

The Virgin Islands Consortium

PFA Approves \$10 Million Loan For Emergency Vehicles; \$991,000 For Implementation Of V.I.P.D. Assessment

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ST. THOMAS -- During a Public Finance Authority board meeting on Wednesday, Governor Kenneth Mapp revealed that Joanne Bozzuto, who had served as the authority's director of finance and administration, has resigned.

The governor said the resignation of Ms. Bozzuto -- coming just three months after her appointment -- was related to her mother, who had fallen ill and Ms. Bozzuto needed to travel out of the territory immediately to tend to her. He expressed regret that Ms. Bozzuto had to leave and restated his confidence in her ability to affect change at the

P.F.A.

As a result of her resignation, the board amended its bylaws allowing P.F.A. Executive Director Valdamier Collens to have same contracting authority as Ms. Bozzuto in the interim.

The board approved a Banco Popular \$10 million line of credit for the emergency vehicles bill approved by the Senate. The bill, once allowing Mr. Mapp to purchase limousines for the executive branch, [now includes language specifically blocking any such purchase](#).

In his [original request](#) in August, the governor expressed the urgent need for government agencies to possess the proper equipment to perform their work.

“Having adequate vehicles and equipment for our first responders and law enforcement agencies in the territory is paramount to protecting the safety and welfare of our residents and visitors. For many years our first responders have valiantly done their duty with less than standard vehicles and equipment,” Mr. Mapp said.

Among the agencies included are the Virgin Islands Department of Health, V.I. Fire Service, V.I.P.D., Public Works, Bureau of Corrections, the Virgin Islands Government and the Office of the Examiner.

The governor noted that the funds would not be spent all at once, but rather on an as-needed basis upon request from affected agencies.

In other action, the P.F.A. board ratified phase two of a two-year contract with T&M -- the New York-based firm that had [conducted a \\$300,000 assessment](#) of the V.I.P.D. aimed at identifying faults and mapping a way forward. The ratification clears the way for a release of \$991,500 to T&M, \$153,000 of which is for expenses. According to the governor, phase two is to facilitate the implementation of recommendations found in the [damning assessment](#), which Mr. Mapp said would help get the force into compliance with and removed from the consent decree.

The P.F.A. approved resolutions relative to shares owed to the G.V.I. from Lonesome Dove Petroleum, Co., including accepting the shares and creating a subsidiary to manage them. The subsidiary would also determine how the funds are to be distributed.

Mr. Mapp said the government could receive anywhere from \$1.7 million to \$2.5 million annually. The monies were made available as part of a \$30 million tax obligation owed by the Lonesome Dove company to the G.V.I.