

FREDERICK COUNTY LIQUOR BOARD
Public Meeting Minutes
Monday March 13, 2023

Those Present: Ms. Joan Aquilino, Chair
Mrs. Debbie Burrell, Board Member
Mr. Christopher Glass, Board Member
Ms. Jennifer Keefer, Assistant County Attorney
Mr. Bob Shrum, Alcoholic Beverage Inspector
Mr. Robert Lind, Alcoholic Beverage Inspector
Mrs. Dawn Shugars, Director
Mrs. Ashley Kneessi Gay, Administrative Coordinator
Mrs. Tabitha Vanleeuwen, Administrative Specialist II
Mrs. Trisha Lawson, Administrative Specialist II

A Public Meeting was held in person and called to order at 8:30am by the Chair, Joan Aquilino. Ashley Kneessi-Gay swore in all participants for today's hearing.

1. Adopt February 13, 2023, and February 27, 2023, Hearing minutes.

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion to adopt the February 13, 2023, and February 27, 2023, Hearing minutes.

SECOND: Chair Aquilino second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Burrell –Aye
Commissioner Glass -Aye
Chair Aquilino -Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

2. VIOLATIONS

- a. Village Mart Beer and Wine

Minaxi Patel
For the use of Bhakti H, LLC
False Statement

- Attendees: None

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion to move this case to the end of today's agenda.

SECOND: Commissioner Glass second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Burrell –Aye
Commissioner Glass –Aye
Chair Aquilino –Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

b. Mayta Peruvian Cuisine

Jorge Velasquez
For the use of Mayta Peruvian Cuisine, LLC
Purchasing Alcohol from a Retailer

- Attendees: Agent Ted Vaughn for the Maryland Alcohol Tobacco Commission, Jorge Velasquez, Licensee
- On Thursday, December 8, 2022, at approximately 12:36pm. Agent Ted Vaughn arrived at the business trading as: “Mayta Peruvian Cuisine”. Agent Vaughn approached the counter and identified himself to Mr. Jorge Velasquez Benavides who identified himself as the licensee and owner. Agent Vaughn advised Mr. Velasquez Benavides that he was there to conduct a routine alcohol inspection. Agent Vaughn inspected a shelf under the bar and observed a container of Rum, bottle of wine and a twelve- pack of beer with an “Evergreen Liquors” retail sticker affixed to the bottle. Agent Vaughn asked Mr. Velasquez Benavides to provide the invoices for inspection. In reviewing the invoices, no invoices indicate the purchase of the products mentioned above. Agent Vaughn asked Mr. Velasquez Benavides for the invoices for these containers in question. At first, Mr. Velasquez Benavides stated that he threw them away, then after further questioning Mr. Velasquez Benavides admitted purchasing them from the liquor store. Mr. Velasquez Benavides was advised that it was a violation of Maryland Alcoholic Beverage laws to purchase alcohol from a non-license wholesaler. Mr. Velasquez Benavides was advised that the following containers would be confiscated, and a report would be made and forwarded to the Frederick County Liquor Board.
- Plea: Requesting Deferred Judgement
- Violation History: The License was issued January 20, 2016. There is currently no violation history for this license holder under Mayta. Under a new business opened as Al Dente Italian Cuisine this license was issued on August 25, 2022. On January 7th, Inspector Shrum went out for a follow up inspection and found the location vacated. Inspector Shrum then contacted Jorge Velasquez; at which time he told Inspector Shrum that he had closed the location around Thanksgiving. He was not aware that he was to surrender his license and notify the Liquor Board. Inspector Shrum advised Mr. Velasquez to surrender his license, which occurred on January 10, 2023. Mr. Velasquez was given a notification of a verbal warning on January 10, 2023, for violating §7.17 of the Frederick County Regulations due to vacating a premise.

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion for to grant Deferred Judgement with the stipulation that the licensee must retake ABLE training on March 30, 2023, at 9am and all servers must retake Alcohol Awareness training no later than June 1, 2023.

SECOND: Commissioner Glass second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Glass –Aye

Commissioner Burrell –Aye
Chair Aquilino –Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

3. NEW

a. Application #260661

DECISION

Jerk It Smoke It
Richard Cohen and Tudie-Ann Henry
For the use of Jerk, It Smoke It, LLC
Class B, On Sale, Beer, Wine, and Liquor

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion for conditional approval Jerk It Smoke It until May 31, 2023. Pending all rules, regulations and laws of the State, County, municipalities, and Liquor Board are met.

SECOND: Commissioner Glass second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Burrell –Aye
Commissioner Glass –Aye
Chair Aquilino -Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

b. Application #260695

DECISION

Ricci Italian Woodfire Steak & Wine Bar
Fredy Portillo and Reynaldo Mina
For the use of Argueta Facci of Frederick, LLC
Class B, On Sale, Beer, Wine, and Liquor

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion for conditional approval Ricci Italian Wood Fire Steak & Wine Bar until June 15, 2023. Pending all rules, regulations and laws of the State, County, municipalities, and Liquor Board are met.

SECOND: Commissioner Glass second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Glass –Aye
Commissioner Burrell –Aye
Chair Aquilino -Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

c. Application #260718

DECISION

West Wind Bar and Grill
Mohammad Chohan
For the use of BHATIA MQRA, LLC
Class B, On Sale, Beer, Wine, and Liquor

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion for conditional approval West Wind Bar and Grill until June 30, 2023. Pending all rules, regulations and laws of the State, County, municipalities, and Liquor Board are met.

SECOND: Commissioner Glass second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Glass –Aye
Commissioner Burrell –Aye
Chair Aquilino -Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

4. TRANSFER

a. Application #260728

DECISION

Atomic 97 Beer & Wine
David McSherry
For the use of Bkeazy's Speakeasy, LLC
Class A, Off Sale, Beer, and Wine

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion for conditional approval Atomic 97 Beer and Wine until May 31, 2023. Pending all rules, regulations and laws of the State, County, municipalities, and Liquor Board are met.

SECOND: Commissioner Glass second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Burrell – Aye
Commissioner Glass –Aye
Chair Aquilino- Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

5. VIOLATION

a. Village Mart Beer and Wine

Minaxi Patel
For the use of Bhakti H, LLC
False Statement

- Attendees: Minaxi Patel
- Report: On Thursday December 13, 2022, at approximately 10:05am, Director Dawn Shugars contacted Minaxi Patel, the licensee and owner of Village Mart Beer

and Wine, to discuss a Writ of Execution that was to be served on the location where this license resided. Inspector Lind visited the licensed establishment on December 14, 2022, and found an eviction notice posted to the door and he observed the inventory was still inside. On December 19, 2022, the Liquor Board office received a phone message from the property owner that the property manager had found the shelves emptied upon inspection on December 18, 2022. Upon further investigation and video footage obtained from an adjacent business, the inventory was removed on December 16, 2022. On December 19, 2022, Minaxi Patel contacted the Liquor Board and stated that the alcohol had not been moved yet. On December 20, 2022, Director Shugars reached out to Ms. Patel to gain an understanding of the whereabouts of the alcohol and Ms. Patel stated she was not sure where the alcohol was.

- Plea: Guilty
- Violation History: The license was issued on January 28, 2008. On September 8, 2014, there was Sales to Minor – the Board gave a \$400.00 fine suspended that – gave a 15-day suspension – suspended that and gave 30-day probation. On July 15, 2017, the Board was notified that a WRIT of EXECUTION was to be served on this property due to a levied lawsuit for monies due. The WRIT was amended on July 26, 2017 and released. The plaintiff made arrangements with the courts to satisfy the judgement with a payment plan. On May 20, 2019, there was a Sales to Minor – the Board granted Deferred Judgement. On December 30, 2022 – Minaxi Patel surrendered the license.

MOTION: Commissioner Burrell made a motion to find the Licensee Guilty of making a False Statement, and Minaxi Patel cannot hold a license in Frederick County again.

SECOND: Commissioner Glass second the motion.

FURTHER DISSCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Glass- Aye
Commissioner Burrell- Aye
Chair Aquilino- Aye

The Vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

6. STAFF MEETING

a. Legislative Update

- i. Director Shugars stated the House bills had their first reading on February 20, 2023, and as of now there is no further action. They are set to cross over to the

Senate on March 20, 2023 Staff will be working on regulations for Hatchet Throwing, the Mini Golf, and the Golf Simulator Licenses.

b. Renewal Update

- i. Ashley Kneessi-Gay stated we have 356 total Licenses, 151 that have not filed their renewal application, 205 have filed their renewal application, and 156 of those that have filed have been issued their licenses for this year.

c. General public comment-NONE

d. ADJOURN

MOTION: Commissioner Glass made a motion to adjourn

SECOND: Chair Aquilino second the motion.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: Commissioner Burrell - Aye
Commissioner Glass –Aye
Chair Aquilino- Aye

The vote was unanimous **Ayes 3, Nay-0**
(Motion passed)

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:50am

Respectfully submitted,
Trisha Lawson, Administrative Specialist II
FREDERICK COUNTY LIQUOR BOARD