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PFA Approves \$219,000 for Junior Achievement Biztown, Mini Soccer Fields and Park Lighting

PFA approved \$219,190.08 for Junior Achievement Virgin Islands' Biztown program, lighting enhancements at Ezra Fredericks Park and two mini soccer fields at Ezra Fredericks and the St. Croix Educational Complex during its Thursday board meeting vote.

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The V.I. Public Finance Authority on Thursday approved \$219,190.08 for a youth financial literacy program and sports infrastructure projects on St. Thomas and St. Croix.

The funding includes \$80,000 for Junior Achievement Virgin Islands to support Biztown, a program that teaches elementary school participants business, finance, planning and governance-related skills. PFA Chair Governor Albert Bryan Jr. said Junior Achievement is “near and dear to

[his] heart,” and told board members that the organization has been “having some problems with their funding” for Biztown.

“I want to make sure that this program doesn’t die in the Virgin Islands, because we see tremendous growth out of it,” Governor Bryan said, proposing the \$80,000 allocation, which “covers some of their expenses and allows them to become solvent again.”

Mr. Bryan said programs such as Biztown help expose young people to budgeting, finance and planning, areas he said need to be better developed among Virgin Islanders.

“These are the kind of programs that Junior Achievement does,” he said.

The board approved the Junior Achievement allocation, along with two additional funding requests tied to sports infrastructure.

The Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation will receive \$68,907.40 for “lighting enhancements” at Ezra Fredericks Park on St. Thomas.

DPSR will also receive \$70,282.68 to complete two mini soccer fields, one at Ezra Fredericks Park and one at the St. Croix Educational Complex.

Funding had already been allocated to complete the bulk of the two mini soccer field projects, but additional money was needed because “construction costs and lighting [are] always escalating,” as Governor Bryan put it.