

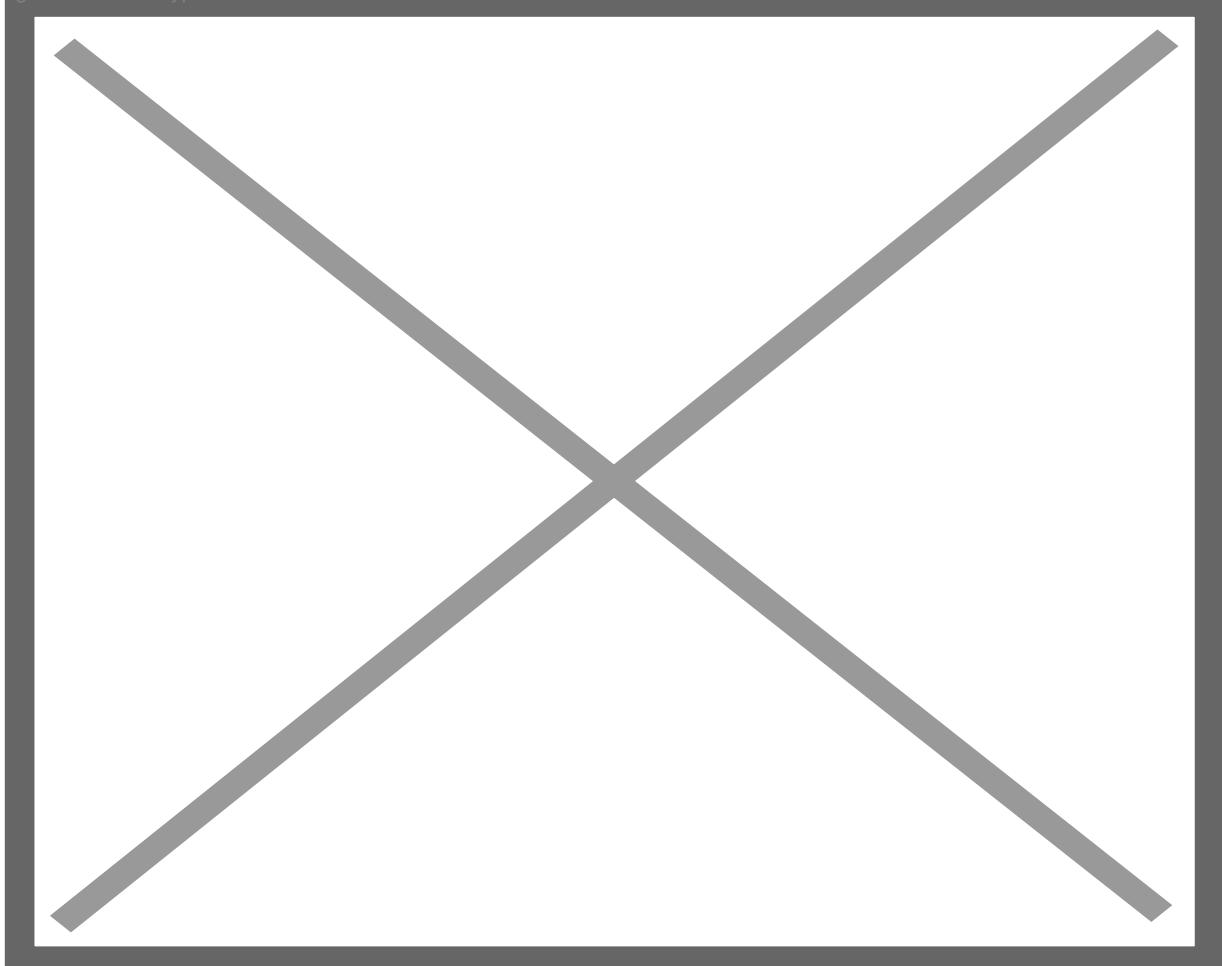
“I’ll Throw My Entire Being Into It”: Mike Ware, Appointed Waste Management Director, Vows to Transform Authority

Hannibal “Mike” Ware has been named WMA executive director. The former federal Inspector General pledged to dedicate his full weight to rebuilding landfills, fixing wastewater infrastructure, and restoring public trust in the troubled agency.

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Hannibal “Mike” Ware.

After a year-long search, the Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority (WMA) has new leadership in Hannibal “Mike” Ware, appointed as executive director on Monday.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. called Ware's appointment pivotal, saying, "Strong leadership is about vision, accountability and restoring public trust in an agency that touches every household in our islands. This appointment marks the start of that work."

Board chair Derek Gabriel, who also serves as commissioner of Public Works, emphasized Ware's extensive experience: "Mister Ware...brings with him decades of experience working on the federal on the federal levels, local levels and state levels, and we know that he will be the person to shepherd us and the authority for years to come."

For his part, Ware made clear that his decision was driven not by career ambition, but by a sense of duty. "At this point in my life, people think about jobs. I'm thinking about purpose. I've already had a 35-year career. I'm not here for a job. I'm here for purpose," he said.

Ware explained that despite lucrative offers from private companies, he chose to return home to contribute to the territory's progress. "The challenge of returning home to my people and partnering with my people to enhance our lives again was something that just couldn't shake," he said. "I stand before you a Virgin Islander whose heart has never left these islands."

He pledged to dedicate himself fully to the task ahead. "I am here to throw my entire being into ensuring the success of the Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority," Ware declared. He said the excellence that marked his federal career as Inspector General for both the Small Business Administration and the Social Security Administration would now be the "Waste Management Authority standard."

Ware acknowledged the scope of the challenge. "The challenge of rebuilding our waste management, our wastewater infrastructure and bringing our landfills into compliance is a massive one, and one that cannot be undertaken alone," he said. He stressed the need for planning, collaboration, and patience, promising the community transparency along the way: "These are not overnight projects, but I promise this community that they will know step by step what is happening and what is being planned."

He closed with a commitment to professionalism and efficiency: "I promise you that you will have an efficiently and professionally run authority. Excellence will be the standard. I am overjoyed to be here and to once again represent my people, the people of the Virgin Islands."