Ernice Gilbert, VIC)

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