

Minutes of the Licensing Board Meeting
Wednesday, December 27, 2023
140 Main St, Council Committee Room, 1st floor

Attending: Greg Mitrakas, Chairman, Mary Jo Nawrocki, Member; Tina Nolin, Clerk
David Bouvier, Member (absent)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mitrakas

New Business

1. Application for a new off-premises wine & malts license – Juma Grocery & Check Services, 55 Mechanic St., Rafael Klipp Borges, proposed manager

The public hearing was opened at 6:31 pm.

Rafael Klipp Borges, 55 Staffordshire Lane, Concord MA, and Clayton Castelo Branco, 319 East Main St, Marlborough, MA were both present to present the license.

They explained that the store serves mainly the Latino community, an estimated 80% of whom live in the nearby neighborhoods and walk to the establishment, and 85% who are estimated to be over 21 years of age. They had several reasons for seeking the license Citing that patrons of the establishment had been asking and they have noticed that the population in that area is and will be growing and there is nothing around that offers beer and wine in the immediate area. In addition, the owner is adding more fresh produce goods and groceries to provide more one-stop shopping and believes the addition of beer and wine would help in that regard.

Clayton emphasized the renovations they have made to the store since they purchased it, and that they had no intention of becoming a package store. There are no plans to reduce the number and variety of services they offer to patrons.

There were no comments/questions in favor or opposed to the application from the public in attendance, and the public hearing portion of the application was closed at 6:38 pm.

Chairman Mitrakas mentioned that a sober house immediately abuts the store and asked for confirmation that SMOC, who runs the house, had been notified of the store's intention and the night's meeting. This was confirmed by the clerk. There had been no calls or written response from them to the licensing office.

Chairman Mitrakas mentioned he had been into the store over the last week or so and noted he had not seen a lot of grocery/fresh produce. It was explained that the liquor license would drive the fresh produce (onions, tomatoes, limes, etc.), but that they did have a lot of bakery items as well as shelf-stable foods.

Chairman Mitrakas noted that because of the nature of this license being new in that location he wished to continue the public hearing until the January meeting when the 3rd board member who was absent this evening could weigh in. In addition, the chair asked the clerk

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to write to the Police Chief, ward councilor, and the councilors at large, letting them know the application was before the board in case they had any comments.

The hearing for the Juma Grocery & Check Services application was thus continued until January 31, 2024, when the board next meets.

2. Application for new all-alcohol on-premises license, Kyle Chen, Inc. (dba Silk Road Bistro), 150 Main St., Yue Mai Chen, proposed Manager

The public hearing opened at 6:51 pm. Yue Mia Chen, the proposed manager, and Meihuei Hu, Esq., were in attendance.

Esquire HU explained that patrons had been asking for them to add the license and they had lost business not having it. Also, the owners are planning on a menu change to fresher, healthier food options and believe that having a liquor license will allow them to attract more patrons.

The Chair noted that their floor plans did not show where the alcohol would be stored and secured when the restaurant was closed or a prep area for making the drinks. While they had a clear idea of the storage location, they were not so sure about the prep area best suited to it.

There was the suggestion that the application could be amended to a wine & malts application if the owners decided they did not have room for drink prep or just wanted to start with the smaller license.

After some discussion, it was decided the hearing on the application would be continued until the next meeting of the license board in January by which time a new floor plan would be submitted showing both secure storage and prep areas, or if the applicant decided to go with just wine and malt beverages.

The hearing for the Kyle Chen, Inc. application was thus continued until January 31, 2024, when the board next meets.

3. Reports from the Chairman - There were no reports from the Chairman.

4. Misc. Correspondence and Open Issues

- Update 2024 License Renewal – all renewals were going well and were on target to be complete by December 31st.

- Correspondence: Colonial Ford re MHQ Class I license

Member Mitrakas motioned for the clerk to send a letter noting the Board had received their communication and handed it off to legal, and to ask that any further correspondence on the issue be sent to both the board and the city solicitor's office. Member Nawrocki seconded; the motion passed 2-0.

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- OUI Last Drink Data from State

The Board reviewed the latest OUI Report from the Attorney General's office, listing food establishments named by people stopped by police for OUI as the last place they were served. While not legally binding, it can be a pulse on establishments that may need to review their serving protocol, retrain their staff, etc.

Chairman Mitrakas motioned to have the clerk send the standard "letting you know letter" to people appearing for the first time on the list and reminders to those who had appeared for a second time to review their policy and protocols with their staff and that they would be asked to come before the board if they appeared again. No establishment appeared more than twice. Member Nawrocki seconded the motion with passed 2-0.

5. Review of November 29, 2023, minutes, and December 5, 2023, (special meeting) minutes

Member Nawrocki motioned to accept and place on file the minutes from both meetings, Chair Mitrakas seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 2-0 vote.

The next meeting of the Licensing Board will be January 31, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Member Nawrocki motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m., Chair Mitrakas seconded the motion, and the vote was 2-0 to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,



Greg Mitrakas, Chairman

Date Signed:

01/31/2024