

THE CABINET OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS - POST MEETING STATEMENT

CABINET DECISIONS

23rd February, 2022
2nd, 11th and 16th March, 2022

Cabinet Meeting – 23rd February, 2022

His Excellency, the Governor John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held virtually on 23rd February, 2022.

All Members were present, with the exception of the Attorney General, who was on annual leave.

The Cabinet:

1. Agreed that the Governor appoint Friday, 3rd June, 2022 as a Public Holiday to allow for the celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee; advised the Governor to issue a Proclamation, pursuant to section 5(b) of the Public Holidays Act, Cap. 199 of the Laws of the Virgin Islands, Revised Edition 1991 to designate the Public Holiday; noted that \$20,000 has been allocated for related event expenses; and decided that the Governor's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the proclamation to give effect to the decision.
2. Decided and approved:
 - a. the term Ministerial Political Adviser be replaced with the term Special Adviser, wherever it appears inclusive of the Job Description and the Code of Conduct;
 - b. that the following paragraphs replace the paragraphs under the section, 'Qualifications and Experience' in the job description as follows:
 - i. Candidates of interest must possess experience and qualifications to meet the requirements of the role; and
 - ii. the Premier will evaluate the resumes of those being considered and determine who is best suited for the position.

- c. all other terms in the job description, previously approved by the Cabinet, remain unchanged.

3. Decided:

- a. that a period of amnesty of interests accrued on property tax be granted from 1st March, 2022 through 28th February, 2023;
 - b. that the period of amnesty noted in decision sought (a) will be superseded if a relevant amendment to the Property Tax Act (CAP 207) is passed by the House of Assembly;
 - c. that decision sought (a) be made available to property owners to pay the outstanding principal tax forthwith or agree to a payment plan with the Commissioner of Inland Revenue to liquidate the principal tax within the amnesty period;
 - d. that the Ministry of Finance provides the Cabinet with an update of the outcome of this amnesty on accrued interest as soon as the report becomes available;
 - e. on the establishment of a Working Group to review the current legislation and make recommendations for relevant amendments to the provisions regarding accrued interest on property tax within one (1) month; and noted that the Financial Secretary will work with the Inland Revenue Department to collaborate with the Department of Information and Public Relations to initiate a promotional campaign ensuring that Cabinet's decision is widely circulated in an effort to inform all property owners.
4. Considered and approved the International Tax Authority (Administrative Penalties) Regulations 2022; instructed that the draft Regulations be made before being 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. Retroactively approved the waiver of the tender process to procure security services to provide secured transport services of Government funds (revenue) collected from various departments and transferred to the designated bank for the period 1st January to 30th April, 2022; and decided that:
- a. Top Priority Security Services be contractually engaged for a four-month period from 1st January to 30th April, 2022 to allow for the completion of the tender process;

- b. the Government of the Virgin Islands enter into an agreement with Top Priority for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) for the four-month period;
- c. decided that the 2021 Cabinet decision be amended to reflect the accurate sum of two hundred and ninety thousand and ninety-five dollars (\$290,095.00) paid to Top Priority Security Services; and
- d. decided that the Ministry of Finance instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet the draft contract.

6. Decided:

- a. that the formal tender process be waived and a new engagement arrangement be entered into with Withers LLP for a period of three (3) months with effect from 1st March, to 31st May, 2022 for legal advice and representation to the Government, in respect of the extension granted to the Commission of Inquiry, in collaboration with the Attorney General, with payment, not to exceed one million, two hundred thousand dollars (\$1.2M); and
- b. that funding in an amount, not to exceed one million, two hundred thousand dollars (\$1,2M) be approved via a Schedule of Additional Provision at the earliest Sitting of the House of Assembly.

7. Noted the 2021 Royalty Report, which shows that a total of sixteen thousand, six hundred and sixty-one dollars and eighty-nine cents (\$16,661.89) had been received in 2021 as coin Royalties from Pobjoy Mint Limited.

8. Approved one application for the lease of Crown land.

Cabinet Meeting – 2nd March, 2022

His Excellency, the Governor John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held at the Financial Services Commission's Resource Centre on 2nd March, 2022.

All Members were present, with the exception of the Minister for Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture and the Attorney General, who were on official overseas travel and annual leave, respectively.

The Cabinet:

1. Decided that, subject to the approval of the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, the proposal for one (1) coin each for the Platinum Jubilee of the Accession of the Queen Elizabeth II, and the 75th Anniversary of The Last Walking Liberty Half Dollar, be minted by Pobjoy Mint Ltd., in accordance with the five (5) year agreement between Pobjoy Mint Ltd. and the Government of the Virgin Islands.
2. Considered and approved the Bill entitled, Stamp (Amendment) Act, 2022, which seeks to introduce certain economic stimulus measures in response to the effects of COVID-19 virus and:
 - a. decided that the Bill be introduced for its first reading in the House of Assembly at the next convenient Sitting;
 - b. approved the Statutory Rates, Fees and Charges (Amendment of Schedule) Order, 2022; decided that the Order be gazetted; and
 - c. approved and decided that the draft Resolution required for amending Part 42 of the Schedule to the Statutory Rates, Fees and Charges Act be forwarded to the House of Assembly for action via the Cabinet Office.
3. Approved that the tender process be waived to renew the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force's (RVIPF) agreement with DNA Labs International to provide DNA Analysis for the RVIPF and:
 - a. approved the renewal of the agreement with DNA Labs International for an initial period of one (1) year with effect from 15th August, 2021, with a yearly option for renewal up to four (4) years in the amount of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) per year,
 - b. decided that a new procurement process for DNA Analysis Services be carried out and completed prior to 15th August, 2022; and
 - c. decided that the Office of the Deputy Governor instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to vet the contract.
4. Decided that:
 - a. the Wickham's Cay Development Authority Ordinance (Cap. 281) be amended to reflect an expanded scope for the Wickham's Cay Development Authority, inclusive of a Board of Directors and a City Manager's Office;

- b. the Wickham's Cay Development Authority Ordinance's provision to make regulations be broadened to include mechanisms for the management of the assets vested in the Authority;
- c. the Authority be reclassified as a corporate body with perpetual succession and a common seal capable of suing and being sued in the name of the Wickham's Cay Development Authority and, subject to the provisions of the Wickham's Cay Development Authority Ordinance, of performing such acts as corporate bodies may by law perform;
- d. the Wickham's Cay Development Authority's Board of Directors shall consist of:
 - i. a Chairman, appointed by the Minister in Council, after prior approval for such appointment has been obtained by a Resolution passed in the House of Assembly;
 - ii. not less than three (3), but not exceeding five (5) appointed members, who shall not be public officers and such members shall be appointed by the Minister in Council, having taken into account the desirability of such interests as affected by the Authority's activities being represented; and
 - iii. five (5) *ex officio* members, who shall be the persons holding office for the time being as:
 - 1. Permanent Secretary of the Ministry responsible for the management of the Territory's infrastructural development, or if he or she is unable to attend any meeting of the Authority, any other officer authorised by him or her to attend and vote on his or her behalf at that meeting;
 - 2. Permanent Secretary of the Ministry responsible for the management of the Territory's natural resources, or if he or she is unable to attend any meeting of the Authority, any other officer authorised by him or her to attend and vote on his or her behalf at that meeting;
 - 3. the Chief Planner of the Town and Country Planning Department, or if he or she is unable to attend any meeting of the Authority, any other officer authorised by him or her to attend and vote on his or her behalf at that meeting;

4. the General Manager of the Authority or if he or she is unable to attend any meeting of the Authority, any other officer authorised by him or her to attend and vote on his or her behalf at that meeting; and
 5. the City Manager, or if he or she is unable to attend any meeting of the Authority, any other officer authorised by him or her to attend and vote on his or her behalf at that meeting.
 - e. appointed members must be made up of professional persons possessing a minimum of five (5) years' experience and a proven track record in one or more of the fields of Financial Management, Property/Estate Management, Environmental Management, Business Administration, and Law;
 - f. that the Wickham's Cay Development Authority shall pay to all or any of its appointed members, such remuneration, fees, and allowances for expenses as may be approved by Cabinet;
 - g. the scope of the Wickham's Cay Development Authority under Clause 5 of the Ordinance be broadened
 - h. a business case with a strategic plan is to be developed for the corporate body to guide its financial planning towards being self-sustained by its fifth year of operations; and
 - i. the Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities instruct the Attorney General Chambers to allow for the drafting of the amendments.
5. Approved a land exchange on Virgin Gorda between Christina Yates and the Crown.
 6. Noted the Situation Report #44 presented by the Health Emergency Operations Centre - Unified Command and decided:
 - a. to remove the limitations on the gathering sizes as noted in the Public Health (COVID-19 Control and Suppression Measures) (No.4) Amendment Order, 2022;
 - b. that organisers and promoters of events anticipated or likely to attract more than three hundred (300) persons shall notify the Environmental Health Division not less than five (5) days prior to the event;

- c. that the quarantine period for unvaccinated persons entering the Territory shall be reduced to five (5) days; and
- d. that the Ministry of Health and Social Development instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the relevant amendments necessary to give immediate effect until 31st March, 2022 to items (b) and (c) of the decision sought.

Cabinet Meeting – 11th March, 2022

His Excellency, the Governor John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held at the Premier's Conference Room on 11th March, 2022.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet

1. Noted the update provided by the Department of Disaster Management on the progress made toward Emergency Management Reaccreditation for the Territory.
2. Reviewed and concurred with the Resolution from the Board of the Recovery and Development Agency (RDA) to appoint Mr. Anthony McMaster as the Chief Executive Officer of the RDA in accordance with Section 13(1) of the Virgin Islands Recovery and Development Act, 2018, with effect from 2nd December, 2021, for a period not to exceed the lifespan of the Agency.
3. Decided to grant a renewal of pioneer status to the applicant, Eureka Medical Clinic Limited, in accordance with Section 3 of the Pioneer Services and Enterprises Ordinance (Cap. 297), First Schedule, Paragraph (a) (xxv), to engage in the service of "Major Health Clinic/Hospital/Health Spa Equipment" for a period of three (3) years beginning on 1st February, 2022; and decided that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the necessary Order to effect same.
4. Considered and approved the Bill entitled, International Tax Authority (Amendment) Act, 2022 and decided that the Bill be introduced for its first reading in the House of Assembly at the next convenient Sitting.
5. Approved an application for permission to use the seabed for the installation of jetties of Trellis Bay, Beef Island for Aycayia Ventures Limited.

Cabinet Meeting – 16th March, 2022

His Excellency, the Governor John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the Meeting held at the Financial Services Commission's Resource Centre on 16th March, 2022.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet

1. Decided:

- a. and appointed the following persons to the Board of Commission of the Virgin Islands Trade Commission Board as members, in accordance with Section (6)(1)(a) to (g) of the Virgin Islands Trade Commission Act, 2020:
 - i. Trade Commissioner - *ex-officio*
 - ii. Mr. Michael Fay - legal practitioner for a period of three (3) years with effect from 1st April 2022 to 31st March, 2025;
 - iii. Mr. Wendell Gaskin - a representative from the education/private business sector for a period of three (3) years with effect from 1st April, 2022 to 31st March, 2025;
 - iv. Ms. Melissa Farara - a representative from the social sector for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1st April 2022 to 31st March, 2024;
 - v. Ms. Lavina Liburd - a representative from the environment/a business and trade association - Member (BVICCHA Representative) for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1st April 2022 to 31st March, 2024;
 - vi. Mr. Hakim Creque for a period of two (2) years with effect from 1st April 2022 to 31st March, 2024;
 - vii. Ms. Sasha Hodge for a period of three (3) years with effect from 1st April, 2022 to 31st March, 2025;
- b. that:
 - i. Mr. Hakim Creque be appointed to the Board of Commission as the person from the Sister Islands in accordance with Section 6(2)(a) of the Act;

- ii. Ms. Melissa Farara be appointed to the Board of Commission as the youth between the age of eighteen (18) and thirty-five (35) in accordance with Section 6(2)(b) of the Act; and accepted the Minister's recommendations to appoint Mr. Michael Fay as Chairperson and Ms. Sasha Hodge as Deputy Chairperson in accordance with Section 6(3) of the Act; and
 - iii. the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the Instruments of appointment for signature.
2. Decided to grant pioneer status to the applicant, Karia Christopher Inc. in accordance with Section 3 of the Pioneer Services and Enterprises Ordinance (Cap. 297), First Schedule, Paragraph (a) (xvii), to engage in the service of "Filming, Film Processing, Television and Video Works" for a period of ten (10) years beginning on 1st March, 2022; and decided that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the necessary Order to effect same.
3. Decided to grant a renewal of pioneer status to the applicant, Bougainvillea Clinic Limited, in accordance with Section 3 of the Pioneer Services and Enterprises Ordinance (Cap. 297), First Schedule, Paragraph (a) (xxix), to engage in the enterprise of "Major Health Clinic/Hospital/Health Spa Equipment" for a period of five years (5) years beginning on 1st February, 2022; and decided that the Premier's Office instruct the Attorney General's Chambers to draft the necessary Order to effect same.

Published by the Cabinet Office on 31st March, 2022.

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.

###