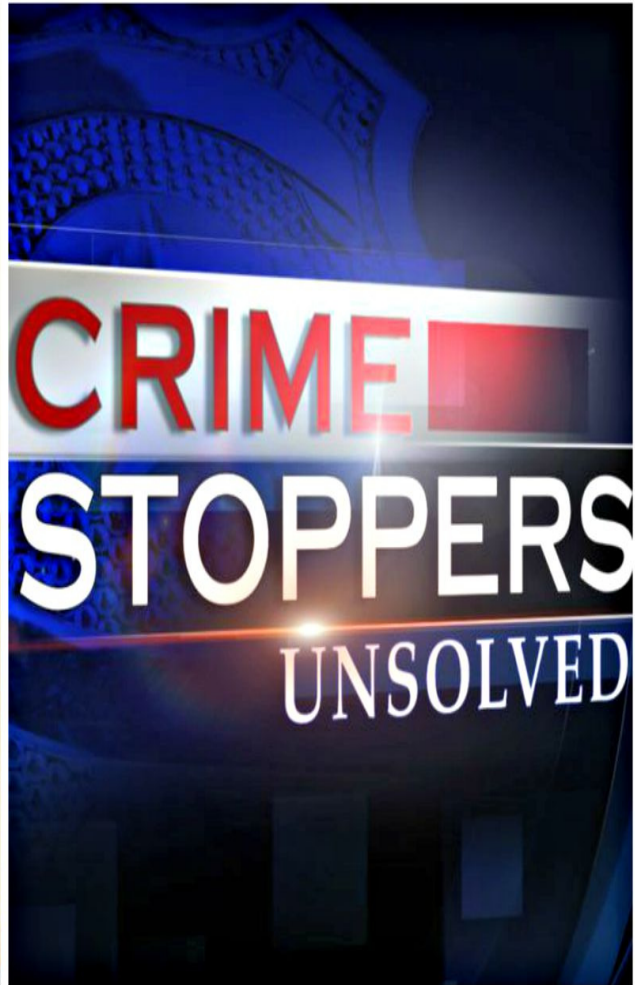


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Crime Stoppers And VIPD To Host Joint Press Conference On Monday

VIC News / **Published On September 20, 2015 10:59 AM /**

Staff **September 20, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- Crime Stoppers USVI [announced in June](#) that it would halt operations because collaboration with the VIPD had seen a steep decline. The nonprofit also said it would make a decision as to whether to reopen in six months, after an assessment was conducted to determine if its partnership with law enforcement had improved.

"There's been a real decline in the last couple of years and what Crime Stoppers really needs is for VIPD to hire someone who's specifically dedicated to working with us and making sure that all our tips are followed up on, investigated and communicated back to us so we know when we can pay a reward, and that hasn't happened," said Judi Buckley, former senator and current chairperson of the organization.

But a VIPD press release issued on Friday has made known that the force will host a joint press conference Monday with Crime Stoppers, to discuss "their planned initiative for the territory," clearly revealing that a partnership had been formed.

During the June press conference to announced the closure, Julien Henley, a Crime Stoppers board member for seven years, said it would be dependent "on law enforcement's level of engagement and commitment, and our own board's level of motivation to operate under these challenging circumstances."

However, recent criminal activity in the territory and commitment from the VIPD for closer collaboration has forced the organization to rethink its decision sooner rather than later. At six months, the earliest Crime Stoppers was expected to reconsider reopening was December, 2015.

In July, Police Commissioner Delroy Richards, Sr. called for the reopening of Crime Stoppers, and appointed Lt. Maria Colon-Jones on St. Thomas and Crime Scene Technician Julisha Lansiquot here as "point persons" for the organization.

"I want to make very clear the Virgin Islands Police Department, from day one, has supported Crime Stoppers," he said.

The commissioner said while he would not get into a back-and-forth with the organization, he would have liked to be given the opportunity to address the problem before Crime Stoppers announced its closure.

Since opening its doors in 2009, the 2272 tips the VIPD received through Crime Stoppers have resulted in the arrest of 214 individuals; the recovery of 97 weapons; \$732,138 in property recovery and confiscated drugs; and a total of 80 rewards amounting to \$68,606. 114 rewards remain unpaid, according to statistics the group provided.

But even with the above numbers, Crime Stoppers officials say citizens have accused the group of not doing its job of arresting people. However, the organization stressed that it's not in the business of making arrests, "our job is to collect information anonymously and pass it on to law enforcement," Henley said.

And in relation to more rewards being released, the group said "if tips are not investigated and feedback isn't provided, we cannot pay a reward for the information."