

MINUTES OF THE BLOOMINGTON  
LIQUOR COMMISSION

November 12, 2013

The Bloomington Liquor Commissioner Tari Renner called the Liquor Hearing to order to hear the request of Jacob Thelander and C. Sophia Petsas to allow moderate consumption of alcohol at Miller Park Pavilion for their wedding reception on March 29, 2014. Present at the hearing were Liquor Commissioners Tari Renner, Stephen Stockton, Geoffrey Tompkins and Jim Jordan; George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel, Clay Wheeler, Asst. Police Chief, and Renee Gooderham, Chief Deputy City Clerk; and Jacob Thelander, groom and C. Sophia Petsas, bride.

Staff absent: Tracey Covert, City Clerk.

Commissioner Renner opened the Public Comment section of the meeting. No one came forward to address the Commission.

Commissioner Renner opened the liquor hearing and requested that the requestor's representative address this request. Jacob Thelander, groom and C. Sophia Petsas, bride, addressed the Commission. The wedding was scheduled for March 29, 2014 at the Miller Park Pavilion. They planned to invite 130 guests. Redbird Catering, located at 1507 N. Main St., would be retained to provide the food and liquor service, which would be limited to beer and wine only. The reception would start at 4:00 p.m. The Miller Park Pavilion must be vacated by 11:00 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Tompkins, seconded by Commissioner Stockton that the request of Jacob Thelander and C. Sophia Petsas to allow moderate consumption of alcohol at the Miller Park Pavilion for their March 29, 2014 wedding be approved.

Motion carried, (viva voce).

Commissioner Renner stated that this item would appear on the Council's December 9, 2013 Consent Agenda. He encouraged Jacob Thelander and C. Sophia Petsas to attend same.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting recessed at 4:10 p.m.

The Bloomington Liquor Commissioner Tari Renner called the Liquor Hearing to order to hear the request of Michael Skolmoski and Karen Bunker to allow moderate consumption of alcohol at Miller Park Pavilion for their wedding reception on November 22, 2014. Present at the hearing were Liquor Commissioners Tari Renner, Stephen Stockton, Geoffrey Tompkins and Jim Jordan; George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel,

Clay Wheeler, Asst. Police Chief, and Renee Gooderham, Chief Deputy City Clerk; and Karen Bunker, bride.

Staff absent: Tracey Covert, City Clerk.

Commissioner Renner opened the liquor hearing and requested that the requestor's representative address this request. Karen Bunker, bride, addressed the Commission. The wedding was scheduled for November 22, 2014 at the Miller Park Pavilion. She planned to invite 130 guests. Lancaster's Fine Dining, located at 513 N. Main St., would be retained to provide the food and liquor service, which would be limited to beer and wine only. The reception would start at 5:00 p.m. The Miller Park Pavilion must be vacated by 11:00 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Jordan, seconded by Commissioner Stockton that the request of Michael Skolmoski and Karen Bunker to allow moderate consumption of alcohol at the Miller Park Pavilion for their November 22, 2014 wedding be approved.

Motion carried, (viva voce).

Commissioner Renner stated that this item would appear on the Council's December 9, 2013 Consent Agenda. He encouraged Ms. Bunker to attend same.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting recessed at 4:15 p.m.

The Bloomington Liquor Commissioner Tari Renner called the Liquor Hearing to order regarding the request for an expansion of premises by TVEO Corporation, d/b/a Eric's Mini Mart & Restaurant, located at 903 W. Wood St., requesting an RAS liquor license which would allow the sale of all types of alcohol by the glass for consumption on the premises seven (7) days a week, said expansion to the restaurant 1840 sq. ft. into the area f/k/a the Mini Mart. Present at the hearing were Liquor Commissioners Tari Renner, Geoffrey Tompkins, Stephen Stockton and Jim Jordan; George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel; Clay Wheeler, Asst. Police Chief, and Renee Gooderham, Chief Deputy City Clerk; Eric Trujillo, applicant representative; and Hal Jennings, applicant's legal counsel.

Staff absent: Tracey Covert, City Clerk.

Commissioner Renner opened the liquor hearing and noted that Mr. Trujillo was present along with Hal Jennings, legal counsel. He informed the Commissioners that a Special Use petition was approved by Council on October 14, 2013. The petition addressed the need to amend parking requirements for restaurants.

Hal Jennings, applicant's legal counsel, addressed the Commission. The location was a single building which received two (2) tax assessment bills. Mr. Trujillo opened his business approximately five (5) years ago. The west end was a small grocery store. The

east was a restaurant. Mr. Trujillo could not maintain the store. The restaurant has been a success. He was wanted to expand the restaurant.

Commissioner Renner asked for anyone to step forward to speak in support of or in opposition to the application. No one came forward.

Commissioner Tompkins noted no concerns with the application. Mr. Trujillo had assisted with the area's rehabilitation.

Commissioner Stockton stated that he was in favor of granting the expansion. He believed the building should remain a neighborhood restaurant. There should be no live entertainment. He questioned if the kitchen remained open when the restaurant closed at 2:00 a.m.

Eric Trujillo, owner/applicant, addressed the Commission. He responded affirmatively. The restaurant was open for two (2) years prior to requesting a liquor license.

Commissioner Stockton questioned the atmosphere at the hours of 12:00 a.m. (midnight) to 1:00 a.m. Mr. Trujillo stated a few customers would be watching sports. It could be described as a sports bar atmosphere. Commissioner Stockton stated concern that establishments become taverns at those hours. Mr. Trujillo responded that food would still be served. Families were still able to order from the menu. Commissioner Stockton suggested using a wait and see approach. If the Commission discovered that the establishment was operating more as a tavern at those hours then tavern rules would be applied.

George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel, addressed the Commission. He questioned closing hours. Mr. Trujillo stated Monday through Wednesday 9:00 p.m. and Thursday through Sunday 1:00 a.m. He also stated if no one was in the establishment they usually close.

Commissioner Renner stated there was community support. The establishment needed to remain a restaurant.

Mr. Boyle noted that complaints had been received last year. He cited concern with the Thursday closing hour.

Clay Wheeler, Asst. Police Chief, addressed the Commission. The complaints referred to the establishment operating as a tavern. Police Officers found that a tavern had been operating in the area between the kitchen and former Mini Mart. The belief was the restaurant operated as tavern later in the evening.

Commissioner Stockton clarified that the liquor expansion included the west side of the building, formerly known as the Mini Mart.

Mr. Jennings stated the east side had five (5) bar stools and the west would have six (6) bar stools with a bar. Tables would be set up to assist with the expansion of food service. Commissioner Stockton believed that the establishment operated as a tavern during the late evening hours.

Mr. Boyle questioned alcoholic beverages outside. Mr. Trujillo responded negatively.

Motion by Commissioner Tompkins, seconded by Commissioner Stockton that the request for an expansion of premises by TVEO Corporation, d/b/a Eric's Mini Mart & Restaurant, located at 903 W. Wood St., requesting an RAS liquor license which would allow the sale of all types of alcohol by the glass for consumption on the premises seven (7) days a week, said expansion to the restaurant 1840 sq. ft. into the area f/k/a the Mini Mart.

Commissioner Jordan abstained due to the professional and personal relationship with Mr. Jennings.

Motion carried, (viva voce).

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting recessed at 4:35 p.m.

The Bloomington Liquor Commissioner Tari Renner called the Initial Liquor Violation Hearing to order regarding Taqueria El Porton, Inc., d/b/a Taqueia El Porton, located at 901 N. Main St., currently holding an RBS liquor license which allows the sale of beer and wine only by the glass for consumption on the premises seven (7) days a week. Present at the hearing were Liquor Commissioners Tari Renner, Geoffrey Tompkins, Stephen Stockton and Jim Jordan; George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel; Clay Wheeler, Asst. Police Chief, and Renee Gooderham, Chief Deputy City Clerk.

Staff absent: Tracey Covert, City Clerk.

Commissioner Renner opened the liquor hearing and noted that this item involved initial notification of violation. He noted that no one was present to address the violation.

George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel, addressed the Commission. The owners had contacted the City Clerk's office and the Legal Department. He spoken with the owner's daughter who stated she would contact her parents. He reminded the Commission that the establishment was a family owned business.

Commissioner Tompkins questioned the number of violations. Mr. Boyle stated that this was the first offense. Commissioner Tompkins believed that liquor violations should have uniform standards.

Commissioner Stockton stated that situations could differ.

Mr. Boyle provided a brief history of past practices. He suggested notifying the applicants that failure to appear would result in a default judgment.

Commissioner Jordan believed the owners had not neglected the situation. They had tried to contact the Legal Department. Standards should be set but there will always be exceptions.

Motion by Commissioner Stockton, seconded by Commissioner Jordan that the Violation Hearing regarding Taqueria El Porton, Inc., d/b/a Taqueia El Porton, located at 901 N. Main St., currently holding an RBS liquor license which allows the sale of beer and wine only by the glass for consumption on the premises seven (7) days a week be continued to the December 10, 2013 Liquor Commission Meeting.

Motion carried, (viva voce).

There being no further business before the Commission, the hearing adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Commissioner Renner provided a brief description of events which involved a Bloomington Police Officer over the weekend. He stated that he was working with George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel to change liquor classifications. The Town of Normal had a stadium classification.

George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel, addressed the Commission. He clarified that "R", restaurant classifications were being reviewed. Focus would also include those establishments which were more entertainment venues.

Commissioner Renner suggested meeting Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. for a Work Session. He stated video gaming would be addressed at same.

Commissioner Stockton provided a brief history of the entertainment ordinance which was not approved by the City Council.

Commissioner Tompkins requested that the fee structure be reviewed. He believed fees had not increased since 1982.

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Respectfully,

Renee Gooderham  
Chief Deputy Clerk