

THE CABINET OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS - POST MEETING STATEMENT

CABINET DECISIONS

31st December, 2021

Cabinet Meeting – 31st December, 2021

His Excellency, the Governor John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held virtually on 31st December, 2021.

All Members were present.

1. Agreed to amend Sections 10(2), 19(1) and Schedule 2, Form Number 3 of the Elections Act, 1994 to make the period, which currently restricts voters to address omissions, name change, etc., to be a continuous one; approved the consolidation of Form Numbers 1, 3, 7, and 8, listed in Schedule 2 of the Elections Act, to include the collection of particulars of voters, as well as to facilitate changes of voters' residence in the same electoral district to be captured in the new Virgin Islands Voter Registration Form; and decided that the Office of the Deputy Governor provide drafting instructions to the Attorney General to make the necessary amendments to the legislation.
2. Decided to grant pioneer status to ACES Group Venture Ltd. in accordance with Section 3 of the Pioneer Services and Enterprises Ordinance (Cap. 297), First Schedule, Paragraph 2(b)(xiv), to engage in the service of "Provision of Manufacture of Concrete Blocks and related products" for a period of ten (10) years beginning on 1st September, 2021.
3. Reviewed and noted the House of Assembly Resolution No. 15 of 2020, approving an eleven (11) member Constitutional Review Commission; agreed to amend Cabinet decision to reflect the increase in membership from nine (9) to eleven (11) members; approved the appointment of the following persons to the Commission, nominated by the Premier, in accordance with the said Resolution, for a period not to exceed two (2) years with effect from 4th January, 2022:
 - i. Mrs. Lisa Penn-Lettsome - Chairman
 - ii. Ms. Janice Stoutt - Deputy Chairman
 - iii. Dr. Benedicta P. T. Samuels Ph.D. (Law) - Member
 - iv. Mr. Valston Michael Graham (Law) - Member
 - v. Sir Charles Michael Dennis Byron (Former Chief Justice) - Member/Resource Team

- vi. Ms. Maya Barry (Law) - Member
 - vii. Rev. Dr. Melvin A Turnbull - Member
 - viii. Mr. Rajah A Smith - Member
 - ix. Mr. Sendrick Chinnery - Member
 - x. Mr. Egbert D. Wheatley - Member
 - xi. Dr. Steve Lennard - Member
4. Considered and approved the amended BVI Business Companies (Amendment of Schedule 1) (No. 2) Order; decided that the Ministry of Finance instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet the Order; and decided that the Order be published in the Official Gazette of the Virgin Islands and thereafter forwarded to the House of Assembly to be laid on the table at the next convenient Sitting.
 5. Reviewed and accepted the evaluation report submitted by the Central Tenders Board (CTB) technical committee, which was approved by the CTB on 8th November, 2021; accepted the CTB's recommendation to award PricewaterhouseCooper Advisory Services Limited the contract for Consultancy Services for Public Service Compensation Review and Job Classification for the British Virgin Islands in the amount of three hundred and two thousand, one hundred three dollars (\$302,103.00); and decided that the Deputy Governor's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet the relevant agreement.
 6. Decided that the Government of the Virgin Islands enter into an agreement with R. G. Hodge Plaza to provide office accommodation for the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and that the Deputy Governor's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet the lease.
 7. Decided that the membership of the Salt Island Lands Advisory Committee (SILAC) be comprised of the following: Leonard Family (Mr. Wallace Leonard and Mr. Paul Leonard); Smith Family (Ms. Lydia Durante and Mr. Sean Durrant); Abbott Family (Mr. Roosevelt Smith and Mr. Arnold C. Smith) and Thomas Family (Dr. Charles Wheatley, OBE and Mr. Melvin Stoutt) and agreed that the details of the Committee's role and function include:
 - a. in conjunction with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and in consultation/collaboration with appropriate experts, develop recommendations for a Land Use and Development Master Plan for the island that takes into account the following:
 - i. preservation of the salt ponds and other natural resources, including beaches, and lagoon;
 - ii. preservation of the ancestral and historical burial grounds;

- iii. preservation of cultural traditions such as “pond breaking” and the preferential harvesting of salt by Salt Islanders;
 - iv. preservation of historical names of places, historical sites, buildings, and cultural landmarks;
 - v. determination of acreage available for land distribution;
 - vi. identification (zoning) of land for residential, commercial, recreational, common area, or other use;
 - vii. identification of infrastructure developments such as the wharf, roads, water distribution, electricity, solid waste, public restrooms, and sewage to support residential and commercial activities;
 - viii. identification of green zones and reforestation of the island. (A number landmark trees were destroyed in Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017);
 - ix. protection of any endangered or threatened species, e.g., plants, birds, animals, etc.
- b. to conduct a fair and equitable allocation of lots pursuant to an exercise of distributing Crown Land on Salt Island, utilizing approved criteria to aid the selection and distribution process;
 - c. recommend maximum size of individual lots;
 - d. to recommend how title of land will be held: freehold or leasehold;
 - e. to oversee all aspects of the management, maintenance and securing records of all applicants in relation to allocation of Crown Land on Salt Island;
 - f. to advise the Minister for Natural Resources Labour and Immigration as requested, with regard to matters concerning the fair and equitable distribution of Crown Land on Salt Island;

- g. to review and make recommendations with regard to all applications for the allocation of lots on Salt Island, utilizing the approved criteria and the conditions by which land would be allocated as follows:
 - i. consideration for granting of free and clear title to families who continually lived on Salt Island and maintained their primary homes on the island;
 - ii. consideration for lots shall be for residential (housing) purposes with the view of having land remain in the family;
 - iii. consideration of lease lots for commercial purposes; and
 - iv. preference may be given for lots to persons who demonstrate that they are ready to build within five (5) years of acquiring lot.
- h. to increase the number of years to twenty (20) given to land owners (crown land) before land can be sold and in the event that this should happen, the Government of the Virgin Islands has first preference or right of refusal in purchasing the crown land (undeveloped land) back from land recipients for redistribution to other Salt Islander applicants who did not receive crown land in the Virgin Islands.
- i. additionally, after twenty (20) years of ownership, if persons wish to part with possession of said land, the land must remain in the possession of a member of the family branch. They will be required to refrain from selling to persons not of Salt Island descent and to seek other options i.e. leasing, renting, or transfer to a relative of the same family line, whichever is possible.
- j. that the Government of the Virgin Islands provide a proposed master plan developed in conjunction with the Salt Island Advisory Committee to demonstrate the layout of the proposed residential or commercial designs that would be expected to be erected on the said lots. Purchasers would be required to adhere to such guidelines to achieve the desired ambience of the location.

- k. to submit semi-annual reports to the Minister for Natural Resources, Labour, and Immigration. The Reports shall contain a full record of the Committee's Minutes of Meetings, details of the Committee's procedure and deliberation inclusive of the Committee's recommendations, advice, and reasons for the respective recommendation.
8. Approved four applications to use the seabed for the installation of a Mooring Buoy in the following areas: Hodges Creek, Mosquito Island, Cane Garden Bay and Setting Point, Anegada.
9. Approved three Non-Belonger Land Holding Licence applications and compensation for encroachment to private property for use as a public road.

Published by the Cabinet Office on 20th January, 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.
6. Cabinet decisions will be also available on bvi.gov.vg and on Twitter.

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