

TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
BOARD OF LIQUOR LICENSE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes of Public Meeting
September 11, 2023

The meeting of the Talbot County Board of Liquor License Commissioners was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, September 11, 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 July 24 2023, were unanimously approved with corrections to the dates.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board reviewed County Council Bill No. 1547, a Bill to amend Chapter 11 of the Talbot County Code (Alcoholic Beverages) regarding operations of Class I alcohol dispensary bistros, they will start to implement the changes if the Bill passes.

Simpatico, LLC – Reconversion of their Class E, Beer, Wine & Liquor License (Off-sale Alcohol Dispensaries) to a Class I Alcohol dispensary bistro license (beer, wine & liquor off-sale) & (craft beer and wine on-sale)

All those in attendance to testify in the matter were sworn in, (Bobbie Parlett and Scott Cavender)

The Board reviewed all submitted documents and application. The Chairman asked for clarification regarding the address 104-106 Railroad Ave., St. Michaels, MD 21663.

Ms. Parlett gave opening statements with regard to the application, explaining the business set up. Ms. Parlett presented a map of the premises in question and explained the address confusing being from the post office. The tax records and deed show 104 however the post office shows 106. The business is essentially two continuing properties, two buildings on one property.

The Chairman explained why determining the premises is important with regards to alcohol sales. Ms. Parlett agreed to clear any confusion she will have it listed as 104 Railroad Ave., St. Michaels, MD 21663. The Chairman explained the importance of keeping the area of alcohol sale and consumption clearly marked. The premises will be considered 104 Railroad Ave., St. Michaels, MD 21663 with two buildings on the premises.

Ms. Parlett gave further testimony of her business plan for the Bistro set up, including wine pairings starting at maybe 1 day a week. They will be starting with 20 to 25 people inside and no more than 30 to 35 outside. The Chairman explained the Ordinance allows 40 patrons on the premise (outside and inside are not differentiated in the Ordinance).

The Chairman further explained that the Board will hold Ms. Parlett accountable for the control of this area with the consumption and service of alcohol. The Chairman gave suggestions with how best to keep control and have the areas of service clearly marked such as fence, ropes or plants. The Chairman explained that what is purchased in the bistro area must be consumed in the bistro area and what is purchased in the dispensary area cannot be consumed in the bistro area.

Ms. Parlett asked the Board about the definition of craft beer for the purpose of the bistro license. The Chairman noted that craft beer is considered craft if it is local made. The Chairman said that it is also based on the volume of the beer made per year. The Chairman suggested that the applicant check with her distributor.

The Chairman asked what savory foods will be served. Ms. Parlett explained she has a small kitchen and she plans to do wine and food pairings. Ms. Parlett wants to promote what is sold for off sale and intends to serve cheese and salami plates, jam and bread plate, pastas and salad to list a few. Ms. Parlett explained she wants to promote wine and food tastings, she wants to sell alcohol and food together. Ms. Parlett testified she will be open year round with many different types of tasting events.

Mr. Cavender asked the Board about documenting the physical area of the bistro for the Board. The Chair explained what was presented today was fine but suggested submitting a more detailed sketch with information about keeping the bistro area clearly marked. The Chairman read from the Ordinance explaining that the bistro area shall be specifically designated and clearly marked. The Board explained that it would be in the applicant's best interest to have the sign say bistro. Ms. Parlett testified that she would have signs clearly marking the areas.

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

- Motion made by Commissioner Bridges, seconded by Commissioner Fike to approve the reconversion of the Class E liquor license to a Class I liquor license Application. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board discussed the upcoming MALA conference, this year's budget did not allow for the Board to attend and it will be requested in next year's budget. The Board asked Secretary Bradley

to ask Inspector Gottschalk to prepare a brief report on the MALA conference since he will be able to attend.

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 11:00 a.m.