



**Government of the United States Virgin Islands
Public Services Commission**

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PSC Regular Meeting and Public Hearing

The Virgin Islands Public Services Commission (PSC) held a Regular Meeting and Public Hearing today, Wednesday, February 22, 2023. There was no executive session held. The Commission heard testimony on several matters from VITELCO and the Virgin Islands Water & Power Authority (WAPA). The Waste Management Authority (WMA) was set to come before the Commission, but no representative was present. There was also no representation from LAN Communications.

In December 2022, the Commission received a Petition for Forbearance from VITELCO, doing business as Viya. The Petition seeks relief from rate regulations and other requirements not applied to other telecommunication carriers. Technical consultant Walter Schweikert of Georgetown Consulting Group reported on public comments received by the Commission; no decisions were made regarding the Petition.

The VITELCO Rate Investigation concluded that although VITELCO's investment in the company may justify a rate increase, competition precludes VITELCO from increasing its rates. VITELCO instead asked, and the Commission found that it is in the interest of both customers and VITELCO to cap their rates at current levels and allow the company to reduce its rates further if necessary or appropriate.

The Commission also heard reports on customer service matters, such as low response, repair, and installation times. Viya CEO Geraldine Pitt said they were "fully committed to getting it right."

The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority came before the Commission on several issues:

- The test of the new Wartsila units will commence next month, March 2023. Ashley Bryan, WAPA's Interim Chief Operating Officer, said that once the units are fully online, monthly savings of \$3 million is expected.
- The Customer Service Regulations have been moved to the March agenda so that PSC and WAPA's general counsel can finalize the terms of the document.
- During the WAPA LEAC discussion, CEO Andrew Smith expressed that WAPA is progressing with VITOL settlement negotiations. After the negotiations, WAPA expects to own the terminals once a propane supplier is identified.
- WAPA filed a Petition for a new Water LEAC rate this morning; this Petition will be considered at a future meeting.

Core Development – Longford Microgrid Development, a solar and battery power supplier, was granted Qualified Facility status.

The Commission expressed concerns to WAPA that none of the Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) discussed at prior meetings for solar power, battery storage, and wind have been concluded. The Commission directed WAPA and Advance Power (wind power on both St. Croix and St. Thomas) to return to the Commission with completed agreements at the Commission’s next meeting on March 14, 2023.

The Commission also heard from WAPA and Christian Loranger of VI Electron regarding solar power. All were strongly urged to move forward as expeditiously as possible.

All four Commission members (David Hughes, Pedro Williams, Andrew Rutnik, and Raymond Williams) were in attendance.

Learn more about the VIPSC matters and efforts by visiting the Facebook page and website – www.psc.vi.gov

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