

Minutes of the February 4, 2021 meeting of the City of Chelsea Licensing Commission.

Location: Chelsea City Hall Council Chambers Room 500 Broadway, Chelsea, MA and Facebook Live. Meeting opened at 6:15 p.m. by Vice Chair Rossi.

Commission members present: Vice Chair Mark Rossi, Mike McAteer, Emily Cherniack and Gladys Vega

Commission members absent: Chairperson James Guido

Also Present in Council Chamber Room: Licensing Administrator Naomi Libran, Officer Nicole McLaughlin.

Vice Chair Rossi asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the December 10, 2020, McAteer motioned to adopt, Gladys Vega seconded and vote unanimous.

The Licensing Commission election results were as follows:

Mark Rossi was elected as the Chair and Emily Cherniack elected as the Vice Chair. McAteer and Vega voted unanimous.

Vice Chair opened the Public Hearing for DeMoulas Market Basket at 170 Everett Avenue-Licensee is seeking an Amusement and Entertainment license. Bob Chausse said he is seeking an Amusement & Entertainment License for two (2) TVs they have in the Café area of the store. Since COVID-19 the TV has not been on. Vice Chair Rossi opened the public speaking portion. No one spoke, therefore the public speaking portion was closed. Vice Chair Rossi motioned to approve, McAteer seconded and vote unanimous.

Vice Chair opened the Public Hearing to consider a Change of Manager application of an All Alcoholic Beverages (On Premise) License of Sonoran Boston Logan, LLC d/b/a DoubleTree by Hilton at 201 Everett Avenue, Chelsea, MA. Present for the petitioner was Attorney Alex Furey and Proposed Manager Kristen Kelley. Attorney Furey mentioned that Ms. Kelley has been a long time employee of DoubleTree Hotels. She's been a licensed manager before and she is well versed in the rules and regulations of the City of Chelsea licensing commission. She will be on the property at least between 40 and 50 hours per week. She is certified and understands the duties and responsibilities that comes with the service of alcohol. Vice Chair Rossi opened the public speaking portion. No one spoke, therefore the public speaking portion was closed. McAteer motioned to approve the change of manager, Rossi seconded and vote unanimous.

Vice Chair opened the Public Hearing for Western Front Marijuana Retail Establishment License 90 days' appointment only, status and update. Present for the petitioner was Attorney Timothy Flaherty, CEO Dennis Benzan and General Manager Cassandra Leete. Attorney Flaherty informs the commission that they have been in operations for 12 or 13 weeks and business is steadily progressing. At the present, the number of customers fluctuates, between 100 to 140 per day. One fourth of those customers are online, pickups only, so there are in and out. The remainder of customers will make an appointment ahead of time and others will show up and make appointments at the door. Attorney Flaherty also states this is below capacity as far as operations go. There is no surge due to or in combination of the pandemic and the use is not as new and exciting as the general public had thought.

Our opinion of having the appointment only policy is irrelevant and unnecessary condition. There is ample parking and no issues with parking and have no queueing of lines at the front door. They have plenty of security and staff to assist customers. We had the capacity of 28 customers the most in a given hour and it has had about 14 customers below that at peak hours. Our expectations, once the pandemic passes, is for people to become more comfortable and come in and visit. We have increased each month, but not at the rate we expected or had hoped for. The \$5,000 payment was paid and received by Treasury. Attorney Flaherty stated that we've an extensive security system from panic alarms, glass, shadow, surveillance cameras. Recently, Revere Police Department used our surveillance system to identify a vehicle that was used in a crime. It was a collateral benefit since the stigma associated with candidate's use being sort of a draw for crime really is nonexistence. It's actually the security systems associated with the cannabis dispensary that actually help prevent crime. So far it's been going good and hope it will continue to get better. Our staff is comprised of a number of minority individuals; I think it's 90% minority. The Chelsea population that are hired there is in excess of 50%. Cassandra, who is the general manager resides in Chelsea. We have a Chelsea High scholar and athletic superstar and he couldn't be a better employee. He really is exactly what we want as an employee. Officer McLaughlin spoke on behalf Captain Houghton and herself as a resident and an officer. Captain Houghton concerns is with the parking because Webster Avenue is a busy street and during rush hour it has heavy traffic. He is suggesting that they think about having a detail officer during rush hour to monitor and direct the traffic flow. At least for the first couple of days. Attorney commented parking is not issue since they have shared parking spaces and they also have the Home Depot parking lot, which they have not used so far. Attorney Flaherty expressed and thanked the City for the support and consideration they have received so far. Vice Chair Rossi closed the public speaking portion since no one from the public was present. Vega recused herself from asking questions, because Western Front donates to the La Colaborativa's food pantry. Vice Chair Rossi asked, is there something that we can come up with as a way to address issues before they become issues, you know what I mean? Attorney

Flaherty responded, what we do is, we use an integrated software that matches all of our customer data with metrics, which is the seed to sale inventory system that the state use and us to keep track of all the inventory process. We know how long an individual will be in the store, what time they come. So our peak hours really is the single peak hour that we have experienced is around 5 o'clock on Friday afternoons where we might say that our number of customers 12 or 13 that we see at other peak hours. During the week, in the morning there's really no issues. Vice Chair Rossi stated he is subjected to the Licensing commission to bring Western Front should we decide that there's a need for it at some future point. Vice Chair Rossi motioned to relieve Western front of the appointment only condition. Vega seconded, and vote unanimous.

Next meeting March 11, 2021

Approved on: March 11, 2011






