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Finance Commissioner Nominee Becomes Emotional While Relaying Why She Accepted Position

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Bosede Bruce. By. VI CONSORTIUM

The Committee on Rules and Judiciary forwarded Governor Albert Bryan’s nominee for commissioner of Finance, Bosede Bruce, to the full body for further consideration on Friday along with a nominee for a commission, three nominees for boards and three bills.

Ms. Bruce told a passionate story on why she accepted the opportunity and was brought to tears as she was giving her reasons. She said she’d recently purchased a home in Chicago while serving in a position at the head office of the Lockhart Companies, when she received a call from Mr. Bryan about the Finance commissioner position. Ms. Bruce said she was immediately “intrigued” despite just buying her dream home.

After the call with the governor, Ms. Bruce said she hopped on another phone call with her siblings to make plans for her father's 80th birthday. Thereafter, "it hit me, I had been weighing the pros and cons but I realized then there was something greater to consider," she said. "To serve the people of the Virgin Islands is an honor, to be able to do so and be close to my parents in their 8th decade on this earth is a blessing and a gift."

After a brief recess to allow Ms. Bruce to compose herself, she proceeded to list her accomplishments in the first six weeks as commissioner nominee. Ms. Bruce made note that the Department of Finance is on track to complete its 2019 audit by June 30 and will begin the 2020 audit a month later.

Her long-term goals include streamlining the check disbursement process, transitioning to electronic funds disbursements, creating an online portal for government-wide cash receipts, and increasing training in every government agency to assist with the streamlining process, among other changes.

The long-term vision is "that when you walk through our building you don't see one piece of paper," she said.

Two of the biggest issues Ms. Bruce repeatedly mentioned were the salaries of her employees and the need to hire more. The salary issues make it difficult to hire and retain employees, according to Ms. Bruce. Her predecessor, Kirk Callwood, was let go in October 2020 after the former commissioner, [without consent from the Bryan administration](#), "issued payment stipends to his rank and file staff without proper authorization."

Government House said at the time that while the amounts were within Mr. Callwood's allotted budget, "the action was not previously approved."

Senator Novelle Francis asked Ms. Bruce to list three strengths and three weaknesses that she intends to improve on. The commissioner nominee said, "My first strength is that I can connect to people well; my second strength is I have a really good memory; and my third strength is my expertise in accounting... My first weakness is the government process; the second weakness is maybe being so naive that I can do all of these things on my list timely; and the third weakness is maybe I can be too passionate about things sometimes. I want more for people than the want for themselves."

The committee also forward the following nominations:

- VI Historic Preservation Commission Nomination of Akil Petersen
- VI Board of Nurse Licensure Nomination of Elizabeth Dumas
- VI Board of Nurse Licensure Nomination of Brittany Dawson APRN, CNM
- VI Board of Dental Examiners of Dr. Chase Greep, DDS

The committee forwarded the following bills:

- Bill No. 34-0037. An Act amending title 15 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 3, section 89, subsections (b) and (c) relating to decedents estate and payment of certain debts without administration to increase the aggregate amount that a surviving spouse may receive from debtors upon the death of the creditor and to increase the amount of debt a debtor must pay the survivors of a decedent creditor not less than thirty days after the creditor's death from not more than \$5,000 to not more than \$10,000
- Bill No. 34-0034. An Act amending title 1 Virgin Islands Code by adding chapter 3A enacting the Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act, to provide for the management of electronic legal information in a manner that guarantees the trustworthiness of and continuing access to important government legal material (with a technical amendment)
- Bill No. 34-0004. An Act amending title 33 Virgin Islands Code, subtitle 1, part 1, chapter 5, section 91 relating to the payment of fuel taxes to change the time for remittance of the tax to the Bureau of Internal Revenue; and for other related purposes

The committee held Bill No. 34-0035, An Act amending title 16, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1, subchapter III, section 61 relating to a wife's name to give either party to a marriage the right to use the other's surname.