

TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
BOARD OF LIQUOR LICENSE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes of Public Meeting
November 27, 2023

The meeting of the Talbot County Board of Liquor License Commissioners was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, November 27, 2023. Present were Chairman Jack M. Gottschalk, Commissioner Edward M. Bridges, Jr., Commissioner David A. Fike and Board Secretary Victoria E. Bradley.

OLD BUSINESS

- Upon motion by Commissioner Fike, seconded by Commissioner Bridges, the minutes of the meeting of October 23, 2023, were unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

The Wardroom, LLC – Request for expansion of Bistro Area

All those in attendance to testify in the matter were sworn in, (Matthew Mason and his Attorney Zach Smith).

Mr. Smith gave opening statements with regard to the applicant and the application. Mr. Smith testified regarding the businesses need to expand to accommodate their business. Mr. Smith further testified regarding the recent change to the Talbot County Code through Bill No. 1547, that now allows, with approval of the Board for the business to expand into the sales area provided liquor is not consumed in the sales area.

The Chairman asked for the applicant to clarify the submitted plan diagram and explain their expansion plan.

Mr. Mason testified that the business has grown and requires more seating options for the Bistro area. Their new expansion plan would not change the business practice and they are not requesting more seating than the Fire Marshall allows.

The Board asked if the applicant would be able to provide a document from the Fire Marshalls office stating that with adding additional seating they would still be in compliance. Mr. Smith said they would be able to provide the Board with documents from the Fire Marshalls office to show the additional seating would not put them over the seating capacity for the building.

The Chairman asked what the time frame would be to complete the expansion. Mr. Mason testified he would start and finish that day if approved, no renovations are required they will be adding a few tables and chairs.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was made:

- Motion made by Commissioner Bridges, seconded by Commissioner Fike that the Board approve the application for expansion of the bistro area for the business provided the applicant provides proof of seating capacity from the Fire Marshall. Motion passed unanimously.

Discuss MD Alcoholic Beverages Code § 4-507 Retail Delivery of Alcoholic Beverages – New request for authorization to deliver alcoholic beverages off-premises

The Board discussed the application submitted by Runway Liquors to allow them to deliver alcohol based on MD Code, Alcoholic Beverages § 4-507 Retail Delivery of Alcoholic Beverages.

Secretary Bradley informed the Board that the Talbot County Liquor Board had previously approved off-premises delivery for holders of a Class E license in the year 2012. Ms. Bradley further testified that three businesses currently have approval to deliver off-premises: Wishing Well Liquors, Hair O' The Dog, and Town and Country Liquors.

The Chairman testified that the Liquor Board records show there is no application for license holders to complete and the previous Board in 2012 issued letters of approval.

The Board discussed submitting a resolution to the County Council for approval to add requirements and stipulations for businesses who are approved to deliver alcoholic beverages off-premises.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was made:

- Motion made by Commissioner Fike, seconded by Commissioner Bridges to approve the applicant the ability to deliver alcoholic beverages off-premise pursuant to MD Code, Alcoholic Beverages § 4-507 Retail Delivery of Alcoholic Beverages. Motion passed unanimously.

Bill 1550 introduced by the County Council November 14, 2023 – Board to discuss bill to amend Chapter 11 of the Talbot County Code (Alcoholic Beverages) regarding the issuance of Class E beer, wine, and liquor licenses for Urban location.

The Board reviewed and briefly discussed proposed Bill 1550 to the County Council. Secretary Bradley confirmed that when the County Council votes on Bill 1550, she will inform the Board members of the Council's decision.

Liquor Inspector's Report

Inspector Gottschalk briefed the Board as to ongoing County liquor inspections. The Inspector testified that TIPS currently has a backlog of certification cards and workbooks. There is no new information to report; no major violations occurred.

Old Business

Our Greek Market, LLC d/b/a Our Greek Market requested to change their Class A license that was approved at the last meeting be changed to a Class I license.

- Motion made by Commissioner Fike, seconded by Commissioner Bridges to approve this license class change provided the license holders pay all fees due. Motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, the Board moved to adjourn.

- Upon motion by Commissioner Bridges, seconded by Commissioner Fike, there being no further business to discuss, the Board voted unanimously to close the meeting at 11:20 a.m.