

The Capitol Building
Charlotte Amalie, United States Virgin Islands 00802
340.774.0880

Golden Rock
Christiansted, United States Virgin Islands 00820
340.773.2424

St. John Annex
Cruz Bay, United States Virgin Islands 00830
340.776.6285



CHAIRMAN
Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning


VICE CHAIR
Committee on Rules and Judiciary

MEMBER
Committee on Health, Hospitals, and Human Services
Committee on Culture, Sports, Parks, and Youth
Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection

MILTON E. POTTER

Senator, 35th Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands

TO: Kurell Hodge, J.D.

FROM: Milton E. Potter 

DATE: July 16, 2024

SUBJECT: July 15, 2024 Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning Committee Report

The attached report of the Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning is submitted pursuant to the Rules of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands.

COMMITTEE REPORT – Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning: July 15, 2024

The Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning was called to order at 10:13a m by Committee Chairman, Senator Milton Potter. The meeting was held in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Chambers on St. Thomas, VI to consider the following:

BLOCK I:

The territory's progress with respect to ongoing and planned disaster-recovery projects, goals and strategies as well as a status update on the "Super PMO / bundling initiative.

INVITED TESTIFER:

Mrs. Adrienne Williams-Octalien
Director, Virgin Islands Office of Disaster Recovery

BLOCK II :

The Committee received testimony with respect to the status of the development of the territory's Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan.

INVITED TESTIFIER:

The Honorable Jean Pierre Oriol
Commissioner, Virgin Islands Department of Planning & Natural Resources

Committee Members in attendance:

Senator Diane T. Capehart
Senator Alma Francis Heyliger
Senator Kenneth L. Gittens
Senator Marise James
Senator Franklin D. Johnson
Senator Carla J. Joseph
Senator Milton E. Potter

Non-Committee Members that attended

Senator Marvin A. Blyden
Senator Ray Fonseca
Senator Novelle E. Francis, Jr.

Public Affairs / Media:

Omari Hicks
Chaunte Herbert
Jonelle Jackson
Melissa Gustave
Alwyn Baptiste
Winston Nugent
Alvin Burke
Bernard Matthew
Eustace Browne
Barry Leerdam
Africah Harrigan
Jamal Potter

Clerked by: Pauline Dawes

Reporters: Nataya Melchior-Munoz, Joanne Samuel, Vashti Berry, Nadine Williams, Tricia Sealey

Sergeant-At-Arms/Security: Delvin Fleming

The committee received an update on and discussed the current status of the Virgin Islands' disaster recovery efforts, specifically those relating to the Virgin Islands Office of Disaster Recovery but were not limited to, planned, in-process, and completed projects; the status of all federal and local funding identified for the agencies' projects, as well as any impediments with respect to the agencies' role in the territory's disaster recovery efforts with specific focus on the status of the "bundles" of disaster recovery projects.

Mrs. Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, Director of the Office of Disaster Recovery, followed with her opening statement. Mrs. Williams-Octalien was accompanied by Mrs. Artra Watlington-Francis, Deputy Director of Finance and Compliance and Ms. Jamila Haynes, Chief Program Officer.

The Committee then conducted a seven-minute round of questioning. This concluded Block I of the day's agenda

In Block II, the Committee received an update on the status of the ongoing development of the territory's Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan. Commissioner Jean Pierre Oriol, of the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) gave his opening statement. Commissioner Oriol was accompanied by Mrs. Leia LaPlace-Matthew (DPNR – Division of Comprehensive and Coastal Zone Planning), Ms. Jozette Walker (DPNR - Assistant Commissioner), Mr. Marlon Hibbert (DPNR – Director of the Division of Coastal Zone Management), and Ms. Hilary Lhomann (DPNR – Coastal Rezoning Coordinator, Division of Coastal Zone Management). Mr. Jeff Davis of Horsley Witten Group, DPNR's Consulting firm, participated virtually.

The Committee then conducted a six-minute round of questioning.

Senator Milton E. Potter adjourned the meeting at 4:20pm