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## 'This is To Augment Carnival As We Know It' - VIPA Board Members Told of Utopia's Benefits to Territory

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Members of the V.I. Port Authority Board of Governors on Wednesday were given a better understanding of the major new event series scheduled for Crown Bay during St. Thomas Carnival 2024 – a visit from the Utopia Carnival Cruise & Festival (UCCF).

A hybrid land and sea entertainment extravaganza, UCCF is set to dock at Crown Bay on May 1, 2024 after three fun-filled days at sea. Responding to a query from board member Celestino White, VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe explained that the Norwegian Breakaway would dock on St. Thomas for 5 nights, during which promoters Glowbal Citizens Entertainment will host four themed parties, each night except for Saturday May 4. “All events that are going to be held at Crown Bay should be finished by about 8:30 p.m. so that these same people have the opportunity then to...go up to participate in our village, our carnival,” explained Mr. Dowe.

“The ship can hold about 4000 people,” Mr. Dowe continued, “and that’s what they’re trying to sell out and bring these 4000 additional people here.” The reason why Utopia has received the blessings of Governor Albert Bryan himself is that the promoters, a Virgin Islands company, “look at it as augmenting the entire carnival product,” Mr. Dowe noted.

He also reassured board members that VIPA would not have to sustain any costs in relation to the venture. “We don’t have no request to waive any port fees,” Mr. Dowe declared. “They asked us what those fees are, we submitted those fees, and we expect to be compensated for that.” Apart from the usual collection of fees, VIPA is also off the hook for any additional security costs. “What they have to submit to us is the amount of officers that they are going to be hiring privately. We would not be bearing the cost of the security property for that event.”

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