

February 2, 2015

Honorable Neville James
Senate President
Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Capitol Building
St. Thomas, VI 00804

Re: Committee of the Whole Meeting – February 11, 2015

Dear Chairman James:

I am in receipt of your letter dated January 26, 2015, relative to a Committee of the Whole meeting on February 11, 2015 on St. Thomas scheduled for 4:00 p.m. in the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall. I am more than happy to see that you are anxious to initiate the dialogue with the Boards of Elections and the Supervisor of Elections relative to the vast amount of issues/concerns from our community, elected officials, and other stakeholders. Allow me if I may, to provide you with a few reasons why I personally believe that the meeting should be postponed by at least one month:

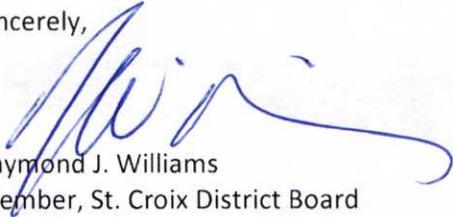
- The Joint Boards have not yet met to organize due to a variety of reasons and do not have a collective voice.
- I truly believe that the Joint Boards should have the opportunity to organize prior to a discussion of the topics mentioned in your letter in order that we may be in accord. Please also consider that several of the members are new and did not have access to the organization, management and other intricacies as most of us did during the 2014 elections. I think it would be unfair to ask them to speak to subjects that they were not privy to.
- Give us the opportunity to meet with the Supervisor and close out the 2014 elections. This has not been done for obvious reasons (run-off election, recounts, court cases, etc.), at least on St. Croix.
- The agenda should probably include items such as election reform and a comprehensive review of Title 18 of the Virgin Islands Code and how we can accomplish that review. It should include the need for funding opportunities to further and better develop the elections system and a myriad of other items (ie., voting systems).

This is a suggested starting point but I suspect the dialogue will expand based on a multitude of questions that will be generated from these topics. I am definitely not opposed to that being the case, as I too want clarification on those matters. My concern is that information and testimony that may be presented, if presented individually, can be based on something other than facts or designed to skew and distort the facts; or worse, to present and promote personal agendas.

If these reasons are not compelling enough to postpone the meeting, then we can certainly proceed. I will make myself available, but in the interest of providing the most bang for the buck, I fervently recommend that we postpone to at least a date in March. I am very much aware of the comments and criticisms being made by our community and respect that, but if we do not proceed with a strategic and collective structure, this will continue to be "the order of the day".

I stand absolutely ready to work in tandem with the Legislature, the Governor and other stakeholders in our community in protecting our democracy. What took place during the 2014 election cycle was a major wakeup call and with the consideration that the 2016 election cycle has already begun, we must focus on regaining and increasing public confidence via fair, accessible and transparent processes. Please feel free to call me at your leisure. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Raymond J. Williams
Member, St. Croix District Board

cc: Members, Joint Boards of Elections
Members of the 31st Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Caroline Fawkes, Supervisor of Elections