

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Bryan Has Recommended Some Mapp Administration Cabinet Members As Possible Holdovers

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Some Mapp administration appointees readying themselves to resign or being asked to leave once the incoming Bryan administration takes hold, should give hope a chance based on comments Governor-elect Albert Bryan made during his transition team announcement press conference today.

The governor-elect, in responding to a question posed by The Consortium, said he had recommended a number of Mapp cabinet appointees to the transition team, who Mr. Bryan believes should continue the work they've been doing.

"We've actually submitted those names as well to the transition team for them to look at," Mr. Bryan said. "As you would imagine, anybody whose already in the position has a greater advantage because they're already familiar with what they're dealing with, so I'm sure, I'm pretty positive as the vetting process is complete, that you will see some names remain on the cabinet level."

Mr. Bryan did not give any hints as to the department and agency heads who may retain their jobs.

Transition team announcement

Members of the transition team are as follows: Karl Knight, a former policy advisor to Governor John P. de Jongh was named as a co-chair. Mr. Knight was also a director of the U.S.V.I.'s Energy Office, and most recently director of modernization and development at the Virgin Islands Housing Authority. Dayna Clendinen, an assistant commissioner at the Department of Public Works with a background in organizational change management, was announced as a co-chair as well. And Richard Motta, current district press secretary for Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett, was announced as the transition's team press secretary.

Lieutenant Governor-elect Tregenza Roach, who was introduced by Mr. Motta at this morning's press conference on St. Croix, spoke of moving forward from the division caused by the election, and he vowed to help foster a climate where people feel welcome and free to share their ideas. Mr. Roach also signaled a commitment to work on the people's behalf; he told a story of a child who came up to him while campaigning, and asked that her school be fixed. "I will keep that little girl in my head," Mr. Roach said, as he thanked residents for their support.

Mr. Bryan, who was introduced by his lieutenant governor, approached the podium with a confident posture and first thanked the people for their support. He also thanked Governor Kenneth Mapp and Lieutenant Governor Osbert Potter for their service to the territory, "and for their efforts of ensuring what both Tregenza and I trust will be a smooth and successful transition."

Like Mr. Roach, the governor-elect said he would work to unify the USVI, an effort he said should be inclusive of each district, "but also considerate to the nuances of need that exists within each island district."

"That is what this transition is about, and that is what both Tregenza and I will remain committed to throughout these next four years and beyond: a Virgin Islands government that's transparent, accountable and responsive to the needs of all Virgin Islanders," Mr. Bryan said.

The governor-elect said the transition team will ensure the incoming administration is prepared to take on the challenge of championing the change needed to better the lives of Virgin Islanders. Part of the team's aim will be to facilitate new and innovative ideas that Mr. Bryan hopes will "set the Virgin Islands on the course to a brighter future."

To that end, the group was in the process of organizing ten assessment teams, Mr. Bryan said, which will assess a number of government agencies and instrumentalities. These assessment teams are:

- Education and Workforce Development
- Justice and Public Safety
- Financial Affairs and Taxation
- Health and Human Services
- Economic Development
- Economic Regulation
- Government Personnel & Operations
- Energy, Environment and Infrastructure
- Housing, Sports and Recreation
- Hurricane Recovery Efforts

"Our approach to this task is perhaps slightly different than the traditional manner of organizing transition teams," Mr. Bryan said. "Given the short window that we have to complete our transition assessment, it is crucial that we make the most efficient and effective use of everyone's time and talent."

Mr. Bryan said the teams conducting assessments will include members of the community who have interest and expertise in particular functions. However, the teams performing interviews and are tasked with preparing the final reports are small and focused, he said. "Their work will be supplemented by listening sessions and focus groups with people who have ideas and insights they want to share before the transition reports are finalized and submitted to Tregenza and I to review," Mr. Bryan said.

Relative to staffing for the new administration, the governor-elect said his team is in search of "energetic change agents" whether they are serving in the current administration, or seeking opportunities to serve in government. He asked those interested to submit their resumes to www.bryanroachtransition.com beginning Monday, Dec. 3 through Wednesday, Dec. 19. A human resources team, led by Mr. Roach, has been established to "evaluate and select top talent interested in serving in a managerial capacity," Mr. Bryan said.

For cabinet positions such as commissioner, director and other appointed titles where resignations will need to be submitted eventually, Mr. Bryan said the transition team had not commenced the process of requesting resignations. However, those who wanted to stay should resubmit their resumes for review.

Feature Image: From left to right: Dayna Clendinen, Karl Knight, Governor-elect Albert Bryan, Lieutenant Governor-elect Tregenza Roach and Richard Motta. (Credit: Ernice Gilbert, VIC)