The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Board Approves Matters Related To Continuing Hurricane Restoration

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The governing board of the Water and Power Authority approved several items relating to the utility's continued hurricane restoration during a regularly scheduled meeting on St. Thomas Thursday, according to the utility. In addition, the board approved changes to existing contracts between WAPA and APR Energy for leased generating units at the Randolph Harley Power Plant.

The board approved increasing contract totals to $500,000 for the following companies involved in hurricane debris removal and clean-up in both districts: Thomas Trucking, Frank's Electric, Marco St. Croix, Z and I Builders, Global Marine, Eric's Construction, Fiber Net, Inc. and Fabien's Trucking.

Other hurricane-related items approved include:

- An amendment to an existing contract with Kami Metals to provide debris disposal services on St. Thomas and St. John. The contract has a $2 million limit.
- A contract with Haugland Energy for a territory-wide clean-up and off-island disposal of WAPA's equipment damaged in the hurricanes, and debris generated during the restoration process. The contract remains in effect until March 15, and cannot exceed $39 million.
- A purchase order with Electric Supply of Tampa for hurricane restoration materials totaling $245,532.20.
- An authorization for the restoration of WAPA's field area network for both Automated Metering Infrastructure and other critical operations in the amount of $1.7 million.
- The purchase of replacement smart meters totaling $2.3 million. Several thousand smart meters were either destroyed in the hurricanes or have malfunctioned since being reinstalled.
- A contract extension with Native Son and Taxi Tours to provide transportation for off island line crews was approved. The new contract total is at $400,000 and the time extension is through the end of February 2018.
- A contract extension with Chitolie Trucking through March 15, 2018 and a cost increase to $400,000. The company is providing on-site fueling services for restoration equipment at various staging sites across St. Croix. The original contract cost was $213,500.
- Additional space at Port of Sale Mall to better accommodate the Customer Service office and other operational areas displaced by the hurricanes. Aside from Customer Service, the additional space will provide an office setting for four other divisions of the Authority. The monthly cost of the additional space is $10,037.50.

Costs associated with the hurricane restoration and clean up are expected to be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA. The board tabled consideration of a policy amendment that would have authorized the executive director to conduct the business of the Authority in the event a State of Emergency has been declared by the Governor. The current policy does not address situations where the governing board is unable to meet or communicate during a declared emergency and where the executive director is required to conduct the business of the Authority expeditiously. The board is expected to take up this item at its February meeting.

In other action, the governing board approved:

- A contract extension for continued work on St. Thomas Unit 23. The restoration from Hurricanes Irma and Maria and the effect of Hurricane Harvey in Houston, Texas where the contractor, Sulzer Turbo Services is based, required the extension of time. Sulzer Turbo is on contract with WAPA to restore the 39-megawatt unit back to manufacturer's specifications and complete a major maintenance overhaul of the unit. In addition to the contract extension, a 15% contingency was approved to cover any unplanned costs associated with the reassembly and inspection of the unit. The overall contract with Sulzer Turbo totals $4.1 million.
- A no cost, time extension on a contract to install water pressure management booster stations. The extension is required to allow the contractor to make up days incurred for delays in the fabrication of the booster station skids by another vendor.

The time extension is for 120 days with a new contract end date of June 15, 2018.

- Approved contract changes with APR Energy for generating units rented from the company. The rental of Unit 25 will be extended through April 1, 2018 at a cost of $340,000 per month. Unit 26’s rental agreement will be adjusted waiving a variable fired hour charge until the unit is commissioned on LPG. A third contract change with APR Energy increases the cost by $236,450 to allow for the preservation of a WAPA turbine unit during its decommissioning and to provide for the electrical connection of the third rental unit, Unit 27, from APR Energy.
- Approved a contract extension with a company tasked with installing fire protection for fuel storage tanks and major power plant assets and facilities. Also, several already approved change orders required modifications.

Board members in attendance included: Chairwoman Elizabeth Armstrong, Vice Chairman Noel Loftus, Secretary Juanita Young, Commissioner Devin Carrington, Director Marvin Pickering, Cheryl Boynes Jackson, Hubert Turnbull and Gerald Groner, Esq. Commissioner Nelson Petty was excused.