

**Meeting Minutes
Board of License Commissioners
Caroline County, Maryland**

DATE: Wednesday, January 22, 2020

PLACE: Health & Public Services Building
403 S. 7th Street, 1st Floor, Room 111
Denton, Maryland 21629

BOARD MEMBERS: Greg Eigenbrode, Chairman
Nicholas Loukides, Vice-Chair
Glen Plutschak, Member
Michael Mann, Alternate

OTHERS PRESENT: Phillip Moore, Alcoholic Beverage Inspector
Heather Price, County Attorney
Crystal Dadds, Assistant Director of Codes
Katheleen Freeman, Director of Planning & Codes

Chairman Eigenbrode called the meeting of the Caroline County Board of License Commissioners to order at 9:30 a.m.

TEMPORARY ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

Caroline Chamber of Commerce. The Caroline Chamber of Commerce has applied for a temporary license for their annual “Best in Business Awards Dinner” to be held on February 27, 2020. Ms. Tracy Snyder presented details of the event. A copy of their TIPS card was emailed to Ms. Dadds this morning. They will be serving beer and wine during cocktail hour and dinner. The event ends at 8:30 p.m. There will be a scholarship wine pull drawing. Attendees will buy a ticket, draw a number, and take a sealed container of wine with them from the wine pull. It will not be opened on the premises. The event will be held at the Preston Fire Hall. The Chamber intends to hold the event in a different location each year in order to visit other areas of the County. Ms. Snyder indicated that all alcohol will be removed from the premises after the event. The Chamber estimates there will be approximately 200-225 attendees.

Motion: Mr. Loukides made a motion to approve the application.
Second: Mr. Plutschak seconded the motion. There was no discussion.
In Favor: All members voted in favor (3-0).

OLD BUSINESS

Sheldon's 313/Roadhouse Transfer Update. Ms. Dadds updated the Board on the transfer of Sheldon's 313. She finally received the clearance letter needed from the Comptroller's Office on January 16, 2020. The transfer license can now be issued to Roadhouse 313.

Food Service Hours for Restaurants. Ms. Dadds presented the agenda item and indicated that the Board had discussed this previously in October and had agreed that restaurants should have to serve food until an hour before closing. Ms. Price was going to prepare some potential draft language for the Board to review but has been out on medical leave since that meeting. The Board agreed to wait until Ms. Price was in attendance to have the discussion.

Unlicensed Establishments Serving Alcohol. The Board agreed they would like to have a discussion with the Board's attorney regarding this issue. The Board requested a copy of Dorchester County's regulations regarding ice cream, bagelry's, nail salons, stores, etc. Mr. Plutschak indicated they would like to consider these regulations, but rather than re-invent the wheel requested that staff provide sample regulations from other jurisdictions.

The Board returned to the discussion of food service requirements. The Board requested that Ms. Price discuss an amendment that restaurants must continue to serve food & keep the kitchen open while they continue to serve alcohol. Mr. Moore discussed the coffee shop in Denton that serves pastries from Turnbridge Point which was a requirement of their license. Some restaurant owners have indicated they want to stop serving dinner and meals in the evening but continue to offer alcoholic beverages. Mr. Moore indicated the County does not have a "last call" regulation. In other words, patrons could order multiple drinks right before closing time. Ms. Price indicated it would not be difficult to draft regulations regarding a food service requirement. Mr. Plutschak indicated he had mixed emotions and would like to avoid too many policies and procedures. Ms. Dadds stated that the County did have last call regulations and read the existing "last call" regulations into the record. There was some discussion that businesses were offering rides home to patrons who were intoxicated. The Board discussed the difference in regulations between restaurants and bars, and what kind of food service the restaurant would be required to serve during the post-dinner hours. The Board requested draft proposed regulations at the next meeting. An amendment could be as simple as 51% of the menu being served must be food. Mr. Plutschak stated he isn't sure that adding food as a requirement in the late hours would reduce intoxication. The Board discussed the number of establishments this could potentially affect. The Board discussed the 51% food to alcohol ratio rule which states that average daily receipts from food must be 51% and maintained on the premises. If an establishment was not meeting the 51% food rule, then there would be a violation. This item is tabled to be discussed further at the next meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Mr. Plutschak made a motion to approve the December 18, 2019 meeting minutes.
Second: Mr. Loukides seconded the motion. There was no discussion.
In Favor: All members voted in favor (3-0).


INSPECTORS REPORT

Mr. Moore provided a summary of recent inspections.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board and staff discussed a budget request from the County Commissioners for education and outreach on alcohol awareness. Ms. Freeman advised the Board not to request dollars from violations be circulated back to the Board, rather that the Board make a budget request for what education and outreach opportunities would be desired. The Board agreed they do not want the appearance of fining businesses in order to acquire funding for outreach and education. The Board will prepare a budget request with staff for presentation to the County Commissioners.

Chairman Eigenbrode adjourned the meeting at 10:41 a.m.



Minutes prepared by: Kathleen Freeman