

## Biden - Debt limit:

'America will not default' — Page 10



# ART THURSDAY



INSIDE

## Ex- PM Liz Truss:

Wams of threats posed by China — Page 15



# St. Croix Avis



USVI 179th YEAR

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2023, NO. 114

75¢

# VIPA heralds the future of VI airports

M.A. DWORKIN

ST. CROIX — The future is in the hands of those who step forth and make it happen.

At a community meeting on Tuesday evening at the Rohlsen Airport Terminal, VI Port Authority Executive Director Carlton

Dowe and the Virgin Islands Port Authority Board members (VIPA), along with Frasca & Associates laid out an exciting and detailed plan of how the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport and the Cyril E. King Airport can lead the USVI into a bold new vision for the future.

The plan and outline of action

that will bring the project to fruition by Dowe and his team of skilled professionals is nothing short of turning the Virgin Islands into a world-class destination. It begins the moment you step off the plane and move through the beautiful, ultra-modern airline terminals. You are

immediately hit by the unmistakable impression that you have now entered a grouping of islands that are flush with class and distinction.

"It is critical to the entire community," Dowe stated as he took to the podium. "We must care about our home look."

Dowe is a man who does not mince his words. He is a force of nature, a powerhouse, brimming with grand ideas and passions for the islands that are so dear to him. He has the talents, the smarts, and the experience to

VIPA, PAGE 4



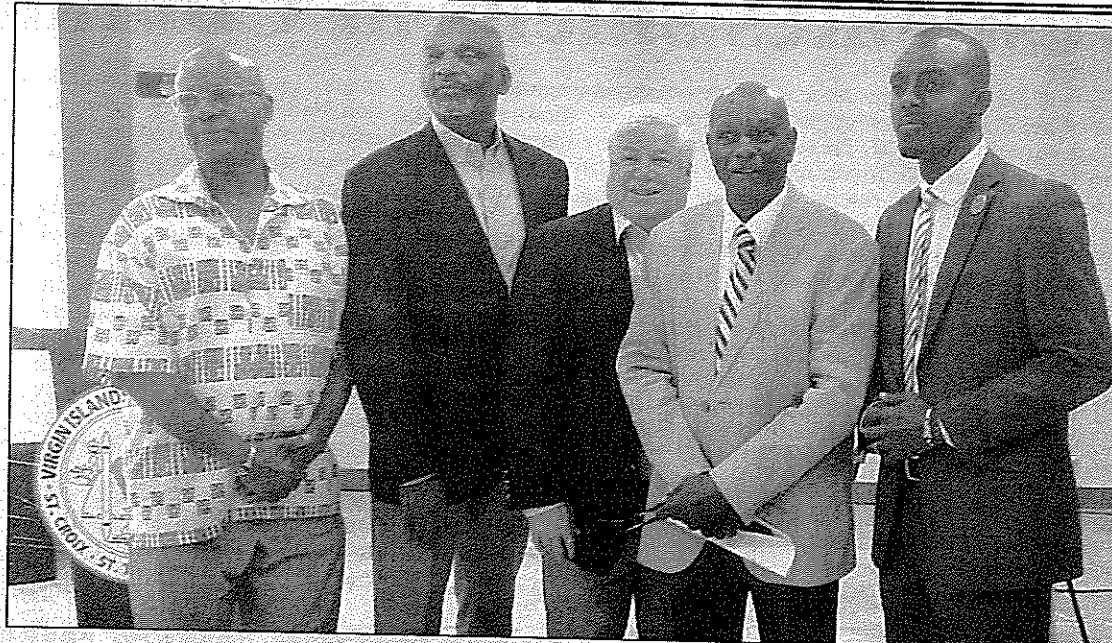
**VIPA:**

FROM PAGE 1

see the goal posts, ninety-five yards off in the distance, and he has the patience and cunning to drive the ball down field, one first down at a time, until he is victorious in the end zone.

Truth be told, when you have a governor like Gov. Albert Bryan Jr., who has a similar breadth of vision about the Virgin Islands that is very similar to Dowe, it makes for a dynamic duo of a force that sees the future of the islands in a way that is Super Bowl bound. They both seem to be calling out: Look out world, here we come!

The plan starts out with the extremely popular P3 Structure, which is an innovative way of getting major projects done. The P3, which is being used successfully all over the U.S. is simply a way in which to finance the airport upgrades. Public/private partnership (P3) is an air-tight proven method and a common financing model that has been used to build airports, bridges, highways and other transportation systems throughout the U.S. and Europe. It has tremendous benefit to taxpayers because the project is financed using private funds rather than public/government monies. The end result, in this case, is the people of the USVI get two modernized airport facilities without having to bear the enormous cost. The operation of the airports pays for the upgrades and to boot there is an infusion of expertise and enhanced management of the airports from a private entity that



VIPA heralds the future of VI airports. From (left to right) Willard John, Juan Pitman and Larry Belinski from Frasca & Associates, Carlton Dowe, Sen. Javan James

Submitted photo

has solid airport management experience.

The P3 Model makes sense in so many ways that it is easy to understand why it is so widely used in today's marketplace.

"We've outgrown the 30 year old airport," Dowe stated. "We have a 10,000 foot runway that can accommodate any aircraft that has been built so far. And we have 400 acres sitting right across from us that is perfect for someone to come in and build a hotel. We have to realize the world is not waiting for the Virgin Islands, we have got to be aggressive and press the envelope ourselves."

The highlights of the timeline which Dowe's Team has drawn up includes: Issue RFQ (Request for Quotes) on December 28, 2022; Recommendation of short-list respondents, week of April 3, 2023; Proposal Submission Deadline, December 5, 2023; February 2024, VIPA Board Approves Preferred Proposer; 4th Quarter 2024, Ground-breaking for the development of the airport terminals.

As of the day of the Community Meeting there were four Selected Qualified Proposers chosen:

- Daa International which is a global airports Management, Consult and Investment Group

- Vantage Airport Group Ltd has for 25 years invested, developed and managed airports around the world, making them more efficient, more profitable, more sustainable and more connected

- Vinci Airports is a global integrator that develops, finances, builds and provides everyday operation of 65 airports in Europe, Asia and America.

- Vports Partners has been involved in the Bermuda Airport, Albany Airport, Detroit North Airport, and LAX -Tom Bradley International Terminal.

The consultants on the massive project are Frasca &

Associates LLC, which is an independent municipal advisory service, founded in 1997, dedicated to helping clients establish financial practices, enabling them to provide services to their constituents and customers in an efficient, cost-effective manner. Frasca & Associates assists their transportation clients in the financing development and management of critical transportation infrastructure, including airports, ports, bridges, toll roads and mass transit.

There were dozens of concerned residents in attendance at the Community Meeting. Senator Diane Capehart was present, as was senator Javan James. USVI Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte was in attendance, as was Anthony Weeks, USVI Special Economic Envoy to Taiwan and the Asia Pacific Region.

There was some concern as to what the participation of locals would be at all points along the process and after completion of the new facilities.

"We will make sure our local people are well taken care of," Willard A. John, St. Croix VIPA Board chairman assured the crowd.

It would appear that all of the gears are starting to fall into place. There is still an enormous amount of planning and work that lies ahead in order to meet the ground-breaking deadline at the end of next year. But if there's one thing the people of St. Croix know all too well, if anyone can get the job done, and get it done right, it's Carlton Dowe, aka Get it Done Now Carlton Dowe.