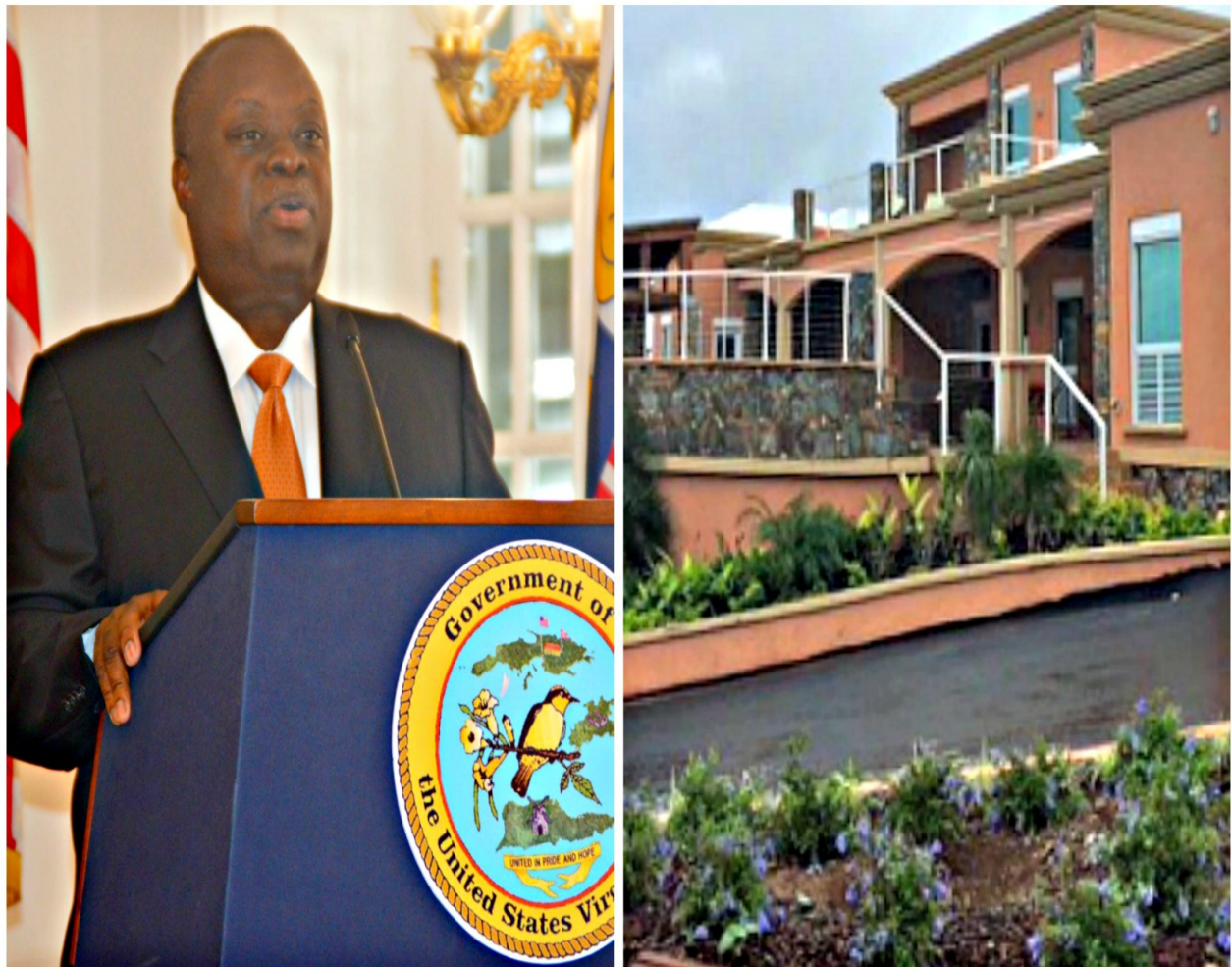


The Virgin Islands Consortium

James Reschedules Committee Of The Whole Hearing On Estate Nazareth Rental For July 9

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ST. CROIX -- President of the 31st Legislature, Sen. Neville James, announced via press release on Tuesday that he's made the decision to reschedule a hearing on the issue of residency for the territory's governors, brought to the fore by discrepancies arising from the Estate Nazareth property that the government was paying \$14,500 on a monthly basis to house Governor Kenneth Mapp.

The hearing will now be held on July 9 instead of the prior date of July 1.

According to James, the rescheduling was important because new information has been made available, and Senate members needed more time to parse the details.

"In an effort to facilitate a comprehensive review of all the documents that have been requested by my office thus far, and in light of several pieces of new information that has been revealed by the news media following my initial announcement, I have decided to move the hearing to July 9 to allow for more time for all the parties involved to be fully prepared," James said.

"My office is currently in the stages of requesting additional information from WICO and Property and Procurement. This information will also be made available to the public once when we examine them at our Senate hearing."

[Earlier this month](#), James' office issued a press release announcing the hearing with information regarding matters to be discussed, including the following:

- Statutory requirements of the Governor to reside in the capitol per the Revised Organic Act of 1954 § 11
- Statutory requirements determining the residency of the Lt Governor per the Revised Organic Act of 1954 § 11.
- Incurred debt and non-payments in lieu of taxes of the West Indian Co. Ltd to the GVI.
- Board Resolution and Lease Agreement between WICO and GVI for Villa Fratelli Cresta rental
- Cost and living expenses accrued at Villa Fratelli Cresta by The GVI and WICO.
- The current condition of Estate Catherineberg, the traditional gubernatorial residence.

James said the purpose of the meeting is to give senators an opportunity to carefully review all documents associated with the matters at hand, receive testimony from representatives of all parties involved, and discuss solutions to find suitable residence for the territory's current and future governors and lieutenant governors.

"We want an open, fair and transparent discussion about this situation," James said. "Housing for the Governor and Lt. Governor should never be treated as a political issue, it is very much a matter of public policy that can be resolved if the Legislature and Executive Branch work together to put this waning issue to rest," he added.

The Senate president said that appropriate steps will be taken if wrongdoing is found. He also expressed frustration with the seemingly never-ending problem of residency for the territory's governors. James is hoping that the Committee of the Whole hearing will be the beginning of a welcomed end to the matter.

"If the Body concludes that there was any wrongdoing, we will deal with it accordingly," said James. "History seems to keep repeating itself every time a new governor is elected and they determine that Estate Catherineberg is not suitable enough to live. This hearing is a step in identifying or possibly re-establishing a safe and protected home for the governor of the Virgin Islands to reside in."

Feature Image: Side-by-side image showing Governor Kenneth Mapp and the Estate Nazareth home he [recently vacated](#).

