

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

### **CABINET DECISIONS**

28<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2021

#### **Cabinet Meeting – 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2021**

His Excellency, the Governor Mr. John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2021, which was held at the Financial Services Commission's Conference Room.

All Members were present, with the exception of the Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities Hon. Kye Rymer, who was away on personal leave.

The Cabinet:

1. Considered and approved the recommendation to amalgamate the British Virgin Islands Airports Authority and the British Virgin Islands Ports Authority to establish the Virgin Islands Air and Sea Ports Authority; noted the proposed legislation - Virgin Islands Air and Sea Ports Act, 2021; decided that the Premier's Office submit drafting instructions to the Attorney General's Chambers taking into consideration the draft legislation provided and that upon completion, the Premier's Office will resubmit to the Cabinet for approval, complete with a feasibility report, inclusive of a cost benefit analysis; and noted that the preliminary analysis indicates that there will not be loss of employment at any of the two entities.
2. Noted and endorsed the appointment of Mrs. Geraldine Ritter-Freeman as the Governor's representative to serve on the Recovery Development Agency (RDA) Board in accordance with section 7(1)(c)(ii) of the RDA Act, and decided that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the Instrument of appointment for the Governor's signature.
3. Reviewed and noted the revised fee structure, approved by the BVI Ports Authority following public consultation on the initial fees, which was approved by the Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020 and gazetted on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2020; decided that the revised fee structure in Schedule II of the BVI Ports Authority Regulations, 1995, be revoked; decided that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the amendments, and noted that the amendments reflective of the revised fee structure (Regulations) would be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration before being gazetted and laid on the table in the House of Assembly.

4. Decided:

- a. that the following persons be appointed/re-appointed, respectively, to the Prospect Reef Management Company Board for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2021:
    - i. Mrs. Tamara Maduro - Chairman
    - ii. Mrs. Kenisha Sprauve - Director
    - iii. Permanent Secretary/Premier's Office or Representative - *ex-officio*
    - iv. Financial Secretary or Representative - *ex-officio*
  - b. that the following persons be appointed to the Prospect Reef Management Company Board for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2021, in accordance with section 5(2) of the Prospect Reef Resort Management Act, 2005:
    - i. Mr. Nathaniel Isaac - Executive Director and Managing Director
    - ii. Ms. Trisha Evans – Director; and
  - c. that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the Instruments of appointment for signature.
5. Decided that the BVI Ports Authority Regulations, 1995; Regulation 103(a) be amended to exempt the BVI Electricity Corporation (BVIEC) from paying 10 cents per gallon on the fuel discharged through ships pipeline direct to the BVIEC facility located at Pockwood Pond and Anegada for a period of one (1) year with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2021; decided that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to amend the above Regulations; noted that the amended Regulations would be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration before being gazetted and laid on the table in the House of Assembly.
6. Reviewed and noted the Bill entitled, Virgin Islands Gaming and Betting Control (Amendment) Act, 2021, which seeks to amend various definitions in the principal Act to allow for online gaming and betting activities; decided that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet and amend the principal Act in accordance with the proposed amendments, to be resubmitted to the Cabinet for approval, before forwarding to the House of Assembly.
7. Noted that the National Security Council considered the proposal for funding the Criminal Courts Transformation Programme for the period 2021-2023 at its meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2021; received the report entitled, "Criminal Courts Transformation: Addressing the Backlog in the British Virgin Islands" and:
- a. agreed to the strategies that have been identified to reduce the backlog;

- b. agreed to fund temporary accommodation for the second Court, which is estimated to cost three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) in rental fees for a period of two (2) years, including costs for outfitting (prison cells, air conditioning, and IT systems) and furniture until the completion of Phase I of the Halls of Justice Building;
- c. decided to allocate the sum of one hundred and eighty thousand dollars (\$180,000) to strengthen the linkages between the criminal justice sector and to build capacity;
- d. approved additional funding of six hundred and seventeen thousand, eight hundred dollars (\$617,800) to fill critical legal and administrative positions within the legal Departments; and
- e. decided that funding does not exceed one million, ninety-seven thousand, eight hundred dollars (\$1,097,800) be sought through supplementary appropriation and to be allocated to the relevant accounts, pending availability of funds.

8. Decided that:

- a. a zero customs duty rate be applied to any renewable energy product/item presented being imported into the Territory for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2023;
- b. after the two-year duty free period, the customs duty applied to all renewable energy products/items being imported into the Territory be reduced to 10 percent across the board;
- c. after the two -year duty free period, the customs duty applied to all LED products/items being imported into the Territory, be reduced to a flat rate of 10 percent across the board;
- d. after the two-year duty free period, the customs duty applied to all energy efficient products/items being imported into the Territory, be reduced to a flat rate of 15 percent across the board;
- e. a policy decision be made for all government owned facilities to begin the process by changing all fluorescent and incandescent light bulbs and light fixtures to LED lighting and light fixtures;
- f. consideration be given for the conversion from gas and diesel to hybrid and electric for all government-owned vehicles;
- g. the Government through the Ministry of Finance explore opportunities with lending agencies to offer low interest short-term fixed loans to citizens for the purchase of renewable energy systems for their homes; and

- h. the Ministry of Finance instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to amend the Customs Management and Duties Act, 2010 (Amendment 2011) accordingly; and noted that the amendment must be presented to the Cabinet for approval before being forwarded to the House of Assembly.
9. Decided that Ms. Italia Penn (Chairman), Mr. Terence Gumbs (Member) and Mrs. C. Jovita Scatliffe (Member) be appointed to the Internal Audit Advisory Committee for a period of three (3) years, effect 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2021 in accordance to Section 8 (1) of the Virgin Islands Internal Audit Act 2011; decided that the Financial Secretary instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to prepare the Instruments of appointment; and noted that an allowance of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) will be paid to the Chairman and five hundred dollars (\$500.00) to the member, who is not a public officer, based on attendance, as per section 9 (4) of the Act..
10. Reviewed and considered the Bill entitled, Public Procurement Act, 2021 and Public Procurement Regulations 2021; agreed that the Bill be introduced for its first reading in the House of Assembly at the next convenient Sitting; and decided that the Public Procurement Regulations 2021 be published in the Official Gazette of the Virgin Islands and then laid on the table in the House of Assembly at the next convenient Sitting.

### **Cabinet Meeting – 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2021**

His Excellency, the Governor Mr. John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2021, which was held at the Financial Services Commission's Conference Room.

All Members were present, with the exception of the Premier and Minister of Finance Hon. Andrew A. Fahie, who was overseas on personal leave.

The Cabinet:

1. Noted the information presented on the National Disaster Management Council - Update of Names and Titles of Sub-committee Chairs.
2. Noted the information outlining the coordinated electricity restoration assistance provided from the region following the passage of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017.
3. Reviewed and accepted the Evaluation Report submitted by the Central Tenders Board's technical evaluation sub-committee, which was approved by the Central Tenders Board on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2021; and decided:

- a. to award Lawrence Wheatley *dba* Wheatley Construction the contract for the construction of a new social home in Greenland in the amount of one hundred, ninety-nine thousand, eight hundred and sixty dollars and ninety-eight cents (\$199,860.98); and
  - b. that the Ministry of Health and Social Development instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet the relevant agreement.
4. Approved two Non-Belonger Land Holding Licence applications.

**Published by the Cabinet Office on 10th June, 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.