

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Speaking On State Of Territory, Mapp Says He Must Deal With Hand That He Was Dealt

Politics / **Published On June 23, 2016 11:05 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **June 23, 2016**



ST. CROIX -- Life for residents in the territory will get better, Governor Kenneth Mapp says. In fact, he spoke of [an improving economy](#) at his last State of the Territory Address, and has been highlighting new jobs available in his administration.

He even encouraged recent high school graduates to join the public sector.

"I am in search of corrections officers, I need police officers, I need teachers, I am looking for social workers, I need carpenters, masons, pipe-fitters, contractors, heavy equipment operators, laborers, paraprofessionals, nursing assistants, nurses — I am saying to you that today in the Virgin Islands, and on the island of St. Croix, we have vacancies funded,

and looking for candidates for these positions," the governor [recently told](#) the Central High School graduating class of 2016.

But in a conversation with The Consortium following a [charrette he held on the development of the Altona Lagoon and Cramer Park](#), the governor suggested that a segment of the Virgin Islands community does not seem to understand the complexities of governing, specifically how project development works.

Mr. Mapp was asked what would it cost to complete the Altona Lagoon and Cramer Park projects, but the governor skipped the question and went directly to a [recent article](#) published here about the length of time it was taking to restart construction on the Paul E. Joseph Stadium, especially following his announcement in October that [work would commence that very month](#).

The governor was visibly perturbed. With his voice raised, Mr. Mapp targeted The Consortium, stating that a segment of the website's community had difficulty in understanding how government works. His body language telling, Mr. Mapp went on to explain the process of how projects come together, a rather straightforward hypothesis understandable to the simplest of minds. And acknowledging that he reads the website, the governor said he was frustrated with some of the comments posted by the publication's users.

To be fair, the comments here and on this publication's Facebook platform, are mostly unforgiving to Mr. Mapp. It doesn't seem to matter how good his proposals, some users find fault in the governor's efforts. A part of governing some say, but the territory's leader takes them seriously, and explained that he must work with the conditions he met upon taking office in January, 2015.

"I have to deal with the hand that was dealt to me. I have to deal with the government in the condition it was given to me. It doesn't mean that things are not going to change; it doesn't mean that I'm not going to put my vision on it. But I have to deal with it based on the way I received it.

"Had I been able to inherit the government in 2006, I would have had a billion and a half dollars of more resources than I have today," Mr. Mapp said, referring to when Governor John P. de Jongh began his tenure as governor. "After a billion and a half of resources were utilized, and I say point to me in the public sector where you see any major investments, you can't find them."

The governor said even if he has a lot of experience in government and the development of projects, he needs to be more mindful of what he says. He also expressed bewilderment on what he says is the community's belief that things should happen overnight.

"I am 60, I have been doing this for a long time and have been trained in some places that know about government and community development. And I just don't get this thing with folks in the Virgin Islands that believe everything is instant," Mr. Mapp said. He added that just because work isn't visible to the naked eye, it does not mean things are not happening in the background.

"What I have learned is that what comes out of my mouth is not what goes into people's ears. And I need to be more sensitive to what goes into people's ears than what comes out of my mouth," he said. "I understand that there needs to be some level of expectation, but expectation needs to be shrouded in what's called reality. And I don't get this perceived realism that things in the Virgin Islands are instantaneous. It's so impractical."

© Viconsortium 2026