

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Mapp Holds First Meeting With Financial Team Since Returning To Territory

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Ernice Gilbert **June 16, 2015**



ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp met with his financial team on Monday at Government House for the first time since returning to the territory from his 12-day trip spanning [Guam](#) and [Florida](#).

"The governor's been out of town for the last couple of weeks and he meets with the financial team on a regular basis, but this is the first meeting he's been able to have with them since the budget hearings have started," Kimberly Jones, Mapp's communications director told *The Consortium* on Monday night.

While the meeting was ongoing, the governor paused to welcome students from the Ulla F. Muller Elementary School who were scheduled to have lunch with him, and invited members of his financial team to join the group as well.

The 31st Legislature's Committee On Finance has been receiving testimony from various departments and agencies in relation to their budget, and most have expressed the need for more funding, while promising to provide exceptional service even if the requested boost remains elusive.

Delroy Richards Sr., commissioner of the Virgin Islands Police Department, said the force was spending [over \\$11 million in overtime pay](#); and officials of the Virgin Islands Fire Service (VIFS), [testifying just days after](#), echoed Richards, making known that VIFS spent \$1.5 million in fiscal year for overtime on an allotment of \$250,000, and the department has already expended \$1,037,953 in FY 2015 with zero dollars allotted for the extra work.

Bureau of Internal Revenue director nominee Marvin Pickering said while the government has seen an improvement in the collection of taxes, there was still an outstanding balance of [\\$41.7 million in tax refunds](#) owed to residents of the territory.

And these are just some of the departments and agencies giving testimony during the budget hearings while the governor was away. Today, at the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall, officials of the Division of Personnel will testify under oath detailing the department's financial condition to members of the Senate's finance committee, chaired by Sen. Clifford Graham.

The governor has scheduled a press conference for Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. at Government House in Christiansted, St. Croix.