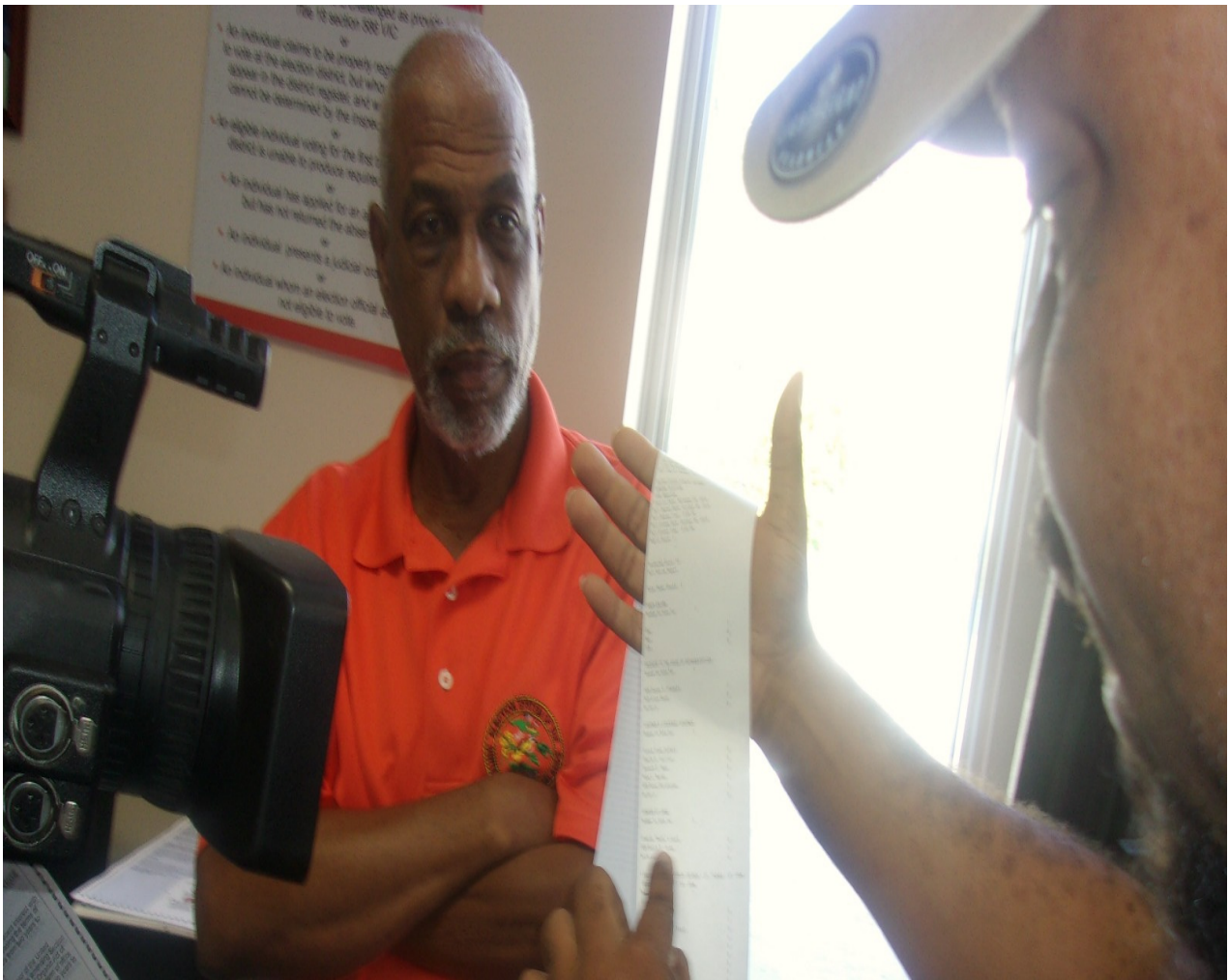


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Joint Boards Want Police To Remove Voters From Booths After 5 Mins, Says Stickers Can Be Affixed To Ballots For Vote

Politics / **Published On November 04, 2014 08:55 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **November 04, 2014**



At a last-minute Joint Boards meeting on Monday, a motion was passed to hand-count all ballots with write-in candidate names, as well as those that contain sticker adhesives bearing the name of a candidate. The *VI Consortium* has learned that at least one senatorial candidate's campaign, as part of its candidate's write-in efforts, may be issuing stickers to supporters with the candidate's name already pre-printed on them. Some Board members also demanded police at polling places enforce a law that says voters could remain in the voting booths for no longer than five minutes.

At the meeting, held at the Bureau of Information Technology on St. Croix and via video conference on St. Thomas, the motion to hand count write-in and stick-in ballots was seconded by St. Croix Board member Lisa Harris-Moorhead, and voted in favor of by all St. Thomas Board members who were present, except Wilma-Marsh Monsanto, who left the meeting during the motion.

All St. Croix Board members who were present voted in favor of the motion, except Board Chairman Adelbert Bryan, who voted against, and Roland Moolenaar, who abstained from voting. Bryan said he voted against the motion because "they did not clarify how they would address those ballots that did not have a sticker on it."

Some Joint Boards members also demanded police enforce a law permitting voters to stay in voting booths for only five minutes, according to VI Code 18, 584 (g). The idea is to curb any potential for chaos that could surface with voters who may wish to feed their ballots into the DS200 tabulator, and not into bins, in order to verify their votes.

The law states in [18 VIC 584 \(g\)](#) that: "No elector shall remain in the voting booth for more than five minutes. If the elector requests a longer period of time, an election officer shall grant him a longer period of time, at his discretion, not to exceed five minutes. If the elector refuses to leave the voting booth after such additional time has been granted, the election official shall summon a police officer who shall remove the elector."

However, the law does not prevent voters from peacefully standing outside the booth after voting.

An online campaign launched on Oct. 31 by the VI Action Group encouraged voters to demand they be able to feed their own ballots into the DS200 tabulator, a function that will be the responsibility of designated elections officials. According to Joint Boards members, the DS200 is not properly tabulating ballots marked with Straight Party symbols.

In an emailed statement sent to local media outlets and circulated via social media, the group claims the Joint Board's decision not to allow voters "to scan their ballots right at the moment of casting ones vote is a manufactured crisis being orchestrated by Arturo Watlington, Jr. chairman of the St.Thomas-St.John district board and the VI Attorney General's office. There is nothing wrong with the functionality of the DS200 voting machine nor are there any malicious malfunctions or programs at play."

The statement went on to say that "voters must demand that their ballots are scanned right at the moment of casting their vote. Public pressure is the best tool at this point to force the Election Boards and the VI Attorney General's office to change course."

ES&S, makers of the DS200 machines, say they stand by the [machines' functionality](#). _

The *VI Consortium* will continue to follow this story, providing updates as they become available.