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St. John Brewers Details Plans to Expand Operations in St. Thomas During EDA Meeting

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St. John Brewers beverage. By. ST. JOHN BREWERS.

The board of the V.I. Economic Development Authority met on Tuesday for a V.I. Economic Development Commission public hearing to consider several applications. A governing board decision meeting for the EDC and the Economic Development Bank was also part of the meeting agenda.

The first item of business was a new application to expand the operations of St. John Brewers, a pub and small craft brewery located on St. John. Co-owners Kevin Chipman and Chirag Vyas presented the board, via video conference, with their plans for expansion and provided insight into the operations of the company, including discussions on staff relations, education and training

components.

The representatives from KCV Associates, the business behind St. John Brewers, clarified to board members the difference between what they were doing on St. John and their plans for St. Thomas. Chipman explained that there were actually two projects in the works, one on the Charlotte Amalie waterfront in the historic district — a tasting room and a merchandise space, which opened in January.

The second project was a major production facility in the Sub Base area. A 7,000 square ft space adjacent to the Bellows Warehouse is currently being modified and expanded, with equipment on the way. This project is expected to become operational in the next two months once construction is completed. The KCV principals estimated that at least 10 new jobs would be created across the company, and additionally, that current production operations in Florida may be reduced as local capacity is expanded.

This is the first application for KCV Associates Inc. and the board will soon come to a decision regarding that application. The second presentation on Tuesday came from Neltjeberg Bay Enterprises LLC, a company that provides consulting services to various businesses in the United States. Managing Director Frederick H. Kopko, Jr. and Office Manager Jazmine Grell made a joint presentation to the board, requesting that the company's suite of concessions granted by authorities be extended for an additional 10 years. This, Grell explained to Consortium journalists, would allow for the continuation of the charitable work NBE LLC has been performing on the ground.

The list of corporate social responsibility activities associated with the firm includes support for the VI Jaguars Small Fry Basketball Team, the local edition of the Small Fry Basketball Circuit which encourages opportunities in basketball for shorter boys and girls.

Through their charitable 501c corporation Caribbean Rose, NBE LLC funds the Jaguars expenses, including uniforms, equipment, and travel and accommodation for Small Fry league trips. In 2020, Caribbean Rose also began working with the Department of Education to tutor athletes in academic subjects. Tutoring in mathematics, science and English occurs every weekend before practice hours at the Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School.

After the presentation from Neltjeberg Bay representatives, board members offered a few suggestions, some of which had to do with expanding staff benefits within the company.

After the public hearing, a decision meeting was held on application and compliance matters for the V.I. Economic Development Authority, the V.I. Economic Development Commission and the V.I. Economic Development Bank. Summaries of decisions made by the board today will soon be made available on the VIEDA website at www.usvieda.org/about-usvieda/board-directors/board-meeting-agenda.