

# Legislature of the Virgin Islands

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The Honorable  
**Angel Bolques, Jr.**  
Senator-At-Large  
36<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the Virgin Islands

**CHAIRMAN**  
Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, and Parks

**VICE-CHAIRMAN**  
Committee on Economic Development & Agriculture

**MEMBER**  
Committee of the Whole  
Committee on Rules & Judiciary  
Committee on Homeland Security, Justice & Public Safety  
Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure and Planning  
Sub-Committee on Energy & Infrastructure Development



## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

*Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks*

*Hearing Date: Friday, February 21, 2025*

*Location: Cleone Creque Legislative Annex, St. John*

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### **Prepared by:**

The Honorable Angel Bolques, Jr.

Chairman, Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks

Monday, March 3, 2025

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The Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks convened a hearing on February 21, 2025, at 10:00 AM at the Cleone Creque Legislative Annex on St. John. The purpose of this hearing was to receive testimony and updates from the Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation (DSPR) and the Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding the youth and aging services and programs for the island of St. John. The discussions were aimed at evaluating existing programs, identifying service gaps, and exploring plans for future development to better serve the residents.

The Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation (DSPR), represented by Acting Commissioner Vincent Roberts, provided an overview of recreational activities available to youth and senior residents on St. John. The testimony emphasized the importance of ensuring equitable access to facilities and programs that promote wellness and community engagement. However, the department acknowledged facing significant challenges, including limited staffing and funding constraints that hinder the expansion of services. Additionally, several facilities require urgent maintenance and upgrades to be fully operational. Looking ahead, DSPR is working to introduce new youth development initiatives and enhance senior-friendly recreational programs. Planned infrastructure improvements for facilities, along with a proposed timeline for completion, were discussed. The department also stressed the importance of increased collaboration with local organizations and community leaders to foster greater participation in programs.

Commissioner Averil George of the Department of Human Services (DHS) provided updates on key areas of concern, including the Senior Center, the Head Start Facility, and the Multi-Purpose Building. The Senior Center is currently operational with plans to expand meal services and wellness programs for seniors. The Head Start program remains a vital resource for early childhood education on St. John, the need for improved resources and staff were discussed. DHS is working to secure additional funding to enhance program offerings and ensure a

safe learning environment for children. The Multi-Purpose Building was another key topic of discussion, with updates on construction progress and intended community usage. While delays in completion were acknowledged, DHS assured the committee of steps being taken to expedite the process.

The committee identified several findings based on the testimonies. While both DSPR and DHS are actively working to provide essential services, there are evident resource and infrastructure challenges that must be addressed. The Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks remains committed to working collaboratively with DSPR, DHS, and other stakeholders to ensure that St. John residents receive the quality services they deserve. Addressing existing challenges and implementing sustainable solutions will require coordinated efforts from both government and community partners. The committee will continue to monitor progress and advocate for the necessary resources to meet the evolving needs of the island's youth and senior populations.

**Respectfully submitted,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angel Bolques, Jr." in a cursive script.

**The Honorable Angel Bolques, Jr.**

Chairman, Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks  
Senator At Large, 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands