

## **CABINET OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS - POST MEETING STATEMENT**

### **CABINET DECISIONS**

**7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2021**

His Excellency, the Acting Governor Mr. David Archer, Jr. chaired the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, in the absence of Governor August Jaspert, who was overseas on official leave. The Meeting was held at the Financial Services Commission's Conference Room, Jones Building, Pasea Estate.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet:

1. Approved the appointment of Captain Baboucar Sallah as a member of the Maritime Advisory Board in accordance with Section 454 and Schedule 4 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 2004.
2. Approved Mr. Nathaniel Isaac as a member on the BVI Airports Authority Board effective 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020 for a period of two (2) years.
3. Approved that the Junior Minister for Tourism take leadership of the National Tourism Plan by year-end; agreed to the establishment of a Special Tourism Committee, to be co-chaired by the Premier and Junior Minister, to support completion of the Plan and noted that the BVI Tourist Board will hire a Traveler Experience Marketing Consultant.
4. Accepted the Evaluation Report submitted by the Central Tenders Board Sub-Committee, which was approved by the Central Tenders Board (CTB) on 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2020, and accepted the CTB's recommendation to award Metro Construction Ltd. the contract for the Renovation of Ground Floor of the Road Town Fire Station in the amount of three hundred and thirty-two thousand, two hundred six dollars and seventy-three cents (\$332,206.73).

5. Decided:
  - a. that the tender process, to procure goods and services needed for the "permanent" electrical connection of Seven Seas Water Plant at Paraquita Bay, Tortola to the national power grid, be waived as the goods and services are specialised and urgently required to ensure the terms of the Water Purchase Agreement No. 68 of 2010 can continue to be reasonably met;
  - b. that a contract be awarded to BVI Electricity Corporation for a sum not to exceed one hundred eleven thousand, six hundred and nine dollars and thirty-five cents (\$111,609.35), to cover the cost of procuring and installing the specialised goods and services; and
  - c. that the Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the relevant agreement.
6. Granted permission to the Government of the Virgin Islands to purchase land in the Long Look Registration Section, measuring 2,040 sq. ft., at a consideration sum of fourteen thousand seven hundred and seventy-five dollars (\$14,775) for use as a public road.
7. Decided that the Ministry of Finance instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet the Bill, entitled Environmental Protection and Tourism Improvement (Amendment) Act, 2020 to allow for the collection of two percent (2%) of the gross accumulated proceeds of the Environmental and Tourism Improvement Levy, prior to payment to any approved entity, to cover the administrative costs incurred by Central Government in its collection and disbursement of the said levy; and that
  - a. the amount collected is to be paid into the Consolidated Fund;
  - b. once finalised, the Bill be introduced for its first reading in the House of Assembly at the next convenient Sitting; and
  - c. that the Ministry of Finance instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the Order under section 6 of the Environmental Protection and Tourism Improvement Fund Act, 2017, to amend the Schedule to redistribute the applicable percentages to the beneficial agencies under the levy.
8. Decided to conduct a service-wide compensation review to advise on the most relatively competitive compensation for the Public Service to address remuneration disparity to further support the retention, engagement and motivation of skilled and competent officers, to effectively deliver public services.

9. Waived the tender process, based on an evaluation report from a restrictive submission of proposals performed by the Ministry of Finance, for procurement of furniture for the offices of the Treasury Department and Inland Revenue Department (inclusive of a heavy duty mobile high density filing system for Inland Revenue Department) at Skelton Baylot at Fish Bay; and decided that the contract be awarded to Island Services Ltd. for a sum not to exceed two hundred and thirty-eight thousand forty-two dollars and nineteen cents (\$238,042.19).
10. Considered the proposal and approved the establishment of the following two (2) special committees to assist in the identification of new revenue streams for the Territory and to identify recommendations for streamlining recurrent expenditure:
  - a. Special Revenue Advisory Committee, co-chaired by the Minister of Finance and the Acting Financial Secretary, with the mandate to identify existing and potential opportunities for creating new revenue streams from current and new industries; and
  - b. Special Public Expenditure Committee, co-chaired by the Minister of Finance and the Acting Financial Secretary, with the mandate to inspect, review, and recommend measures that will allow for more efficiency in the management of recurrent expenditures.
11. Noted that OBM Limited has been contracted for Consultancy Services for Engineering and Architectural Design, Construction Supervision and Contract Management for the rehabilitation of the Ralph T. O'Neal Administration Complex (RTOAC), working in collaboration with the Public Works Department, and decided that office spaces be assigned on the basis of:
  - i. an open floor plan;
  - ii. information and communications technology needs;
  - iii. SMART building design;
  - iv. security systems;
  - v. work place health and safety;
  - vi. optimised indoor air quality; and
  - vii. energy efficiency.
12. Approved applications for one Non-Belongers land holding licence, First Leasehold Charge and to expand development on existing lease of Crown land for commercial use.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Cabinet Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2021**

His Excellency, the Governor Mr. Augustus J.U. Jaspert chaired the Meeting, which was held at the Financial Services Commission's Conference Room, Jones Building, Pasea Estate.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet:

1. Reviewed the Annual Report of the Governor's Office for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018 and decided that the Report be laid on the table at the next convenient Sitting of the House of Assembly.
2. Reviewed the Bid Evaluation Report by the Central Tenders Board (CTB) and accepted the recommendation to award Ernst & Young Limited a non-exclusive contract for Consultancy Services for Recovery of Unclaimed Property and Assets for the British Virgin Islands.
3. Decided that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 5 of the Financial Services Commission Act, 2001, Mr. William Gilmore be appointed to the Financial Services Commission's Board of Commissioners as Deputy Chair and Member for three (3) years from 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 to 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 and decided that the Ministry of Finance instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to prepare the Instrument of Appointment for signing and thereafter gazetted.
4. Approved the appointment of the following members to the Education Advisory Board with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 for a period of two (2) years:
  - i. Dr. Arlene Smith-Thompson, representing the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College;
  - ii. Dr. Quincy Lettsome, someone with expert educational opinion;
  - iii. Mrs. Derecia Scatliffe-Thomas, Elmore Stoutt High School PTA President, representing Parent Teacher Associations;
  - iv. Mr. Willis Potter, representing technological, vocational or business education;
  - v. Mr. Stacy Mather, representing organisations concerned with community development;
  - vi. Pastor Naaman Chalwell, representing the religious community;

- vii. Ms. Rochelle Lawrence, representing the business community;
  - viii. Mrs. Corine George-Massicot, representing the legal community;
  - ix. Mr. Kayron Todman and Mr. Hilroy George representing principals;
  - x. Mrs. Gracia Stevens, representing the sister islands; and
  - xi. Ms. Tammy Henry, Teachers' Union President, representing a duly recognised organisation representing teachers.
5. approved the naming of the Baugher's Bay Marina Development/Fisherman's Wharf and Park to the "Omar Wallace Hodge Fishermen's Wharf and Park" in honour of the late Omar Wallace Hodge; decided that the park be placed under the Recreation Trust for its management and maintenance, and decided that a planning committee be established to plan the ceremony for the occasion consisting of the following persons:
- i. Ms. Lorna Stevens, Assistant Secretary (Desk Officer for Recreation Trust) - Chairman;
  - ii. Ms. Janelle Hodge, representing the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries - Member;
  - iii. Mr. Kareem Nelson Hull, Representing the Sixth District Representative - Member;
  - iv. Ms. Nekita Turnbull, Information Officer - Member; and
  - v. Mr. Jeremy Hodge, Family Representative - Member.
6. Noted the summary of the Situation Report #33, as presented by the Health Emergency Operations Centre, and decided that:
- i. effective immediately, all persons approved to travel to the BVI originating or transiting through the Dominican Republic or the United Kingdom are required to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine on arrival provided they undergo a five-day rt-PCR testing regimen prior to arrival and on days 0 and 14; and
  - ii. in light of the prevalent cases of COVID-19 in the Dominican Republic and the new strain of COVID-19 prevalent in the United Kingdom (UK, to implement a travel ban effective Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 of persons travelling from the Dominican Republic and the UK to the British Virgin Islands, except for Nationals, Belongers, Residents, work

permit holders, persons permitted to reside in the Territory, diplomats and persons employed by Government and Statutory agencies.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Cabinet Meeting – 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2021**

His Excellency, the Acting Governor Mr. David Archer, Jr chaired the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, which was held at the Financial Services Commission's Conference Room, Jones Building, Pasea Estate.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet:

1. Considered and approved the Bill, which is to effect necessary amendments to the Financial Investigation Agency Act, 2003 (Act No. 19 of 2003), to enable the Financial Investigation Agency to better perform its anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism obligations attributable to it in preparation for the next Caribbean Financial Action Task Force mutual evaluation of the Virgin Islands, currently scheduled for this year. The Bill will be forwarded to the Attorney General's Chambers for review.
2. Recommended that the Bitter End Yacht Club Limited be granted a new Hotel Aid License for a period of five (5) years commencing 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2020 and ending 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2025 in accordance with the Hotel Aid (Amendment Act) 2005.
3. Decided that the Bill entitled, Supplementary Appropriation (2016) Act (2020) be introduced for its first reading in the House of Assembly at its next convenient Sitting.
4. Approved the establishment of a Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) under the Virgin Islands Shipping Registry (VISR) and decided:
  - a. to increase the Virgin Islands Shipping Registry's 2021 recurrent budget by \$595,000 in the requisite sub-heads to cover RCC's costs;
  - b. to increase the Premier's Office's 2021 Capital Vote by \$425,000 to cover the establishment and outfitting works for the RCC;
  - c. that the Vigilant II be re-assigned to VISR to lead search and rescue and support the additional maritime functions:
    - i. marine fire response;
    - ii. safety patrol and monitoring of VIRGIN ISLANDS waters;

- iii. maintenance of navigational aids;
    - iv. marine ambulatory transport between the sister islands and Tortola, in conjunction with HSA.
  - d. that funding for the expenditure be approved in the amount of \$1,020,000, via a Schedule of Additional Provision, to be approved by the House of Assembly at its earliest convenient Sitting; and
  - e. that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to review any existing Agreements and arrangements, relating to search and rescue in the Virgin Islands, that could impact this decision.
5. Noted the implementation of the BVI Electricity Corporation Amnesty Programme and its corresponding policy, and approved the immediate remittance of payment in the amount of one hundred and seven thousand, two hundred ninety-eight dollars and fifty-four cents (\$107,298.54) by way of the Government of the Virgin Islands' Consolidated Fund.
6. Reviewed the Bid Evaluation Report submitted by the technical sub-committee, which was approved by the Central Tenders Board (CTB); accepted the CTB's recommendation to award Proficient Business Services Ltd., as the lowest evaluated bidder, the Caribbean Development Bank funded contract for the supply and installation of ICT equipment for courts in the British Virgin Islands in the amount of two hundred eighty-six thousand, twenty-six dollars and forty-five cents (\$286,026.45).
7. Decided that the Social Security (Amendment) Act, 2014 be further amended to bring a number of areas in line with international standards and that amendments also address persons unable to make contributions due to unemployment or other extenuating circumstances. The Ministry will collaborate with the Attorney General's Chambers on the amendments.
8. Received the Health Emergency Operations Centre: Situation Report #34: Reopening Update and decided:
- a. that in light of the new strains of COVID-19 prevalent in South Africa and Brazil, to implement a travel ban, effective Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, on persons travelling from these countries to the British Virgin Islands, except for Nationals, Belongers, Residents, work permit holders, persons permitted to reside in the Territory, diplomats and persons employed by Government and Statutory Agencies; and
  - b. that effective immediately, all persons approved to travel to the BVI originating or transiting through South Africa or Brazil, are required to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine on arrival, provided they undergo a five-day rt-PCR testing regimen prior to arrival and on days 0 and 14.

9. Reviewed and approved the COVID-19 Vaccine Introduction Plan, which outlines the actions that need to be taken, before and after the vaccine arrives in the Territory, and the strategies involved in vaccinating the target population, as well as other important key steps including management and organisation, communication, information and evaluation; considered and approved that immunization of the population of the Virgin Islands be carried out on a voluntary basis; and considered and approved the Terms of Reference and Membership for the:

- i. BVI COVID-19 Vaccine Steering Committee;
- ii. BVI COVID-19 Vaccine Administration and Technical Sub-Committee;
- iii. BVI COVID-19 Community Mobilization Sub-Committee; and
- iv. BVI COVID-19 Communications Sub-Committee.

10. Approved a number of Non-Belongers land holding licence applications.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Published by the Cabinet Office on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.**

**###**

**Guidelines:**

1. Cabinet decisions will be published by the Cabinet Office following confirmation of the Minutes.
2. Only a summary of the decisions will be published.
3. Cabinet discussions will not be disclosed.
4. Cabinet decisions of a sensitive nature, matters of national security, those where publication breaches regional or international conventions and those relating to personal privacy will not be disclosed.
5. Cabinet decisions will be published in the weekly issues of the Virgin Islands Official Gazette at [www.eservices.gov.vg/gazette](http://www.eservices.gov.vg/gazette).
6. Cabinet decisions will be also available on [bvi.gov.vg](http://bvi.gov.vg) and on Twitter.