

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Police Commissioner Nominee Announces Leadership Team, Says VIPD Has Heard Community and is Ready for Challenge at Hand

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Police Commissioner Nominee Ray Martinez announced his leadership team on Friday, Sept. 3rd, 2021. By. VI CONSORTIUM/FB/SCREENSHOT

Police Commissioner Nominee Ray Martinez held an event at Gov't House Friday to unveil the individuals he has surrounded himself with to lead the V.I. Police Department.

"My leadership selections are based on experience, leadership skills, respect among their peers and an ardent desire for positive change that promotes our police department," Mr. Martinez stated as a lead-in to the appointment announcements.

The commissioner nominee said he has decided to have an assistant commissioner in each district, with Mario Brooks continuing this role in the St. Thomas-St. John District, while Sidney Elskoe, who formerly served as police chief was promoted to assistant commissioner. "Both men have the experience, knowledge and wherewithal to serve in this capacity," stated Mr. Martinez.

Lieutenant Barrington Thomas was promoted to police chief for the St. Thomas-St. John District to include Water Island. Mr. Martinez said Lt. Barrington's over 33 years of policing qualify him for the job.

St. Thomas Police Chief Steven Phillip "will take one step down and return to the duties that he once held as deputy chief of police, while Lieutenant Clayton Brown in St. John will assume the duties of the deputy chief of St. John," Mr. Martinez revealed.

During Chief Phillip's tenure, St. Thomas saw a decrease in homicides this year compared to St. Croix: 24 on St. Croix, 6 on St. Thomas for 2021 as of August.

On St. Croix, Deputy Police Chief Sean Santos has been promoted to police chief. Also on St. Croix, Corporal Uston Cornelius, "another 30-plus year veteran, will become the deputy chief of police," Mr. Martinez made known.

Deputy Commissioner of Professional Standards Jason Marsh will continue in his role as deputy commissioner.

Mr. Martinez said Internal Affairs is a key component "to the department's ability to continue to constitutionally police," and he named former St. John deputy chief of police Vivianne Newton to lead the arm.

The commissioner nominee announced Carolyn Wattley as his director of strategic planning and research, and Andrea Bryan-McIntosh as director of facilities and properties.

With the exception of assistant commissioner Mario Brooks and deputy commissioner Jason Marsh, the other members of Mr. Martinez's leadership team will serve their roles in acting capacities "until the necessary paperwork is processed to complete their appointments," Mr. Martinez said.

"In closing, I thank the members of the leadership team for agreeing to serve and their willingness to share this journey with me," Mr. Martinez said. He also thanked Governor Albert Bryan "for allowing me this distinct opportunity to lead the Virgin Islands Police Department."

He said he looked forward to forging a "fruitful relationship" with the media. And to the community, Mr. Martinez stated, "You have made an impassioned plea for a safer territory. The onus for increasing our policing efforts rest on the shoulders of my executive leadership team and I."

Mr. Martinez added, "We've heard you, we understand, and we're ready for the challenge at hand."

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