

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Judgement Day: Farrell, Bennett And Nine More Mapp Nominees Face Full Senate Today

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ST. THOMAS -- History will be made on Thursday at the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall as 11 of Governor Kenneth Mapp's nominees, including two whose nominations are in question, will testify under oath during a full Senate session where they'll be given the final approval or rejection.

The nominations that are approved by the Senate will be forwarded to the governor for his final signature, however, those who fail will see their quest to lead the territory's departments and agencies come to an end.

The 11 nominees facing the full body today are Valdamier Collens, Acting Commissioner Dept. of Finance; Dawn Henry, Esq. Acting Commissioner Dept. of Planning & Natural Resources; Carlos Robles, Acting Commissioner Dept. of Agriculture; Gustav James, Acting Commissioner Dept. of Public Works; Devin Carrington, Esq., Acting Commissioner Dept. of Licensing & Consumer Affairs; Beverly Nicholson-Doty, Acting Commissioner Dept. of Tourism; Vivian-Ebbesen-Fludd, Acting Commissioner Dept. of Human Services; Nellon Bowry, Acting Director Office of Management & Budget; Milton Potter, Acting Director Division of Personnel; Eugene Farrell, Acting Director of the Virgin Islands Fire Service; and Marvin Pickering, Acting Director of the Internal Revenue Bureau.

But Property and Procurement Acting Commissioner Randolph Bennett will face tough questions concerning what has been declared by Senator Kenneth Gittens as [deception](#), and Acting Fire Director Eugene Farrell's fate is almost [sure to end in rejection](#).

"I was really taken aback during the confirmation hearing on Monday as a result of Mr. Bennett's responses to questions about possessing a master's degree," Gittens said through a press release issued on July 15. "He had stated on his questionnaire that the degree was pending, but during his live testimony, under oath, he repeatedly said that he had already earned the degree — he even further stated that he just didn't have the certificate because he had not walk across the stage."

Farrell has been chided by senators and employees alike, who contend that his personality is not one conducive to leading one of the territory's first responder agencies.

"Your personality was very harsh and abrasive like you didn't care. And even when we told you about morale, a simple thing as coming here and changing our emblem without even asking the masses, that means something. That emblem is us, and you have to ask us what we feel about it. Regardless of what you said about St. Croix being touchy. We're not touchy, we're just real," said Firefighter George Otto at a recently held [plenary meeting](#) organized by Farrell and Governor Mapp.

Fire Marshal Clifford Joseph, who said he'd never spoken to anyone about the director, added that Farrell treats his suggestions as having no value.

"Anything that I bring to Farrell, I don't care if it's good, bad or indifferent, he just drops it 100 percent," Joseph said.

All the other nominees are expected to be approved with salary increases of \$102,000 to \$105,000.