

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Adelbert Bryan, Raymond Williams Rattle Board Meeting With Profanity-Laced Argument

Politics / **Published On August 15, 2014 11:29 AM /**

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The District of St. Croix Board of Elections held a special meeting to discuss the Third District Court ruling that granted the Coffelt-Canegata team a restraining order against the Elections System, prohibiting it from removing the candidates from the November 4th general elections ballot. But the meeting quickly erupted into a bout mostly between board members Adelbert Bryan and Raymond Williams, as the two bantered, using profanity loosely, over who did their jobs on election night.

Board members Lilliana Belardo de O'Neal and Glenn Webster argued for a while, but nothing came close to the Bryan/Williams outburst.

There were a lot of issues to be discussed -- and they were: from implementing early voting in the Virgin Islands as was signed into law recently by Governor deJongh. The board still isn't clear on how it will tackle early voting, so the issue was pushed back to be discussed at another meeting. No date was set.

Casting ballots for the November election was an issue for both the St. Thomas and St. Croix Districts in light of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals decision to keep the Coffelt-Canegata ticket on the November 4th general election ballot, and while the court is yet to hand out a final ruling, the St. Croix District voted to move ahead with the scheduled August 19th casting of lots, citing potential lawsuits from other candidates if the process is stalled because of the Coffelt-Canegata dilemma.

The St. Thomas District Board of Elections, meanwhile, decided to wait.

Bryan and Williams banter broke out when the board moved to the topic of members' responsibilities at polling places during the August 2nd primary election. Adelbert Bryan, while votes were being tallied and precincts were still active, was on a radio talk show with host former Senator Ronald Russell on 970 AM, WSTX, discussing the results. Ostensibly the matter was raised by Williams and the back-and-forth ensued.

That lead to other board members arguing about who should be doing what on election night, and who actually did their jobs. Board members Lilliana Belardo de O'Neal and Glenn Webster argued for a while, but nothing came close to the Bryan/Williams outburst. In fact, Williams left after a 5 minute recess was called, and Bryan hounded Williams until he exited the meeting, held in the Sunny Isle annex.

Before the meeting was over, the board voted to have each member take responsibility for at least two polling places, voted on the number of ballots for the general election, and voted to have ballots for 150 percent of the number of voters at each precinct made, with said ballots being color-coded according to precinct.