

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Nominates Clifford Joseph As Fire Director, Says It's Time To Move On

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ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp has accepted the Senate's rejection of Eugene Farrell as Director of the Virgin Islands Fire Service, and declared in a press release issued late Thursday that it was time to move on.

In demonstrating his willingness to do so, the governor swiftly announced the nomination of Fire Marshal Clifford Joseph to head VIFS.

"I appreciate Captain Joseph's Willingness to serve the community in the capacity of Director of the Virgin Islands Fire Service, he has the full support of my administration to ensure the safety of the Territory," the territory's leader said.

According to a press release Government House issued, Captain Joseph has been with the V.I. Fire Service since 1987, began his career as a firefighter, and moved through the ranks to Fire Sergeant in 2005; Fire Lieutenant in 2009; and Fire Marshal in 2012.



Newly nominated VIFS Director Clifford Joseph.

Joseph is a graduate of the VIPD Post Peace Officer/Law Enforcement Training Certification and certified in many areas including Hazmat 1st Responder Awareness; Conflict Resolution; National Wildfire Incident Command Fire Science; and a certified responder for weapons of mass destruction.

"It is with heartfelt thanks to the MAPP/POTTER Administration in their selection of confidence in me to lead the V.I. Fire Service. I am confident through Christ who gives me the strength to lead the V.I. Fire Services," Joseph said in a statement issued to *The Consortium*.

Mapp tried to hold on to Farrell after senators started receiving negative reports about his character by organizing a plenary meeting with firemen here in hopes of amending the situation. But the plans descended into chaos after reports started circulating the community that Farrell had temporarily shuttered the island's fire stations.

And even at the plenary meeting, firemen, including Joseph, were unforgiving in their description of the now-rejected former acting director.

"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 on Monday](#).

Fireman George Otto vented his frustrations as well.

"Your first encounter with us was on a teleconference. And in that teleconference, a statement was made by you [that] 'we don't want you to come over here,' because when you come, we won't want it.' That was your statement to us," Otto said to Farrell.

And he went on, stating that Farrell did not understand the skill of communication. "And that's the main problem," Otto added. Then, looking at the former director nominee intently, Otto said, "it's not just your style and how you do things, but your personality. Your personality stuck out like a sore thumb, and I'm not saying this to be disrespectful, but I'm going to say what's on my mind."

Otto continued: "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."

For the governor, it's time to move on. He thanked the senators for supporting 15 of his 16 cabinet members on Thursday, and the nominees who were approved for staying the course.

"I want to thank all fifteen Senators for their thorough evaluation and careful consideration of each and every nominee. It is now time to move forward; we have our Professionals in place to tackle the issues ahead of us," Mapp said.

"Although this has been an arduous process, I must thank each nominee for their commitment to serve the people of the US Virgin Islands," he concluded.

Feature Image: American Samoa Governor Lolo Matalasi Moliga and Virgin Islands Governor Kenneth Mapp at a National Governor's Association winter meeting in meeting.

Image Credit: NGA.