

logo not found or type unknown

WAPA Extends Contract of Firm Helping to Reduce Estimated Meter Readings; Approves Items for Further Buildout of Electrical System

WAPA / **Published On November 26, 2020 06:17 AM /**

Staff Consortium **November 26, 2020**

Image not found or type unknown



Members of the WAPA Governing Board during a regular monthly meeting on Wednesday approved several items that the authority said are key to the continued development of a more resilient, efficient, and reliable electric system territory-wide.

“The favorable actions by the board today means project planning can continue on items related to composite pole installation, preparation for undergrounding of electrical equipment and the various components of our strategic transformation plan,” said Lawrence J. Kupfer WAPA executive director.

Among the approved items:

- No-cost extensions to existing contracts with Haugland Energy and American Wire Group for the procurement of equipment and supplies associated with the Cruz Bay Underground Project on St. John.
- Amendments to existing contracts with Haugland Energy, Haugland Virgin Islands, and BBC Electrical Services to allow the companies to purchase materials on WAPA's behalf. The materials will facilitate ongoing electric system hardening projects on St. Croix, and composite pole installations in both districts.
- A time extension and cost increase on an existing contract that addresses the procurement of pad-mounted transformers for the Cruz Bay Underground Project. The adjustments were necessary to reflect current market prices for materials associated with the project. The contract was extended to July 2021, and the increase totaled \$77,000.
- Increase of an existing purchase order by \$8.2 million for the purchase of an additional 1,200 composite poles from Trident Industries.

WAPA said other approvals included a health insurance benefit package for employees, a contract extension for air quality testing and reporting at the two power plants; a contract extension for the installation of a new transformer at the St. John electrical substation, and a four-month contract extension with PA Consulting, a company working to develop an improvement roadmap on issues associated with meter reading, billing, and the reduction of estimated utility bills.

A contract extension with Evertec Group, LLC for the printing and mailing of utility bills was also approved. The extension allows time for the negotiation and execution of a new three-year contract at a cost not to exceed \$2.2 million.

The governing board did not approve change orders associated with the 2019 installation of the Aggreko propane-fired generators on St. Croix. The matter may be revisited later, WAPA said.

In his monthly report to the board, Mr. Kupfer noted that in the month of October there was some decline in generation demand. "This could be seasonal as temperatures are a bit cooler. Overall, our generation sales are off about 12.5% when compared to pre-storm levels." The power plants, he said, dispatched 77% LPG and 23% fuel oil to meet demand for service. "There continues to be a narrow spread between the cost of propane and diesel fuel. The water systems are in relatively good shape...both inventory levels and production capacity." Mr. Kupfer also reported no safety incidents in the month of October and no positive COVID-19 cases amongst the workforce.

Board members in attendance included Chairman Anthony D. Thomas, Vice Chairman Jed JohnHope, Secretary Juanita Young, Cheryl Boynes Jackson, Noel Loftus, Director Kyle Fleming, Hubert Turnbull, and Elizabeth Armstrong. Director Joel Lee was excused.