



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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Virgin Islands Water & Power Authority Governing Board Meeting Yields Positive Developments

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Governing Board today approved changes to the Authority’s Gold Health Care Plan, provided an update on renewable energy discussions and successfully voted on Governing Board member’s roles as Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and committee Chairpersons.

The Governing Board’s approval of changes to the Authority’s existing health care plan will allow for increased healthcare savings for current employees and also help position the Authority to compete with local businesses for quality talent in the job market. Previously, the Authority’s Employee Cost Share for dependent care coverage was significantly higher than other employers in the territory at a 65%/35% split whereby the Authority paid 65% of the cost of an employee’s healthcare coverage.

Under the new Gold Health Plan, employees will now see an 80%/20% split for dependent coverage, at a minimal 1.1% increase in annual premium for the Authority, or less than \$70,000 per year. “When we consider the factors related to high employee turnover and general job satisfaction, a primary consideration is health care. The Governing Board’s approval of this change will improve the Authority’s standing as a top choice employer in the territory and provide significant savings for employees,” notes Sabrina King-Leonce, Human Resources Director at the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority.

Also on the agenda, CEO/Executive Director Andrew Smith presented for the Governing Board a detailed overview shared earlier this week with the Public Services Commission (PSC), highlighting the indications of interest received from seven solar developers for St. Croix’s highly anticipated solar project. CEO Smith reiterated the Authority’s commitment to transparency, and noted the Authority is still in ongoing discussions as it starts to negotiate refined terms under which the Authority would purchase electricity from the solar project under a power purchase agreement (PPA). If an executable PPA can be agreed upon, the Authority will not sign any PPA until approved by the PSC and Governing Board.

The Governing Board also conducted board member elections and appointments. Votes were unanimous to keep Director Kyle Fleming as Chairman, Mr. Hubert Turnbull as Vice-Chairman and Ms. Juanita Young as Secretary. Additional appointments included Director Joel Lee as Finance Committee Chair and Mr. Hubert Turnbull as Planning Committee Chair.

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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.