



**MINUTES
REGULAR LIQUOR COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2022, 4:00 P.M.**

The Commission convened in Regular Session in the Government Center Chambers, 115 E. Washington Street at 4:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 12, 2022. The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Lindsey Meister.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mboka Mwilambwe	Commissioner	Absent	
Lindsey Meister	Commissioner	Present	
Jim Jordan	Commissioner	Absent	

Staff Advisors

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Amanda Stutsman	Deputy City Clerk	Present	
George Boyle	Asst. Corporation Counsel	Present	
Ken Bays	Assistant Police Chief	Absent	
Chris McAllister	Building Official	Present	
Catherine Dunlap	Downtown Development Specialist	Present	
Sahara Williams	Asst. to Deputy City Clerk	Present	

Commissioner Meister noted that she was the only Liquor Commissioner present.

George Boyle, Assistant Corporation Counsel, followed up by stating for the record that Liquor Commission was different from other Boards and Commissions, in that a quorum was not needed to have a meeting, or make rulings on licenses. He added that City Code Chapter 6 Section 37(d) stated that the Liquor Commissioner (Mayor) may appoint one or more persons to the Bloomington Liquor Commission to assist him, and that, in his absence, such person may have any and all authority and perform the duties provided by the local Liquor Control Commission. He added that the Commission followed a meeting format consistent with the Open Meetings Act and that there was not the same quorum requirements as other Boards and Commissions. He went on to explained that, for those reasons, the Commission could take action with only one Commissioner. He added there was similar provisions in the State Statue and that there was also an Attorney General opinion regarding what he just described.

Public Comment

No public comment was received in-person or via email.

Consent Agenda

Items listed on the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion; Items pulled by Council from the Consent Agenda for discussion are listed and voted on separately.

Commissioner Meister approved the Consent Agenda, including all items listed below.

Items listed on the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion; Items pulled by Council from the Consent Agenda for discussion are listed and voted on separately.

Item 4.A. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the June 14, 2022, Regular Liquor Commission Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

AYES: Meister

Motion carried.

Regular Agenda

All license creations, amendments or transfers are contingent upon compliance with all building, health, and safety codes.

The following item was presented:

Item 5.A. Continued Sanctions Review Hearing on Violation #2022-014 issued to Violation Citation of Bill Hill, Inc. d/b/a Maguire's, located at 220 N. Center St., for Violating Section 37(e)(12) of Chapter 6 of the Bloomington City Code relating to past due food and beverage taxes, as requested by the Legal Department.

George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel, reported that there was an agreement had been reached. He added that there was a bookkeeping issue to be resolved by the City, not the licensee. He was confident that the staff report at the next meeting would notify the Commission that the issue was resolved, and no further action would be needed.

The following item was presented:

Item 5.B. Public Hearing and action on an Application from Around the Corner II, Inc., d/b/a JP's Wheel & Alehouse, located at 409 N. Hershey Rd., requesting an approval of a change of ownership for their Class TAS (Tavern, All Types of Alcohol, and Sunday Sales) Liquor License, as requested by the City Clerk Department.

Commissioner Meister opened the Public Hearing at 4:04 p.m.

Carrie Haas, Legal Representative for Applicant, Brett Matthews, Applicant and Co-Owner, and Rob McDermott, Applicant and Co-Owner, after being sworn, addressed the Commission separately.

Mrs. Haas stated that it was a full change of ownership from Rachel Jones, the previous 100% shareholder of Around the Corner II, to Brett Matthews and Rob McDermott who are equal shareholders of Around the Corner II, each holder 50% ownership. She stated that the sale occurred, and the change was effective as of April 18, 2022, after a quick turnaround from contract execution. She noted that from a buyer's perspective, it was imperative to close quickly, as the business was rapidly deteriorating and was causing significant issues for customers, employees, and overall the community. She added there have already been, and will continue to, be positive changes such as cleaning up and running the business more efficiently since assuming ownership.

Mrs. Haas acknowledged that the new ownership understood a full change of ownership should have come before the Commission prior to the sale and apologized for not doing so. She stated that they were initially unaware of the requirement and stated that she was not informed by the seller prior to closing. She stated that under the new ownership, there had already been, and would continue to, have positive changes in the day-to-day operations. She added there had not been any material or significant changes since the purchase of the business and stated that the owners have cleaned it up, and made it run more efficiently than before. Mrs. Haas noted that it was a snapshot of what the City could expect from the new management of this business moving forward. She stated Mr. Matthews and Mr. McDermott both have a clean record and are known by the community as they owned and operated BloNo Pizza Company ("BloNo Pizza"), located at 1304 Cross Creek Drive Normal, IL for the past several years. She noted that as owners of BloNo Pizza, they have a current liquor license with the Town of Normal, and after asking their Counsel, she was not aware of any complaints or citations as it related to that location's liquor license. Mrs. Haas noted that if the application was approved, they looked forward to working with the City, and enjoying a long, productive, and successful business moving forward. She concluded her comments and informed the Commission that Mr. Matthews, Mr. McDermott, and herself were willing to answer any additional questions.

Commissioner Meister asked how the business would be ran now, and if there would be any changes to the building. Mr. Matthews stated that the first order of business was to clean up as the it was very out of shape as far as safety sanitation. He stated that the kitchen was currently closed for a deep clean to serve more consistently and provide a long-term professional atmosphere at that location. He noted that since the purchase, they have worked with other local businesses to keep fun food events happening. He stated that they have also maintained their trivia and bingo events to continue an active entertainment-based operation.

Commissioner Meister asked if there would be any changes to their hours of operation. Mr. Matthews stated their long-term goal was to be open as long as possible and safely with a good experience. He added that he and Mr. McDermott have had a lot of experience with restaurants, and they have talked about the potential for a busy lunch spot with a nice steady restaurant schedule.

Commissioner Meister asked if all employees were BASSET trained. Mr. McDermott that BloNo Pizza employees were BASSET trained, and that they will be crossed utilized at JP's Wheel and Alehouse ("JP's"). He added that the existing team did not appear to be BASSET trained. He stated that JP's was down to one bartender and one server. He noted everyone in the front of the house would be basset trained within 90 days of hiring.

George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel, asked how long they have owned BloNo Pizza. Mr. McDermott stated they have been open since November 9, 2019.

Mr. Boyle asked how long it had a held liquor license. Mr. Matthews stated they have had a license there since November 8, 2019.

Mr. Boyle asked if either of them were aware of any liquor license violation. Mr. Matthews, and Mr. McDermott both answered no.

Mr. Boyle stated that Legal had no further concerns or questions.

Commissioner Meister asked if anyone was registered to speak for or against the application. Amanda Stutsman, Deputy City Clerk, clarified that it was a Public Hearing, and anyone in the public could speak. No one came forward to speak.

Commissioner Meister closed the public hearing at 4:13 p.m.

Commissioner Meister approved the item as presented.

AYES: Meister

Motion: carried.

The following item was presented:

Item 5.C. Consideration and action on the Request from the Bloomington-Normal Convention and Visitors BNCVB' for their first Go Nuts Festival to be held in Downtown Bloomington, on Saturday, September 10, 2022, to allow for the service of beer and wine for their event by a licensed provider(s), as requested by the City Clerk Department.

Commissioner Meister opened the Public Hearing at 4:14 p.m.

Matt Hawkins, Bloomington-Normal Convention and Visitors Bureau Representative ("BNCVB"), after being sworn in, stated the BNCVB had started a plan of action to establish new events and festivals within the community. He stated it would be their first attempt at a new street festival. He added it would be for both locals and visitors from the surrounding area which would impact the community economically. He stated the event would run from approximately 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 10, 2022. He added there would be various vendor booths, live music, and chef demonstrations.

Nick LeRoy, Owner of The Stable Music Hall, after being sworn in, stated they would handle the entertainment and production aspect for the event in addition to the sale of liquor and wine through one main beer tent. He added that some of the local beer companies would have pop-up beer shops such as Keg Grove Brewing Company and Lil Beaver Brewery which they would purchase the product from. He restated there would be one central location for alcohol between East Street and Prairie Street on Front Street, and the whole street would be closed off. He added that the stage would sit on the corner of Front Street and Prairie Street, facing west with all vendor booths towards the west end. He restated that the alcohol tent would be in between. He reiterated that there would be a live chef demonstration and a live comedy tent in the parking lot west of Anju Above and Epiphany Farms.

Commissioner Meister asked if employees would be BASSET trained. Mr. Leroy stated that all employees would be BASSET trained.

Commissioner Meister asked if everyone there would be over 21 years old. Mr. LeRoy stated that everyone would be allowed in the event, but there would be a booth were individuals aged 21 and over would have to show Identification in order to receive a wristband to permit them to buy an alcoholic beverage.

Mr. Boyle asked if only beer and wine would be served. Mr. LeRoy responded affirmatively.

Commissioner Meister clarified that all alcohol providers need a Secondary Premises Liquor License too. Mr. Boyle stated that Mr. LeRoy would be the only Secondary Liquor License.

Mr. Boyle asked if there was any contact with residents and business owners on that street to be closed. Mr. Hawkins stated there had not yet been formal communication, but there would be within the next few weeks. Mr. LeRoy added that he had personally spoke to restaurant and bar owners on the north side of Front Street regarding the event. He reiterated that no formal notification had been sent yet.

Catherine Dunlap, Downtown Development Specialist stated that it was a condition on the Special Events Permit that the event organizer was responsible for the notification of the event at least 14 days prior said event.

Commissioner Meister asked if there was present to speak for or against the application. No one came forward.

Commissioner Meister closed the Public Hearing at 4:19.

Mr. Hawkins stated for the record there was a slight name change from Go Nuts Festival to BN Nuts Festival.

Commissioner Meister approved the item as presented.

AYES: Meister

Motion: carried.

Old Business

No Old Business was discussed.

New Business

No New Business was discussed.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment

Commissioner Meister adjourned the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously (Viva Voce).

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM



Mboka Mwilaampwe, Liquor Commissioner

ATTEST



Amanda Stutsman, Deputy City Clerk