

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Bryan Plans Scaled Back Inaugural Events; Balls To Be Privately Funded

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Governor-elect Albert Bryan told The Consortium on Wednesday that while there will be territorial balls as part of his inauguration into office, they will be scaled back affairs that are privately funded, mindful of the territory's financial condition, which has seen improvement under the Mapp administration, but still has a long way to go.

And while the inauguration ceremonies will be funded through the government's coffers, Mr. Bryan said those, too, will be events being done with frugality in mind.

"We've eliminated a couple of the activities like the luncheon that comes after the regular inaugural address," he said responding to a question posed by The Consortium following

his address announcing the incoming administration's transition team. "We're going to have an open house, and we're also limiting the amount of balls, we're going to have one on each island," the governor-elect said.

"We know we're going to ruffle a couple of feathers with that, and I've really kind of tried my best to tighten up on the budget for inauguration activities. The ball functions will be totally private funding; we're raising the money to do that, we're not going to use public funds to do that, so want to start off on the right foot," Mr. Bryan added.

The move to privately fund the balls while keeping the inauguration ceremonies on a tight budget, will help in burnishing an image for Mr. Bryan that Virgin Islanders may well appreciate. It comes after the Mapp administration was criticized for out-of-control spending throughout his tenure, and at a time when the territory was said to be on the brink of collapse by the governor himself.

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 Wednesday 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.