**Minutes of the Virgin Islands Taxicab**

**August 23, 2021**

Today the Virgin Islands Taxi Commission opened with Chairperson Lloyd welcoming all present. She then read what she called her “dissertation” as it pertains to respect for self and others. As that was completed, she told the Members they were present to decide on 1 of the 4 applicants for Executive Director that were interviewed. From the St. Thomas/St. John District, she said Vernice Gumbs applied, from the BVI Damien Percival applied, from the St. Croix District Carol Jackson and Linda Smith applied. She stated that we all listened and asked questions and we know that Mr. Percival did not qualify because during his interview the Board realized that he did not have the proper immigration status to work in the United States as he alluded to. With that noted, Chairperson Lloyd stated there were only 3 applicants as Mr. Percival was disqualified. She noted he would have been a good candidate seeing that he was once the Director of the Taxi Commission in the BVI, but he cannot be considered because of his immigration status. At our meeting on Friday, we gave reasons why we would not consider Carol Jackson therefore, the two candidates are Vernice Gumbs and Linda Smith.

With that said, Lloyd asked for votes, beginning with Member Sweeney. Member Sweeney said he saw Ms. Linda Smith as his choice; however, the Board would need to address the Budget issues in reference to housing and travel between districts. He noted they were both excellent candidates. Either way it goes, he wants to see a Deputy Director in the other District so that decisions and actions can be made.

Lloyd then asked Member Georges. Georges said he believed Ms. Smith would be the candidate of choice but he too had a problem with the Budget. If that does not get cleared up, we will have an issue. He stated that Smith said she can stay a couple days in a family house but of course at some point they would need to be compensated. Whoever the Director is, that person must be on St. Thomas Office at least 3 weeks per month.

Lloyd then asked Secretary George the same question. My selection would have been Percival because he is very familiar with the Taxi Industry, being that he worked in that capacity in the BVI. He not being qualified; my next selection would be Ms. Smith. She is bilingual and has knowledge of grant writing. For those reasons, I would choose her. I agree with my colleagues

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that the Budget is an issue, but it does not matter where the individual lives, she will have to travel to the other District as VITCC in any district is a mess. I am not drawing any lines in the sand; I see Ms. Smith as the most qualified. However, if we don’t have the money, I am humble enough to accept Ms. Gumbs, she is just as qualified. Also, Member Brathwaite has called in his selection for Ms. Vernice Gumbs.

Lloyd stated that she listened to both candidates, and it does not matter which island she comes from. When she contrasts them, both Smith and Gumbs have the same qualifications, especially in grant writing, website knowledge, leadership. Gumbs was able to quote the law. When I asked Smith about the job of the enforcement officer, she quoted Title 20 which was incorrect. She spoke a lot but not all was of substance. They are equally qualified. She voted for Ms. Vernice Gumbs. Not having the Budget is concerning so what will we do? She said she will look at vacancies and try to move some money around. She worked with the Government for 38 ½ years. Gumbs also has a lot of contact with various officials. We need to hear from Watley and Paris as both were absent.

Because they were not present Lloyd went on to say that she continued to speak with P&P Commissioner Thomas on the Lease and trying to get the reduction of the rent at the St. Thomas Office as well as seeking a new location for the St. Croix Office. We still must deal with Tanya Paul. Lloyd then asked Secretary George if she looked for any files that the IG may have taken. George stated she will be at the Office tomorrow, August 24th. George noted that Special Assistant Eulatemae Joseph returned to the St. Thomas Office today, August 24 and that Carol Joseph went on vacation today August 24th as well.

Chairperson Lloyd said ACT #8162 establishes a local website. We would allow the new Executive Director to implement that when she comes on board. Lloyd said she was told all Agencies responded except VITCC. We need to respond and become a part of this. Lloyd also stated that Eulatemae Joseph sent an email on 26Jul that Members must now be paid via Vendor #. Lloyd spoke with Mrs. Lindo at Finance and found that not to be true so we will ignore what Joseph said and continue as we have been. Additionally, Lloyd investigated the short pay on Mena’s payroll for July 30th. Lindo told Lloyd to have the new Director send a letter and Lindo said she would clear this up. McIntosh was also short 56 hours, and she will handle that as well. Secretary George reminded Lloyd that some of McIntosh time is sick time so we must make that distinction. McIntosh stated she would like to be trained to input Payroll in Time Force. Secretary George said she would wait until the new Executive Director comes in as this is operations. Lloyd stated Officer Dawson sent in an Annual Leave slip from September 1, 2021, to September 30, 2021. She is not sure if he can take an entire month off. That is up for discussion as we must handle these situations while there is no director. Sweeney said September is a low month so it may be the appropriate time to do it. After that, it’s going to

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get busy again. George and Georges agreed. Georges said going forward, he hopes the Executive Director will set an advance calendar for vacation scheduling. That was one of the items she told Shane Benjamin to do, and he never did.

Again, Member Sweeney stated that it is imperative that the other District hire a Deputy Director. He then asked that we make the decision to get a Deputy Director sooner than later.

Secretary George said we would need a job description for that position as there is currently done. Georges said he thinks the Executive Director should have a say in the Deputy Director’s selection or there could be some contention. Sweeney asked what the salary would be for the position. Secretary George said she would say $60,000.00 and asked if anyone else had a number in mind. Lloyd said she would prefer $65,000.00.

As the Board was awaiting Vice Chair Watley to come in the Room and vote, Secretary George asked Chairperson Lloyd to proceed and she would call Watley and see if she can get her vote from her and report it to the Board,

Lloyd then reported that the Time Clock was again not working so BIT promised to come back in. George said she will be at the Office tomorrow. Lloyd said we need to check to see if Eulatemae Joseph got into her computer. Georges said if she could not get in, she should have called us by now and not us trying to call her and Sweeney agreed.

Lloyd also said we have the Rules and Regulations from 2011 and we need to take those and look at them, update them and get them promulgated.

Secretary George stated that after leaving messages for Vice Chair Watley, she never responded.

Sweeney stated that all the Boards of VITCC, from conception, have always had their challenges. He mentioned the Executive Director before Director Sarauw went to St. Martin and South America without knowledge of the Board and thus it was his opinion that person was operating as if the Director was responding to the Governor and not the Board. Georges stated that the prior Board was also having issues as well. He mentioned that Eulatemae Joseph received two raises during Director Sarauw’s tenure. The raises should have been approved by the Board and they were not. He went ahead and did it on his own.

Lloyd said when the Hearing was held on the Citation on St. Croix, she believed Sweeney would be in the Office. Sweeney said the Office was too small, so he held the Hearing in the back of a Safari. Secretary George said that should not have happened. It should have been postponed and an appointment made to use the Conference Room and P&P. Lloyd agreed and then went

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on to discuss tat report given by Sweeney on the Hearing. This was the Hearing of Feldom Mills and Warren Brooks.

Georges said we said this meeting was going to be short. He wanted us to make the decision about who the Director would be. George said there were 3 votes for Smith and 2 votes for Gumbs. Ms. Linda Smith is the selected Executive Director. Secretary George will check the payroll cycle to see which Monday would be best to bring in Ms. Smith. George would advise everyone in the Whats App chat. All letters will be sent thanking each applicant for their interest and Ms. Smith will be sent a letter of congratulations and a recommended start date. Sweeney wanted to know if we can entertain Laurie Hodge-Brooks as the Deputy Director and George told him no because he said the other person should come from the St. Thomas-St. John District. Sweeney also said George said the Hearing should be held in a Safari. Since he asked for guidance, the Board told him going forward he should not do that. Georges did commend him for trying to push through and it was understood why he did it.

**New Business**: Lloyd said Director McIntosh sent us a draft of Safari Manufacturing Instructions and the Application. The Board needs to look at it and make recommendations so that McIntosh can have our input. Sweeney noted there are 2- 25 passenger vehicles and 2-18 passenger vehicles. The 25 passengers were built on St. Croix and the 18 seaters were built on St. Thomas. The Board noted there must be clarity as to how the St. Croix drivers would be accommodated.

Secretary George said that Members Sweeney, Georges, Paris and Brathwaite should be the ones to give the most input in this area as they are in the industry.

By the way, Vice Chair Watley finally called in at 1:52 minutes into the meeting and stated she had an emergency with Tourism. She said she would try to join the meeting now; however, the vote was made for the Executive Director already.

Lloyd stated that Policy Advisor Toya Malone is working with her for the areas that VITCC needs help with. Waiting for him to call her back. We need the name of the two manufactures on St. Croix who will certify Safaris on St. Croix will be spearheaded by Member Georges. In terms of payroll at Finance, it must be submitted with signature of the Board Chair. We received a report of an accident by Officer Dawson on St. Croix with the VITCC vehicle. There was a complaint from Watley of Officer Dawson on 8/18 at the Cruise Ship dock. With his month off, Watley said we should make a quick contact with him and discuss before he goes on his months’ vacation. Lloyd told her to have him make a report of that day. There was some hesitation, but she agreed.

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Watley was briefed on the selection of Ms. Linda Smith and that we would be seeking a Deputy Director for the St. Thomas Office/District. Lloyd said there are 3 vacant positions, and she would tap into that area to get the money for the Deputy Director.

Lloyd stated that Chief of Staff Karl Knight called her this morning, but she did not elaborate as to how it related to the VITCC Board.

Georges said he went to the St. Thomas Office to place his son’s name on his Medallion record where it would be Vincent Georges and his son’s name. He was told that there would be $300.00 for each of them. He did not mind paying the $300.00 for his son’s name to go on but did not see why he would have to pay again since his name is there. No one agreed to this process and Watley said we should reduce the fee to $250.00.

After 2 hours, Sweeney had to leave the meeting. Secretary George then asked the Board what they would be doing with Special Assistant Eulatemae Joseph. No one really answered. It is to be left alone until the new Executive Director comes on and the Director then makes the recommendation as to whether she goes or stays.

Watley again stated that the Board can go ahead and get a Uniform Policy in place prior to the Executive Director’s arrival. Georges said there is a uniform top so all that’s needed is a uniform bottom. Secretary George said the Board should write a letter to the ED, directing her to implement the Uniform Policy by the Board. Watley said the Government has a standard for Uniforms already.

Through the Chair, Member Georges said that the Secretary should resubmit the directives they gave her and have the deadline of 24 hours. Watley said she already had the directive, there is no need to give her the same directive. The Directive stands already, Watley said. Her approach would have been that on such a date the Board expected it on a certain date. Secretary George said she will be in the Office tomorrow, and she will ask Eulatemae for the information requested. The Vice Chair said to ask her in writing for what was requested in the past. It needs to be documented that she did not turn in the requested information.

\***Present at this meeting were Chairperson Lloyd, Secretary George, Member Georges, Member Sweeney. After 1 hour 52 minutes, Watley joined the meeting. Paris was absent and Brathwaite was absent but voted via proxy for Vernice Gumbs for Executive Director.**

This meeting ending after 2 ½ hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Myrna S. George

Secretary, VITCC

