



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001

January 31, 2023

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Novelle E. Francis
Senate President
Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Capitol Building
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

Re: Nomination of Aaron Hutchins – Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with the provisions of Title 32, chapter 2(a) of the Virgin Islands Code, I hereby nominate Mr. Aaron Hutchins to the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees for the District of St. Croix. The term of appointment is six (6) years.

Accordingly, it is my pleasure to ask the advice and consent of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature on this nomination. A copy of Mr. Hutchins resume is enclosed for your review.

Your prompt and favorable confirmation will enhance the Board's ability to meet its robust agenda and serve the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Bryan Jr.", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Albert Bryan Jr.
Governor

Enclosure

Cc: Senator Diane T. Capehart
Chair, Committee on Rules and Judiciary

Working hard for a better Caribbean!

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Leatherback Brewing Company, St. Croix, Virgin Islands. 2017 – Present.

Co-Founder/Managing Partner, locally owned regional craft beer production brewery.

- Conceived, co-founded, branded, built and operate a 15,000-barrel production and packaging craft beer brewery with wholesale distribution and retail outlets along with a beer education and tour venue.
- Export market presence in Florida, Puerto Rico and the British Virgin Islands.
- Designed and built St. Thomas Innovation Brewery and Tasting Room.
- VI Economic Development Commission Tax Beneficiary.
- Awarded *Most Likely to Improve the Local Economy* by the *Prior Family Foundation*, U. of Miami, 2018.
- VI Clean Coasts *Certified Eco-Friendly Business*, Since October 2018.
- Recipient of Workforce 180 Workforce Development Grant, 2019.
- Recipient St. Croix Chamber of Commerce, New Business of the Year, 2018.

Island-Life-Adventures, St. Croix, Virgin Islands. 2009 – Present.

Founder, Co-Owner, bicycle and eco-tour and shore excursion company.

- 20,000+ guests, 200,000+ miles ridden on St. Croix with a 5-star participant experience review rating.
- St. Croix Youth Mountain Bike Program for 5th-8th graders. 1,000 miles ridden with 22 kids.
- Hotel Bike Program fleet lease program for St. Croix hotels.
- Trip Advisor *Certificate of Excellence* since 2017.

Freelance consultant. US Virgin Islands. 2016 – Present.

- Lead author on VI CZM's integration of climate change considerations in their *Environmental Assessment Report Guidance and Requirements* for Coastal Zone permit applicants, 2017-2018.
- Designed and performed scientific marine, benthic and terrestrial surveys and assessments.
- Expert Defense Witness for Civil Environmental Proceedings in the US Virgin Islands.
- Environmental Strategic Advisor to St. Croix Energy.
- Team member for the Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan update contract.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Virgin Islands. 2008 – 2015.

-Program Director, US and British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico Program.

- Created capacity and directed operations and conservation strategies across the three jurisdictions.
- Launched new office in Puerto Rico and deployed first field projects in the British Virgin Islands.
- Identified and cultivated private donors and recruited new Trustees and talented staff.
- Networked and worked closely with regional and local leaders to advance sustainability policies.
- Managed inventory of park and conservation lands and collaborated with local land and park trusts to improve cohesion and efficiencies for more comprehensive and regional beneficial impacts.

-Director of Government Relations, US and British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico Program.

- Developed policy priorities and strategies for improving marine resource management and terrestrial park and private protected areas development.
- Identified and engaged key policy makers and implementors within the local and federal government and national governments and bilateral agencies.

US Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Virgin Islands. 1998 – 2008.

-Environmental Program Administrator, Office of the Commissioner. 2007 – 2008.

- Provided senior technical/policy support and managed multidisciplinary projects across agencies.
- Coordinated the Department's natural resource damage and emergency response and assessments.

-Director, Division of Environmental Protection. 2004 – 2007.

- Directed activities supporting the implementation of all environmental laws applicable to the USVI.
- Managed \$15M annually allocated across two regulatory offices with ~60 employees.
- Led the effort to successfully establish the US' first coral bio-criteria under the Clean Water Act.
- Developed, proposed, presented and defended annual budgets to VI Legislature.
- Provided professional and expert testimony and presentation to numerous and varied audiences.

- Manager/Environmental Engineer, Water Quality and Pollution Control Program. 1998- 2004.

- Lead the growth of the Water Programs, issued TPDES permits and performed facility surveys.
- Created and funded the *VI Beach Water Quality Monitoring Program*.
- Expanded marine and coral monitoring programs.
- Implemented the *DPNR Scientific Diver Program*.
- Pursued regulatory compliance through objective environmental enforcement actions.
- Technical Lead on the government's *VI Rum Treatability Study*.
- Acted as Incident Commander and supported field response to Hazmat Incidents throughout the VI.
- Provided expert witness testimony to civil and criminal environmental proceedings under federal and local law.

EDUCATION

Master of Environmental Management, Duke University, Durham, NC. 2004.

Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering with Minor in Ecology, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA. 1997.

K-12 Graduate of The Good Hope School, Frederiksted, VI. 1992.

VOLUNTEER BOARD MEMBERSHIPS and COMMUNITY SERVICE (current roles)

- **Virgin Islands Trail Alliance, Co-Founder and President of the Board.**
- **St. Croix Chamber of Commerce, Member.**
- **St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce, Member.**
- **VI Hotel and Tourism Association, Member.**

NATIONAL RECOGNITIONS and AWARDS

- **USEPA Environmental Champion Award. 2015.**
- **NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service Recognition. 2015.**
- **US Coral Reef Task Force, Significant Contribution Recognition. 2013.**
- **USEPA Scientific and Technological Achievement Award. 2009.**
- **White House, Coastal America Partnership Award. 2003.**

LANGUAGES

Native: English

Proficient: Spanish



Office of the Governor
United States Virgin Islands

QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR
GOVERNOR'S NOMINEE FOR
DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

- 1) **ALL questions must be fully and correctly answered and returned to the Office of Legal Counsel within seven (7) business days of your receipt of the Questionnaire.**
- 2) Do not submit a resume instead of this Questionnaire.
- 3) If more than the allotted space on this form is required for a complete and full answer, please attach as many additional 8½ x 11 sheets as may be needed. At the top of each additional sheet put your name, "Office of the Governor, Office of Legal Counsel", and then reference the question number before each answer.
- 4) **The Questionnaire is in Word Format. Please complete all responses clearly in black font color. Responses are NOT to be hand written.**
- 5) Please do not hesitate to call the Office of Legal Counsel at Government House at (340) 774-0001 if you have any questions concerning this Questionnaire.

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

10. EMPLOYMENT RECORD: Please list, in chronological order, your complete employment record for the past ten (10) years, beginning with the present or most recent position.

[Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

Employer	Dates of Employment	Position	Address/Phone #	Supervisor
Leatherback Brewing Co	2017- Present	Managing Partner		Self
Caribbean Crafted	2019-Present	Managing Partner		Self
Island Life Adventures	2019-Present	Managing Partner		Self
Freedom City Cycles	2009-2017	Owner		Self
The Nature Conservancy	2008-2015	Director- VI, PR and BVI		Dr. Phil Kramer
DPNR	1998-2008	Various technical and leadership positions		Various directors and commissioners

11. GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE:

A. List all federal, state, territorial or local government service, giving dates and type of service such as employee, boards, commissions, executive, legislative or judicial branches, consultant, voluntary service, part-time or honorary. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

B. List and attach a copy of all service contracts you have held independently or been a party to with the Government of the Virgin Islands.

GVI-DPNR, Water Program Engineer, 1998-2000.
GVI-DPNR, Water Program Supervisor, 2000-2004.
GVI-DPNR, Director, Division of Environmental Protection, 2004-2006.
GVI-DPNR, Environmental Program Administrator (Office of the Commissioner), 2006-2008.
The Nature Conservancy, US Government Relations Cabinet (lobby arm of TNC), 2011-2015

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

12. BUSINESSES AND FINANCIAL INTEREST: List all businesses (for profit or not for profit), real estate and trusts in which you have at least a 10% interest or control of assets or serve as an officer or member of a board with voting rights. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

Leatherback Brewing Company, LLC.
Caribbean Crafted, LLC
Leatherback Island Life Adventures, LLC (DBA- Island Life Adventures)

13. QUALIFICATIONS: What in your opinion qualifies you to serve the People of the Virgin Islands in the position, which the Governor has nominated you?

My nature, education and 25 years of experience working on natural resource, conservation and environmental management-- mostly in the USVI but also nationally and regionally in the Caribbean. My specific and ongoing understanding of GVI operations. My business and non-profit building and management experience. My continuous stewardship of our natural resources and facilitation of getting more people out to responsibly enjoy our great outdoors, especially the younger generation!

SECTION II: HONORS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

14. MEMBERSHIPS: List all memberships and offices held in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, charitable, and other organizations.

St. Croix and St. Thomas Chambers of Commerce, business member
USVI and St. Croix Hotel Tourism Associations, member
Trust for VI Lands, former member.
VI Cycling Federation, former president and member.

15. BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, TRUSTS, ETC.: List all government or private sector boards, trusts or fiduciary responsible positions on which you have served or are now serving.

VI Trail Alliance, President and Co-Founder

16. HONORS AND AWARDS: List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honor society memberships, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievement.

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

St. Croix Chamber of Commerce, New Business of the Year Award, 2018 for Leatherback B.
USEPA Environmental Champion Award, 2015 for The Nature Conservancy.
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service Recognition, 2015 for The Nature Conservancy.
USEPA Scientific and Technological Achievement Award, 2009 for DPNR and The Nature C.

17. PUBLISHED WRITINGS: List all titles, publishers and dates of books, articles, reports, or other published materials you have written.

https://www.caribjournal.com/2015/02/02/the-caribbeans-critical-coasts/
https://stcroixsource.com/2018/11/25/stx-mountain-biker-builds-trail-for-kids-encourages-back

SECTION III: CHARACTER

18. Have you ever been the subject of a grand jury, police, and department of justice or any legally constituted government authority, investigation anywhere or at anytime?
 YES NO

If you answer is yes, please explain with details including date and location. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

19. Have you ever been arrested in any geographical location for any offense, including traffic violations? YES NO

If yes, please explain with details including offense, date of location and disposition. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

20. Have you ever been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor? YES NO

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

If yes, please explain with details including offense, date, location and current status. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

21. Is there now or has there ever been a judgment entered against you? YES NO
If the answer is yes, please explain with details on date, location and disposition or current status. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

22. Have you ever been a respondent in any labor dispute or discrimination proceeding?
 YES NO

If the answer is yes, please explain with details on date, location and disposition or current status. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

23. Have you now or have you ever been a member of an organization or an associate of an individual advocating terrorism, overthrow of a government by force or the advocacy or subordination of any ethnic group or individuals? YES NO

If the answer is yes, please give details of dates, names of organizations, names of individuals and all pertinent circumstances. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

24. Do you know of any individual, organization or group, which can be expected to oppose your nomination? YES NO

If the answer is yes, please list the individuals, organizations or groups by name and give the details of your belief for their opposition. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

25. Do you have any outstanding and delinquent monetary obligations to the Government of the Virgin Islands or any other public or private entity, including but not limited to, personal income taxes, business taxes, real property taxes (commercial or residential), business license renewals, trade name renewals, annual reporting fees, professional organization dues, child support, judgments, debt

Government of the Virgin Islands, includes but is not limited to the following departments, agencies and instrumentalities: the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Tax Assessor, Department of Justice Division of Paternity and Child Support, Board of Education, Economic Development Authority, U. S. Small Business Administration, Small Business Development Center, Police Department, Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, the Water and Power Authority, the Waste Management Authority, Department of Health, Department of Human Services

YES NO

If the answer is yes, please attach a detailed explanation of what outstanding and delinquent monetary obligations are owed, the reason for the delinquency, and the intended plan to bring the matter current.

SECTION IV: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

26. Please explain your understanding of "Conflict of Interest" as it applies to the position to which you have been nominated to serve the People of the Virgin Islands.

I cannot directly benefit from decisions or funds of Board or Territorial Park System.
Any potential conflicts must be disclosed in advance and avoided.

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

27. Do you own a business or real estate, or are you a partner or shareholder or affiliated in anyway to sell or provide goods or services to the Virgin Islands Government?
 YES NO

If the answer is yes, please explain and give the name and location of these interest(s) and how you promise to remove yourself from any possible conflict. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

28. Does any close relative or spouse have a business or real estate interest(s) as described in question 25? YES NO

If the answer is yes, please explain and give the name and location of these interest(s) and how you propose to remove yourself from any possible conflict. (Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary.)

SECTION V: JOB PERFORMANCE

29. In no more than 150 words, please outline in priority order your four (4) specific short-term and four (4) specific long-term goals and objectives you would employ to achieve the entity's purpose and improve its service delivery system if your nomination is confirmed for this position.

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

Short term: 1) Develop a strong Trust Board. 2) Ensure a full set of legal and financial tools are available to deploy by the Trust in combination with Division of Territorial Parks and Protected Areas. 3) Collaborate with the established private and nonprofit efforts working towards a common goal. 4) Identify innovative mechanisms for funding the growth and effective stewardship of VI park and protected areas.
Long term: 1) Ensure strong leadership and succession management for the Trust. 2) Build an endowment for sustainable funding of protected area management. 3) Leverage the lands within the protected area system for climate change resilience and improved outdoor human ex

30. As you must know, the Virgin Islands Government does not have the monetary resources to continue business as usual. Do you have a fiscal plan in place to deal with less spending and a streamlined system to deliver services to the residents of this Territory? YES NO

If your answer is yes, please give a brief summary of your plan. If your answer is no, please explain how you intend to operate your department with less money and deliver the services to the residents as required. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

Specifically for parks and protected areas- consolidate numerous government operations across multiple departments, reducing overlapping authority and increasing efficiencies. Leverage the significant private and non-profit sector efforts for land conservation and ensure that the full suite of land trust and tools are utilized by the Trust.
Nature is our islands' treasure that significantly drives our economy. Embrace and market this notion to drive progressive and active experiential tourism.

31. What is your view and understanding of Equal Employment Opportunity and Sexual Harassment? [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

All humans have the equal right to live the life they choose. Workplaces should be free of intrusion into personal space and private matters. Its illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy transgender status, and sexual orientation), national origin, age over 40 or disability. It is unlawful to harass a person (employee or applicant) because of that person's sex including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassm
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32. Have you ever been named as a party in any hearing, administrative, civil, and criminal, including EEOC, civil rights or sexual harassment? YES NO

If yes, please explain in detail, giving date, venue, agency, and the names of the other parties and the disposition. [Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary, and reference this question number]

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

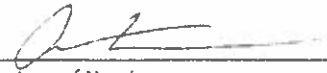
33. Is there any additional information that you believe would assist the Committee on Rules and the Judiciary in processing your nomination expeditiously?

CERTIFICATION


This is to certify and affirm that all the statements contained herein and in any supporting documents or schedules or other such supporting documents or schedules executed at a later date as a part or addendum to this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and are made in good faith.

Signed this 27th day of Sept. 2022

Aaron Hutchins
Nominee's Name (Print Clearly)


Signature of Nominee

Sworn and subscribed before me this 27 day of September, 2022


Notary Public of the U.S. Virgin Islands

[seal]

My commission expires: _____

THELMA M MANNING
Notary Public
U.S. Virgin Islands
NP-175-21
My Commission Expires June 9, 2025

NOMINEE'S NAME: AARON HUTCHINS

**SIGNATURE, CERTIFICATION AND AUTHORIZATION
FOR
RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

Please read the following very carefully before you sign this document.

1. I understand that the information given in this Questionnaire will be investigated under all applicable laws.
2. I understand that any false statement on any part of this Questionnaire can be grounds for rejecting the confirmation of my nomination.
3. I hereby consent and authorize the release of information on my character, background, ability, financial indebtedness and fitness to serve the residents of the United States Virgin Islands by all government departments and agencies, especially the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Tax Assessor, Department of Justice Division of Paternity and Child Support, Board of Education, Economic Development Authority, U. S. Small Business Administration, Small Business Development Center, Police Department, Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, if applicable, employers, schools, all law enforcement agencies, and all other individuals and organizations, which may be deemed necessary, to authorized Committee on Rules and the Judiciary investigators, its staff and any other authorized employees of the Virgin Islands Government as may be required.
4. **CERTIFICATION:**
This is to certify and affirm that all the statements contained herein and in any supporting document or schedules or other such supporting documents or schedules executed at a later date as a part or addendum to this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and are made in good faith.

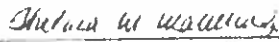
Signed this 27th day of Sept 2021

Aaron Hutchins

Nominee's Name [Print Clearly]


Signature of Nominee

Sworn and subscribed before me this 27 day of September, 2021.


Notary Public of the U.S. Virgin Islands

[seal]

My commission expires _____

THELMA M MANNING
Notary Public
U S Virgin Islands
NP-475-21
My Commission Expires June 9, 2025

NOMINEE'S FULL NAME: Aaron Hutchins

**AUTHORIZATION FOR
RELEASE OF INFORMATION**
Carefully read this authorization to release information about you, then sign and date it in ink.

6. CERTIFICATION:


This document is to certify and affirm that all the statements contained herein and any supporting documents or schedules or other such supporting documents or schedules executed at a later date as a part or addendum to this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and are made in good faith.

Signed this 29 day of March, 2023

Aaron Hutchins
Nominee's Name (Print Clearly)

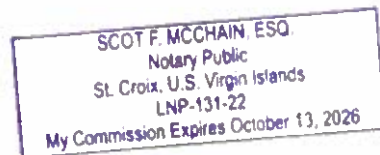

Signature of Nominee

Sworn and Subscribed before me this 29 day of March, 2023.


Notary Public

(Seal)

My commission expires _____



Last Four (4) Digits of SSN # **2312**

NOMINEE'S FULL NAME: Aaron Hutchins

**AUTHORIZATION FOR
RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

Carefully read this authorization to release information about you, then sign and date it in ink.

1. **I Authorize** an investigator, special agent, or other duly accredited representative of the authorized Local Federal agency conducting my background investigation or reinvestigation to obtain any information relating to my activities from individuals, schools, residential management agents, employers, criminal justice agencies, credit bureaus, consumer reporting agencies, collection agencies, retail business establishments or other sources of information to include publicly available electronic information. This information may include but is not limited to my academic, residential achievement, performance, attendance, disciplinary, employment history, and criminal history record information.

I understand that, for some sources of information, a separate release will be needed, and I may be contacted for such a release at a later date.

2. **I Authorize** the Social Security Administration (SSA) to verify my Social Security Number (to match my name, Social Security Number, and date of birth with information in SSA records and provide the results of the match) to the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or other Federal agency requesting or conducting my investigation for the purposes outlined above. I authorize SSA to provide explanatory information to OPM, or to the other Federal agency requesting or conducting my investigation, in the event of a discrepancy.
3. **I Authorize** custodians of records and other sources of information pertaining to me to release such information upon request of the investigator, special agent, or other duly accredited representative of any Local Federal agency authorized above regardless of any previous agreement to the contrary.
4. **I Understand** that the information released by records custodians and sources of information is for official use by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands (Government) only for the purposes provided in this Application and that it may be disclosed by the Government only as authorized by law.
5. **I hereby** consent and authorize the release of information on my character, background, ability, financial indebtedness and fitness to serve the residents of the United States Virgin Islands by all government Departments and agencies, especially the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Tax Assessor, Department of Justice, Division of Paternity and Child Support, Board of Education, Economic Development Authority, U.S. Small Business Administration, Small Business Development Center, Police Department, Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, if applicable, employers, schools, all law enforcement agencies, and all other individuals and organizations which may be deemed necessary, to authorized Committee on Rules and Judiciary investigators, its staff and any other authorized employees of the Virgin Islands Government as may be required.

Photocopies of this authorization with my signature are valid. This authorization is valid for two years from the date signed.

Last Four (4) Digits of SSN = **2312**