



**The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority
Corporate Communications
NEWS RELEASE**

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**WAPA BOARD GIVES GO AHEAD FOR EXPANSION OF
EAST END ELECTRICAL SUBSTATION;**

ANTHONY D. THOMAS RE-ELECTED AS BOARD CHAIRMAN

The second phase of restoration and expansion of WAPA's East End Electrical Substation received the green light Monday as the governing board authorized the execution of a contract with Haugland Virgin Islands to furnish and install new switchgear and associated equipment.

When completed, the substation will function at full capacity providing more stable and reliable electrical service to the east end of St. Thomas and the island of St. John. The federally funded contract is capped at \$1.1 million dollars.

Executive Director Lawrence J. Kupfer said replacing the existing switchgear will require less maintenance, and allow WAPA to maximize the facility, located adjacent to the National Guard armory, to its full potential.

The substation was severely damaged by Hurricane Irma in 2017 and has been replaced with a hardened poured concrete building making it more resilient to windstorms. In addition, the substation has been expanded to include communications, and a work area for engineers and other personnel. Board members were told today that commissioning work is underway at the new facility which in recent weeks included a tie-in to the Tutu electrical substation and the energizing of some portions of the substation. Testing is expected to continue with the substation becoming functional by the end of the month.

The board on Monday also approved a no-cost time extension on a contract with RG Engineering to complete a transformer replacement project on St. John. The extension is for four months with a new completion date of January 31, 2021. The project was delayed due to COVID-19 related challenges.

In his monthly report, Director Kupfer provided an overview of operations including: the impact of COVID-19 on WAPA, safety goals and objectives, generation capacity and demand, fuel pricing and current price spreads between LPG and oil, causes of recent service interruptions, and the status of the potable water system territory-wide.

The governing board elected officers at today's meeting. Commissioner of Property and Procurement Anthony D. Thomas was re-elected as Chairman, Jed John Hope as vice-chairman, and Juanita Young re-elected as board secretary. All members attended today's meeting including Thomas, John Hope, Young, Directors Joel Lee and Kyle Fleming, Elizabeth Armstrong, Cheryl Boynes Jackson, Noel Loftus, and Hubert Turnbull.

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About WAPA: The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority is an autonomous agency of the Virgin Islands Government which produces and distributes electricity and drinking water to residential and commercial customers in the territory. WAPA was created by the Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands in 1964 through Act No. 1248. Today, WAPA generates electrical power at production plants on St. Thomas and St. Croix and distributes electrical service through smart grids to customers on St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Hassel Island, and Water Island. Potable water is distributed to almost 13,000 customers through water lines and standpipes. WAPA also has the responsibility of installing and maintaining streetlights.