

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Tokyo 2020 Olympic And Paralympic Games Officials Discuss Potential USVI Participation During Meeting

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Senate Vice President Myron D. Jackson, chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Historic Preservation and Aging hosted a meeting in collaboration with the Committee on Sports, Parks, and Recreation with representatives from the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, on Friday at the Capitol Building. According to a release Mr. Jackson's office issue, the purpose was to meet with visiting Japanese and Virgin Islands Olympic officials to consider the participation of the U.S. Virgin Islands in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Olympic Town Host Program.

The host town initiative seeks to build and strengthen relationships with local Japanese towns and countries or regions partaking in the 2020 Tokyo Games, the release said.

Additionally, the national team has an opportunity to promote and publicize their country. If the U.S. Virgin Islands participates, qualified athletes will have an opportunity to visit, explore and participate in activities in Ojiya City in Japan, according to Toshihiro Hayashi, assistant director for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games Secretariat of the Headquarters. Ojiya City is two hours by train from Tokyo and is shaped by the longest river of Japan. It is known for its colored carp, bull fighting, textiles, festivals, sacred music, dance, and fireworks.

“Forging new relationships can occur within the structure and outside of the structure of sports. For example, residents of the Host Town will have tourism opportunities for an even exchange of cultural roots such as interactions between jazz musicians from each country,” said Mr. Jackson of the potential partnership. “This is a really appropriate host town. I’m excited.”

Mr. Hayashi stated that the exchange aids in maximizing the performance of the athletes during the competition. He explained the details of the exchanges with athletes through the Host Town initiative for the Tokyo 2020 Games. Participants will attend sports workshops and cultural events, interact with residents and students from several schools, eat local foods and dishes, and enjoy casual interactions with each other after the games.

According to the release, the host program entails inviting guests from counterpart countries, learning the history of the country, exchanging among students, and participating in festivals and events. The Virgin Islands Olympic Committee has the power to formalize the territory’s participation in the Olympic Town Host Program by signing an agreement.

Also attending the meeting were Keeichi Tada, senior policy coordinator, asecretariat of the Headquarters for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games; interpreter Yoku Yoshizawa; Angel Morales, president of the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee, Senator Janelle K. Sarauw, and Jose Lettsome, chief of staff of Senator Dwayne DeGraff.