



Licensing Board
CITY OF WATERTOWN
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
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Watertown, Massachusetts 02472
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BOARD MEMBERS

DONNA B. DOUCETTE
SANDRA KASABIAN HOFFMAN
JOHN LABADINI

ALTERNATE MEMBER
JIM TSEREKAS

MINUTES FEBRUARY 16, 2023

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: JANUARY 19, 2023,

Approved 3-0

1. Special Licenses

- **Rinzin Tsomo, St. James Armenian Church Approved 3-0**
Special All Alcohol License – Tibetan New Year Celebration
465 Mt. Auburn Street, February 25

John Piranosian, facilities manager, appeared in support of the application. Chair Doucette reviewed the elements of the application. Anticipated attendance is 400 persons, of all ages; hours of 4:00 p.m. – 12:00 midnight; bartender TIPS certifications, and crowd manager certifications, and insurance information are included. Mr. Piranosian explained that the party/celebration event has previously been held at the church hall. Chair Doucette asked how parking for 400 people would be handled, and Mr. Piranosian stated that the church has hosted events for 500 people, and that staff checks side streets in the area to make sure there is no parking where not allowed. He added that the Health Department permit had been approved the day before. Sgt. Swift reported that the Police Department had no objection to the granting of the license requested, subject to the conditions in the department's written report. The Board acknowledged receipt of a report from the Health Department, and voted to grant the license subject to the conditions requested by the Police Department.

- **Rev. Timothy Kearney, St. Patrick's Church Approved 3-0**
Special All Alcohol License – Dinner/Dance
St. Patrick Parish Hall, 26R Chestnut Street, March 11

Ed Aucoin, appeared in support of the application. Chair Doucette reviewed the elements of the application. A St. Patrick's Day event, with anticipated attendance of 150 persons, expected to be of age 40+; hours of 6:00 p.m. – 12:00 midnight; bartender TIPS certifications, and hall layout plan are included. Mr. Aucoin stated that he has crowd manager certification, in connection with his work at the Shutt Marine Corps. Detachment club, and Board clerk Gilligan noted that there was a copy of that certification in the Board's files. Mr. Aucoin explained that the attendees would be in an older age range, but that identification would be checked. Ms. Gilligan reported that a food permit application had been submitted to the Health Department.

Sgt. Swift reported that the Police Department had no objection to the granting of the license requested, subject to the conditions in the department's written report. The Board acknowledged receipt of a report from the Health Department, and voted to grant the license subject to the conditions requested by the Police Department.

- Rev. Timothy Kearney, St. Patrick's Church Approved 3-0
Public Dance and Entertainment Licenses – Dinner/Dance
St. Patrick Parish Hall, 26R Chestnut Street, March 11

Ed Aucoin, appeared in support of the application. Chair Doucette reviewed the elements of the application. A live band of up to six persons, including a singer, will perform for the St. Patrick's Day dinner/dance to be held on March 11, the subject of the previous application. Sgt. Swift reported that the Police Department had no objection to the granting of the license requested, subject to the conditions in the department's written report. The Board acknowledged receipt of reports from the Health Department and Zoning Enforcement Officer, and voted to grant the license subject to the conditions requested by the Police Department.

- Tammy McKenna, City of Watertown Approved 3-0
Special All Alcohol License – Funeral Collation/Reception
Commander's Mansion, 440 Talcott Avenue, February 17

Tammy McKenna, facility manager for the Commander's Mansion, appeared in support of the application. She stated that the reception will follow the funeral for the former Town Manager. Chair Doucette asked about non-profit status for an all alcohol license. David Doneski, of City Attorney KP Law, stated that the applicable statute allows for issuance of a one-day all alcohol license to a nonprofit organization, which is not defined, and that in his view, under circumstances, the Board could issue the license requested. Sgt. Swift reported that the Police Department had no objection to the granting of the license requested, subject to the conditions in the department's written report. The Board voted to grant the license subject to the conditions requested by the Police Department.

2. Arsenal Hotel, LLC
d/b/a Hampton Inn and Suites Watertown
25 Bond Street
Show Cause Hearing

- ### 3. Comments by Board Clerk and Police Department

Ms. Gilligan stated that the Ole Tapas and Bar Cino restaurants would be scheduled for a status hearing next month.

Ms. Gilligan reported on the legal ad process for license applications. The advertisement price had been \$31.50 thru Wicked Local, but is now about \$380 dollars, for a Boston newspaper, because there is no locally published print edition newspaper. She noted that in her review she found that many surrounding cities and towns require the applicants to do the advertising. Chair Doucette commented that if the applicants did the advertising she would want to have the City provide the wording. Member Tsekrekas stated he found it reasonable to have applicants pay for advertising. Chair Doucette requested that the subject be scheduled for discussion at the Board's next meeting.

Ms. Gilligan reported on the process for December license renewals. With the Board meeting on the third Thursday in the month the renewals are voted very close to the holidays and licenses mailed to renewing licensees do not always arrive by the end of year. She asked whether the Board could have an earlier meeting date for renewals. Member Tsekrekas stated that the Board could move up the December meeting or have a separate meeting. Member Kasabian-Hoffman stated she would not be opposed to a separate meeting. Ms. Gilligan noted that the City is moving to an on-line licensing system, which should reduce follow up inquiries to applicants and City departments.

Ms. Gilligan reported on a question she had received regarding a temporary common victualer license, for example - someone buying a business but not changing the operations. The persons asking had noted that the 45-day advance application period can be a long lead time in those circumstances. Chair Doucette commented that people know that a license is needed and it is common for purchase and sale agreements to be contingent upon the buyer obtaining a license. She noted there had been situations of a buyer working alongside the existing licensee until the buyer got its own license. She stated she was not in favor of temporary licenses. Member Kasabian-Hoffman commented that the Board would run into problems if it started issuing temporary licenses.

Start: 7:30PM

End: 8:34PM

Donna B. Doucette, Chairman

Present: Donna B. Doucette, Sandra Kasabian-Hoffman, Jim Tsekrekas

Also Present: Acting Licensing Board Clerk - Noelle Gilligan, Watertown Police Sgt.

Ken Swift, Attorney David Doneski

Arsenal Hotel, LLC d/b/a
Hampton Inn and Suites Watertown
25 Bond Street
Watertown, MA 02472

The Watertown Licensing Board held a show cause hearing on the following matter: service of food to the public and operating as a common victualer at the innholder premises at 25 Bond Street without a license to operate as a common victualer, in violation of M.G.L. Chapter 140, sections 2, 6 and continuing.

Sharad Chand, vice president of operations at Stonebridge Companies, the management firm for the Hampton Inn, appeared on behalf of Arsenal Hotel, LLC. He stated he had previously been associated with Residence Inn and had worked on opening the Hampton Inn in 2021.

Board clerk Noelle Gilligan read into the record a summary report of the facts giving rise to the show cause hearing. The report noted the following: On January 23, 2023 Ms. Gilligan received an e-mail from CSC Global, on behalf of Arsenal Hotel, LLC, stating that the hotel had received its alcohol license but not a common victualer license. On January 25, Ms. Gilligan received a phone call from a Kelly at Stonebridge inquiring about the common victualer license, with the statement that the hotel had received the alcohol license and not the common victualer license. Ms. Gilligan responded that the Hampton Inn did not have a common victualer license because at the time of the alcohol license application for the premises the hotel was only providing “grab and go” snacks. Kelly reported that the hotel serves a hot breakfast consisting of eggs served buffet style in the dining area. Ms. Gilligan then contacted the Health Department since there was no food establishment permit on file. On January 26, Watertown Health Officer Lauren Olsen inspected the premises and prepared a report noting there is hot food and a kitchen on site, eggs being prepared and cooked, and with seating. She inspected the kitchen and found it to be sanitary with certified food safety managers on site, so she did not issue a closure order. Later that day, Kelly contacted Ms. Gilligan requesting documentation to update the hotel’s permits and Ms. Gilligan forwarded the applicable forms. The Health Department has issued a food establishment permit. On February 1 the hotel manager, Genevieve Humphrey, submitted a common victualer license application. BP Watertown Hotel, LLC is the holder of the alcohol license for the premises; Arsenal Hotel LLC is a different entity.

Following Ms. Gilligan’s report, Mr. Chand stated that the eggs served are prepackaged and are placed in an oven to cook, but otherwise the facts reported were accurate.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Chand stated that food service started in August 2022; prior to that time the hotel offered only grab and go food items. He stated that it was presumed the hotel had authority to serve food. When the hotel originally opened, as a Residence Inn, there was a different management group. For the Hampton Inn, there is a third-party license advisor, Bluebonnet. Mr. Chand stated that when the hotel was advised of the need for a common victualer license the application process was started.

Ms. Gilligan commented that the alcohol license reads “All Alcohol Common Victualer,” so that there was apparently a presumption that it covered common victualer operations as well. David Doneski, of City Attorney KP Law, reported that the alcohol license for the premises was issued via a transfer of the all alcohol common victualer license that had been held by Miller’s Ale House restaurant. Chair Doucette noted that a common victualer license, unlike a license to serve alcohol, cannot be transferred from one licensee to another but must be applied for on an individual basis each time there will be a new business operator.

After hearing, the Licensing Board unanimously found that the violations as alleged had occurred, and unanimously voted to issue a letter of warning. Any future violations of licensing requirements will be subject to another show cause hearing and disciplinary action and/or penalties.