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Securities code: 9887

June 6, 2022

To Our Shareholders:

Kazutoshi Kawarabuki,  
President and Representative Director  
**MATSUYA FOODS HOLDINGS CO., LTD.**  
1-14-5 Nakacho, Musashino-shi, Tokyo

## Notice of 47th Annual General Meeting of Shareholders

We are pleased to announce the 47th Annual General Meeting of Shareholders of MATSUYA FOODS HOLDINGS CO., LTD. (the “Company”), which will be held as described below.

In order to prevent the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and protect your safety, you are encouraged to exercise your voting rights in writing or by using the Internet, if at all possible. Regardless of your own state of health, you are strongly urged to refrain from traveling to the venue on the date of the meeting.

You may not be able to enter the venue even if you arrive as we will have fewer chairs than normal at this year’s meeting because we will need to space them out to help prevent the spread of infection.

If you are not attending the meeting in person, please read the attached Reference Documents for the General Meeting of Shareholders and exercise your voting rights by 6:00 p.m., Friday, June 24, 2022 (Japan Standard Time).

**1. Date and time:** Monday, June 27, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. (JST) (Reception opens at 9:00 a.m.)

**2. Venue:** Hyatt Regency Tokyo, 1st basement floor, banquet room “Momoyama”  
2-7-2 Nishi-shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo

### **3. Purpose of the Meeting**

#### **Matters to be reported:**

1. Business Report and Consolidated Financial Statements for the 47th Term (from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022), as well as the results of audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements by the Financial Auditor and the Audit & Supervisory Board
2. Non-consolidated Financial Statements for the 47th Term (from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022)

#### **Matters to be resolved:**

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Proposal No. 1</b> | Appropriation of Surplus                                    |
| <b>Proposal No. 2</b> | Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation                 |
| <b>Proposal No. 3</b> | Election of Five Directors                                  |
| <b>Proposal No. 4</b> | Election of One Audit & Supervisory Board Member            |
| <b>Proposal No. 5</b> | Election of One Substitute Audit & Supervisory Board Member |

### Notice regarding Prevention of COVID-19 Infection

In order to prevent the spread of infection, you are encouraged to exercise your voting rights in writing or by using the Internet, if at all possible. Regardless of your own state of health, we would kindly ask you to refrain from traveling to the venue on the date of the meeting.

You may exercise your voting rights via smartphone without entering the “login ID” and “password,” by scanning the QR code provided in the Voting Rights Exercise Form enclosed herein (in Japanese only).

Shareholders attending the General Meeting of Shareholders in person are requested to take note of their own health condition. Please take measures to protect yourself from infection, such as wearing a face mask.

In order to protect against the spread of COVID-19, we will take necessary protection measures at the venue, including checking your temperature and requesting you to use alcohol disinfectant solution and wear a face mask. We may limit the number of people who can enter the venue in order to ensure space between shareholders. We will refuse entry to those who are found to have a fever or be in bad health, and shorten the duration of the General Meeting of Shareholders.

- When attending the Meeting, please submit the enclosed Voting Rights Exercise Form to the reception desk.
- The reception will open at 9:00 a.m.
- If you exercise your voting rights by proxy, you are allowed to appoint one other shareholder with voting rights as your proxy. Please note that your proxy is required to submit a document evidencing the authority as proxy.
- Pursuant to the provisions of laws and regulations and Article 14 of the Articles of Incorporation of the Company, the following documents are posted on our website (<https://www.matsuyafoods-holdings.co.jp/ir/>) and are therefore not included in this Notice. The documents attached to this Notice are hence part of the documents audited by the Audit & Supervisory Board Members and the Financial Auditor for the preparation of their Audit Report (this applies only to the Japanese version).
  - (i) Outline of Systems to Ensure Appropriate Operations and Their Operational Status
  - (ii) Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Assets
  - (iii) Notes on Consolidated Financial Statements
  - (iv) Non-consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Assets
  - (v) Notes on Non-consolidated Financial Statements
- Any updates to the Reference Documents for the General Meeting of Shareholders, the Business Report, the Non-consolidated Financial Statements and the Consolidated Financial Statements will be posted on our website (<https://www.matsuyafoods-holdings.co.jp/ir/>; in Japanese only).
- Please be advised in advance that no gifts will be presented to the shareholders at the venue of the General Meeting of Shareholders.

## Reference Documents for the General Meeting of Shareholders

### Proposals and Reference Information

#### Proposal No. 1 Appropriation of Surplus

The Company recognizes the return of profit to its shareholders as a key management priority, and it maintains a basic policy of paying stable dividends on a continual basis in consideration of business performance and future business development, while paying attention to internal reserves to be secured for future business development and strengthening of its management base.

The Company proposes to pay a year-end dividend of ¥12 per share for the fiscal year.

- (1) Type of dividend property  
To be paid in cash.
- (2) Allotment of dividend property and their aggregate amount  
The Company proposes to pay a dividend of ¥12 per common share of the Company.  
In this event, the total dividends will be ¥228,669,936.
- (3) Effective date of dividends of surplus  
The effective date of dividends will be June 28, 2022.

**Proposal No. 2** Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation

1. Reasons for the Amendments

With the enforcement of the revised provisions provided for in the proviso to Article 1 of the Supplementary Provisions of the Act Partially Amending the Companies Act (Act No. 70 of 2019) September 1, 2022, the Company proposes to make the following changes to its Articles of Incorporation in preparation for the introduction of a system for providing informational materials for the general meeting of shareholders in electronic format.

- (1) The Company intends to establish paragraph 1 of Article 14 (Measures for Providing Information in Electronic Format, Etc.) as proposed because companies are obliged to stipulate in their articles of incorporation that they will take measures for providing information that constitutes the content of reference documents for the general meeting of shareholders, etc. in electronic format.
- (2) The Company intends to establish paragraph 2 of Article 14 (Measures for Providing Information in Electronic Format, Etc.) so that the Company may limit the scope of the matters to be stated in the paper-based documents to be delivered to shareholders who request them as provided in the Ministry of Justice Order, as far as such matters constitute the content of reference documents for the general meeting of shareholders, etc. to be delivered in electronic format.
- (3) Since the provisions for Internet Disclosure and Deemed Provision of Reference Documents for the General Meeting of Shareholders, Etc. (Article 14 of the current Articles of Incorporation) will no longer be required, they will be deleted.
- (4) Supplementary provisions regarding the effectiveness of the aforementioned establishment and deletion of provisions will be established. The supplementary provisions shall be deleted when they are no longer effective.

2. Details of the Amendment

The details of the amendment are as follows:

(Amendments are underlined.)

Current Articles of Incorporation	Proposed amendments
<p><u>(Internet Disclosure and Deemed Provision of Reference Documents for the General Meeting of Shareholders, Etc.)</u>  <u>Article 14</u>  <u>When the Company convenes a general meeting of shareholders, if it discloses information that is to be stated or presented in the reference documents for the general meeting of shareholders, business report, non-consolidated financial statements and consolidated financial statements through the Internet in accordance with the provisions prescribed by the Ministry of Justice Order, it may be deemed that the Company has provided this information to shareholders.</u></p> <p>(Newly established)</p>	<p>(Deleted)</p> <p><u>(Measures for Providing Information in Electronic Format, Etc.)</u>  <u>Article 14</u>  <u>1 When the Company convenes a general meeting of shareholders, it shall take measures for providing information that constitutes the content of reference documents for the general meeting of shareholders, etc. in electronic format.</u>  <u>2 Among items for which the measures for providing information in electronic format will be taken, the Company is not required to state all or some of those items designated by the Ministry of Justice Order in the paper-based documents to be delivered to shareholders who requested the delivery of paper-based documents by the record date of voting rights.</u></p>

Current Articles of Incorporation	Proposed amendments
(Newly established)	<u>(Supplementary Provisions)</u> <u>(Transitional Measures for Providing Informational Materials for the General Meeting of Shareholders in Electronic Format)</u>
(Newly established)	<u>Article 1</u> <u>1 The deletion of Article 14 (Internet Disclosure and Deemed Provision of Reference Documents for the General Meeting of Shareholders, Etc.) in the pre-amended Articles of Incorporation and the establishment of the new Article 14 (Measures for Providing Information in Electronic Format, Etc.) in the amended Articles of Incorporation shall be effective from September 1, 2022.</u> <u>2 Notwithstanding the provision of the preceding paragraph, Article 14 of the pre-amended Articles of Incorporation (Internet Disclosure and Deemed Provision of Reference Documents for the General Meeting of Shareholders, Etc.) shall remain effective regarding any general meeting of shareholders held on a date within six months from September 1, 2022.</u> <u>3 These Supplementary Provisions shall be deleted on the date when six months have elapsed from September 1, 2022 or three months have elapsed from the date of the general meeting of shareholders in the preceding paragraph, whichever is later.</u>

**Proposal No. 3** Election of Five Directors

The terms of office of all five Directors will expire at the conclusion of this meeting.

Therefore, the Company proposes the election of five Directors.

The candidates for Director are as follows:

Candidate no.	Name (Date of birth)	Career summary, position, and responsibility in the Company (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company)	Number of the Company's shares owned
1	Toshio Kawarabuki (May 5, 1941)	<p>Oct. 1975 Established Matsuya Shoji as a limited liability company President and Representative Director</p> <p>Jan. 1980 Matsuya Shoji was converted to Matsuya Shoji Co., Ltd. President and Representative Director</p> <p>Mar. 1981 Established Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd. President and Representative Director</p> <p>Apr. 1988 President and Representative Director of Matsuya Shoji Co., Ltd., which was established through a merger between Matsuya Shoji Co., Ltd. and Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd.</p> <p>June 1989 Matsuya Shoji Co., Ltd. was renamed Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd. President and Representative Director</p> <p>June 2007 President and Representative Director and General Manager of Merchandise Division</p> <p>June 2009 Chairman and Representative Director</p> <p>Oct. 2018 Chairman and Representative Director of MATSUYA FOODS HOLDINGS CO., LTD. (renamed from Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd.) (current position)</p>	3,847,400
<p>Reasons for nomination as candidate for Director</p> <p>As a founder, Toshio Kawarabuki has demonstrated strong leadership with commitment to the corporate philosophy of the Company and has obtained extensive knowledge on corporate management. For this reason, the Company nominates Toshio Kawarabuki as a candidate for Director.</p>			

Candidate no.	Name (Date of birth)	Career summary, position, and responsibility in the Company (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company)	Number of the Company's shares owned
2	Kazutoshi Kawarabuki (January 10, 1976)	Feb. 2001    Joined Toshoku Co., Ltd. (present Cargill Japan Co., Ltd.) June 2006    Joined the Company Apr. 2011    General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. June 2011    Executive Officer and General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. May 2012    Executive Officer and Assistant to General Manager of Corporate Management Division (Secorded to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries via personnel exchange program between the government and private sectors) May 2013    Executive Officer and General Manager of Merchandise Dept. of the Company June 2013    Director, General Manager of Merchandise Dept. and General Manager of International Business Dept. Apr. 2014    Director, General Manager of Merchandise Division, General Manager of Merchandise Dept. and General Manager of Merchandise Development Dept. June 2015    Managing Director, General Manager of Merchandise Division, General Manager of Merchandise Dept. and General Manager of Merchandise Development Dept. June 2016    President and Representative Director and General Manager of Merchandise Division Oct. 2018    President and Representative Director (current position) (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company) President and Representative Director and General Manager of Merchandise Division of Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd. President and Representative Director of M.L.S., Ltd.	936,500
Reasons for nomination as candidate for Director Kazutoshi Kawarabuki has a good grasp of the Company's overall management with substantial experience and a track record nurtured through serving in key divisions including merchandise, factories and finance, in pursuit of growth-oriented management. For this reason, the Company nominates Kazutoshi Kawarabuki as a candidate for Director.			

Candidate no.	Name (Date of birth)	Career summary, position, and responsibility in the Company (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company)	Number of the Company's shares owned
3	Kiichiro Tanzawa (February 11, 1954)	<p>Apr. 1979    Joined Shoko Chukin Bank, a cooperative financial institution (present The Shoko Chukin Bank, Ltd.)</p> <p>June 2013    Executive Officer, General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. and General Manager of Personnel Affairs Dept. of the Company</p> <p>Apr. 2016    Managing Director, General Manager of Corporate Management Division, General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. and General Manager of Personnel Administration Dept.</p> <p>June 2017    Senior Managing Director, General Manager of Corporate Management Division, General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. and General Manager of Personnel Administration Dept.</p> <p>Mar. 2018    Senior Managing Director, General Manager of Corporate Management Division, General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept., General Manager of Personnel Administration Dept. and General Manager of Shared Service Center</p> <p>Apr. 2018    Senior Managing Director, General Manager of Corporate Management Division, General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. and General Manager of Personnel Affairs Dept.</p> <p>Oct. 2018    Senior Managing Director, General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. and General Manager of Personnel Affairs Dept.</p> <p>Dec. 2019    Senior Managing Director and General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept.</p> <p>Dec. 2020    Senior Managing Director, General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. and General Manager of Internal Audit Dept.</p> <p>Apr. 2021    Senior Managing Director and General Manager of Finance and Accounting Dept. (current position)</p> <p>(Significant concurrent positions outside the Company) Senior Managing Director and General Manager of Corporate Management Division of Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd.</p>	300
<p>Reasons for nomination as candidate for Director</p> <p>Kiichiro Tanzawa has served in the personnel affairs and finance divisions for many years and is currently involved in the Company's management as Senior Managing Director, where he nurtured extensive experience and a track record. For this reason, the Company nominates Kiichiro Tanzawa as a candidate for Director.</p>			

Candidate no.	Name (Date of birth)	Career summary, position, and responsibility in the Company (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company)	Number of the Company's shares owned
4	Yoshito Usui (August 11, 1962)	<p>Sept. 1984    Joined the Company</p> <p>Apr. 2001    General Manager of Merchandise Development Dept.</p> <p>Jan. 2005    Head of the representative office in China</p> <p>June 2007    Director, Deputy General Manager of Merchandise Division and General Manager of Merchandise Development Dept.</p> <p>June 2009    Director, General Manager of Merchandise Division, General Manager of Merchandise Development Dept. and General Manager of New Business Dept.</p> <p>Apr. 2011    Director, General Manager of Merchandise Division, General Manager of Merchandise Development Dept. and General Manager of Manufacturing Dept.</p> <p>Apr. 2014    Director, General Manager of Production and Logistics Division and General Manager of Production and Logistics Dept.</p> <p>Apr. 2016    Director, General Manager of Production and Logistics Division, General Manager of Logistics Dept., Head of Ranzan Factory and Head of Mt. Fuji Factory</p> <p>June 2018    Director, General Manager of Production and Logistics Division, Head of Mt. Fuji Factory, General Manager of Engineering Dept. and Head of Preliminary Office for the Establishment of Rokko Production and Logistics Center</p> <p>Oct. 2018    Director (current position) (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company) Managing Director and General Manager of Production and Logistics Division of Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd. Chairman of the Board of Directors of Qingdao Matsuya Commercial Trade Co., Ltd.</p>	300
<p>Reasons for nomination as candidate for Director</p> <p>Yoshito Usui is well-versed in manufacturing and logistics through serving in the production and logistics division for many years, and also has profound experience and a superior track record in sales and other divisions. For this reason, the Company nominates Yoshito Usui as a candidate for Director.</p>			
5	Eri Fujiwara (August 7, 1961)	<p>Apr. 1987    Joined Chugai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.</p> <p>Apr. 2000    Joined Nomura Securities Co., Ltd.</p> <p>Aug. 2004    Established Aoba Labor and Social Security Attorney Office Representative Partner (current position)</p> <p>June 2015    Outside Director of the Company (current position) (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company) Representative Partner of Aoba Labor and Social Security Attorney Office</p>	—
<p>Reasons for nomination as candidate for Outside Director and the outline of expected role</p> <p>Since Eri Fujiwara has management experience as Representative Partner of Aoba Labor and Social Security Attorney Office, the Company judges she will appropriately fulfill her duties as an Outside Director. She actively provides opinions and recommendations on corporate management at the Board of Directors of the Company, and the Company expects to continue utilizing her experience, etc. to supervise its management. For this reason, the Company nominates Eri Fujiwara as a candidate for Outside Director.</p>			

- Notes:
1. There is no special interest between any of the candidates and the Company.
  2. Toshio Kawarabuki falls under the category of Parent Company, etc. set forth in Article 2, item (iv) -2 of the Companies Act.
  3. The Company has entered into a directors and officers (D&O) liability insurance policy with all the Directors and Audit & Supervisory Board Members as insured parties. If each candidate is re-elected and assumes office as Director, the Company plans to continue to include every such Director as an insured party. The insurance policy will cover losses incurred in cases where an insured party receives a claim for damages and court costs arising from the performance of

duties as an officer and assumes legal liability for the damages. The term of the insurance policy is one year, and the Company plans to renew the policy before the expiration of that term by resolution of the Board of Directors.

4. Eri Fujiwara is a candidate for Outside Director.
5. Eri Fujiwara is currently an Outside Director of the Company, and at the conclusion of this meeting, her tenure will have been seven years.
6. Pursuant to the provisions of Article 427, paragraph (1) of the Companies Act, the Company has entered into an agreement with Eri Fujiwara to limit her liability for damages under Article 423, paragraph (1) of the same Act. Pursuant to this agreement, the defined maximum amount of liability for damages is the minimum liability amount provided for under Article 425, paragraph (1) of the Companies Act. If her re-election is approved, the Company plans to renew this agreement with her.
7. If the re-election of Eri Fujiwara is approved, the Company plans to designate her as an independent officer as provided for by the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

**Proposal No. 4** Election of One Audit & Supervisory Board Member

The term of office of Audit & Supervisory Board Member Hiroki Takanashi will expire at the conclusion of this meeting. Therefore, the Company proposes the election of one Audit & Supervisory Board Member.

The consent of the Audit & Supervisory Board has been obtained for this proposal.

The candidate for Audit & Supervisory Board Member is as follows:

Name (Date of birth)	Career summary and position in the Company (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company)	Number of the Company's shares owned
Yu Kobori (July 11, 1973)	Mar. 1998      Graduated from the Faculty of Liberal Arts of Sophia University Sep. 2007      Registered as an attorney at law (Tokyo Bar Association) Joined Mirai Sogo Law Offices Feb. 2013      Partner (current position) June 2013      Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member of TOKYO BOARD INDUSTRIES CO., LTD. (current position) June 2015      Director and Chairman of Compliance Committee of IR Loan Servicing, Inc. (current position) June 2017      Representative Coordinator of Debt Collection Company Director Attorney Liaison Council (current position) Dec. 2021      General Manager of 12th Research Dept., Disciplinary Committee of Tokyo Bar Association (current position)	-
Reasons for nomination as candidate for Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member Yu Kobori has been mainly involved in corporate legal affairs including compliance, labor issues and timely disclosure as a partner in a major law firm, and has substantial practical experience at both private corporations and public agencies. The Company judges that Yu Kobori is expected to conduct management audits based on his abundant experience and insights, and nominates him as a candidate for Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member.		

- Notes:
1. There is no special interest between Yu Kobori and the Company.
  2. The Company has entered into a directors and officers (D&O) liability insurance policy with all the Directors and Audit & Supervisory Board Members as insured parties. The insurance policy will cover losses incurred in cases where an insured party receives a claim for damages and court costs arising from the performance of duties as an officer and assumes legal liability for the damages. If Yu Kobori is elected and assumes office as Audit & Supervisory Board Member, the Company plans to include him as an insured party in the insurance policy. The term of the insurance policy is one year, and the Company plans to renew the policy before the expiration of that term by resolution of the Board of Directors.
  3. If Yu Kobori assumes the office of Audit & Supervisory Board Member, pursuant to the provisions of Article 427, paragraph (1) of the Companies Act, the Company plans to enter into an agreement with him to limit his liability for damages under Article 423, paragraph (1) of the same Act. Pursuant to this agreement, the defined maximum amount of liability for damages is the minimum liability amount provided for under Article 425, paragraph (1) of the Companies Act.

Reference: Skill matrix of candidates in Proposal No. 3 and Proposal No. 4

Position	Name	Skills and Experience							
		Corporate management and management strategy	Merchandise development and marketing	Quality control	Finance and accounting	Personnel and labor management	Legal affairs and governance	Sustainability	Global mindset
Director	Toshio Kawarabuki	●	●	●				●	
	Kazutoshi Kawarabuki	●	●	●	●			●	●
	Kiichiro Tanzawa	●			●	●	●		
	Yoshito Usui	●		●				●	
	Eri Fujiwara	●				●	●		
Audit & Supervisory Board Member	Yoshiyuki Kikuchi	●			●		●		
	Yukio Imamura				●		●		●
	Yu Kobori				●	●	●		

**Proposal No. 5** Election of One Substitute Audit & Supervisory Board Member

The Company requests approval for the election of one substitute Audit & Supervisory Board Member to be ready to fill a vacant position should the number of Audit & Supervisory Board Members fall below the number required by laws and regulations.

The consent of the Audit & Supervisory Board has been obtained for this proposal.

The candidate for substitute Audit & Supervisory Board Member is as follows:

Name (Date of birth)	Career summary and position in the Company (Significant concurrent positions outside the Company)	Number of the Company's shares owned
Kazunori Suzuki (April 23, 1955)	Mar. 1979      Graduated from the Faculty of Law of Chuo University Apr. 1989      Registered as an attorney at law (Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association) Apr. 1998      Special Lecturer at the Faculty of Law of Chuo University Jan. 2002      Established Law Offices SIGMA Kojimachi (current position) From Apr. 2007 to Mar. 2008 Vice President of Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association From Apr. 2013 to Mar. 2014 Executive Governor of Japan Federation of Bar Associations	—
Reasons for nomination as candidate for substitute Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member The Company expects Kazunori Suzuki to utilize his legal knowledge nurtured as an attorney at law for many years in the Company's audit system, if he assumes the office of Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member. For this reason, the Company proposes the election of Kazunori Suzuki as substitute Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member. Kazunori Suzuki has never in the past been involved in the management of a company. However, the Company judges he will appropriately fulfill his duties if he assumes the office of Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member because he is well-versed in corporate legal affairs as an attorney at law and has substantial knowledge about corporate management.		

- Notes:
1. There is no special interest between Kazunori Suzuki and the Company.
  2. Kazunori Suzuki is a candidate for substitute Outside Audit & Supervisory Board Member.
  3. The Company has entered into a directors and officers (D&O) liability insurance policy with all the Directors and Audit & Supervisory Board Members as insured parties. The insurance policy will cover losses incurred in cases where an insured party receives a claim for damages and court costs arising from the performance of duties as an officer and assumes legal liability for the damages. If Kazunori Suzuki assumes office as Audit & Supervisory Board Member, the Company plans to include him as an insured party in the insurance policy.
  4. If Kazunori Suzuki assumes the office of Audit & Supervisory Board Member, pursuant to the provisions of Article 427, paragraph (1) of the Companies Act, the Company plans to enter into an agreement with him to limit his liability for damages under Article 423, paragraph (1) of the same Act. Pursuant to this agreement, the defined maximum amount of liability for damages is the minimum liability amount provided for under Article 425, paragraph (1) of the Companies Act.
  5. Kazunori Suzuki satisfies the requirements for an independent officer as provided for by the Tokyo Stock Exchange, and the Company plans to submit notification to the aforementioned exchange concerning his designation as an independent officer.