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Larger Cruise Ships On St. Croix? Port Authority Approves Study To Determine Possibility

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Virgin Islands Port Authority Board of Governors is exploring an opportunity to increase cruise visitors to St. Croix by accommodating larger ships at the Ann E. Abramson Marine Facility in Frederiksted, the authority has announced. At its February monthly meeting, the board approved a proposal from VIPA's marine consultant, Moffat and Nichol, to analyze the feasibility of berthing quantum class vessels at the Ann E. Abramson Pier.

VIPA's board members stated that cruise line officials have expressed an interest in bringing the larger ships to St. Croix. However, the Abramson Pier was not built to accommodate quantum-class ships. The largest vessels that currently berth at the pier are the Radiance class ships, which have a capacity of up to 2,501 passengers. The quantum class is the third largest class of cruise ships and each call could bring over 4,905 visitors to St. Croix. The analysis will determine what

modifications to the pier are needed to berth the quantum ships and the most cost-effective method to implement the changes, according to the release. VIPA will pay \$86,500 for the study that will be funded through its fiscal year 2019 capital projects budget.

Board members also took the following actions during the February meeting:

- Conducted its annual election of board officers and voted to appoint José Penn as the board's chairman, Dr. Yvonne E. L. Thraen as its vice chair and Marvin Forbes as the board's secretary. The board also decided which members would serve on its Finance, Property, Projects and Operations, and Personnel committees.
- Ratified a Jan. 25, 2019 poll vote approving a \$112,949.51 three-year contract with Oshkosh for performance inspection and servicing the Airport Rescue and Firefighter vehicles at the Cyril E. King Airport, St. Thomas.
- Approved Task Order #13 to Lemartec, Inc. in the amount of \$1,710,469 to provide labor and materials to repair the CEKA air cargo building, funded via VIPA insurance funds.
- Approved Task Order #74 to Lemartec, Inc. in the amount of \$549,761, funded via insurance monies, for architectural and engineering services for hurricane repair damages, including: CEKA and Henry E. Rohlsen Airport (HERA) landside & apron lighting repairs; VIPA's St. Thomas Administrative Building repairs; and the CEKA and HERA terminal interior repairs.
- Approved American Infrastructure Development (AID) Task Order #10C in the amount of \$74,960 to extend construction administration services beyond the original contract date due to contractor-related delays for the HERA Apron Rehabilitation Project Phase Three. This task order is funded via liquidated damages. AID is VIPA's St. Croix aviation consultant.
- Authorized AID Task Order #12B to provide professional services including project management, inspection and quality assessments for the HERA Apron Rehabilitation Project Phase Four, funded via FAA funds and VIPA's FY 2019 budget.
- Awarded a \$197,285 contract to Marco St. Croix, Inc. to demolish the hurricane-damaged general cargo building at the Wilfred "Bomba" Allick Port and Transshipment Center on St. Croix, funded by insurance monies.
- Approved Addendum #4 to Atkins, not to exceed \$196,262, to provide professional engineering services for the modification of construction documents for the Gordon A. Finch Molasses Pier Terminal and Roll On/Roll Off Dock Project, and to assist with the rebidding phase of this project. VIPA intends to rebid this project in Feb. 2019.
- Authorized the Executive Director to amend Section J of the VIPA's marine tariff as follows:
 - Amend free cargo storage time from 5 days to 2 days on St. Croix.
 - Amend free cargo storage time at the Crown Bay Sandfill on St. Thomas to 12 hours for inbound cargo, and no free time for outbound cargo (due to limited space and safety precautions).
 - Added the restriction of hazardous material storage per the U.S. Coast Guard's 33 Code and Federal Regulations (CFR) 154 - Facilities Transferring Oil or Hazardous Material in Bulk.
 - Require an agent or person in charge is identified for all cargo stored on VIPA property.
 - Authorized the Executive Director to select a vendor to operate a paid parking facility at the VIPA-owned gravel lot adjacent to the Theovald E. Moorehead Dock and Terminal at Enighed Pond, St. John.
 - Authorized the Executive Director to approve Love City Car Ferries' request to add additional barge service between Red Hook and Cruz Bay.
 - Approved the reorganization of the VIPA accounting department by deleting two vacant positions and replacing them with a Senior Accountant and an Accountant. The positions will be funded using monies already budgeted for the vacancies.

- Approved the hiring of a harbor pilot for St. Croix.
- Approved the creation and filling of a Deputy Executive Director position.

The board also took several actions during its executive session:

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