

LA GRANGE LIQUOR COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING

53 South La Grange Road
First Floor Conference Room
La Grange, IL 60525

Monday, April 9, 2012 – 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

A meeting of the La Grange Liquor Commission was convened at 6:34 p.m. by Liquor Commissioner Elizabeth Asperger. Present and constituting a quorum were:

Present: Liquor Commissioner Elizabeth Asperger, Commissioner Mark Kuchler
and Commissioner Mark Langan

Absent: None

Also Present: Assistant Village Manager Andrianna Peterson
Village Attorney Mark Burkland
First Applicant Chang J. Wu
Second Applicant Jennifer Kintzle

2. Approval of the Minutes from the Liquor Commission meeting on March 12, 2012.

It was moved by Commissioner Langan and seconded by Commissioner Kuchler to approve the minutes of March 12, 2012, as submitted. The motion carried on a voice vote.

3. Liquor License Request / Liquor License Applicant

Woow Sushi La Grange LLC d/b/a Woow Sushi Japanese Restaurant

Commissioner Asperger indicated that Chang Wu was present as part owner of Woow Sushi La Grange LLC d/b/a Woow Sushi Japanese Restaurant to be located at 33 S. La Grange Road.

Commissioner Asperger informed the applicant that liquor control is taken very seriously and it is a privilege to sell and serve liquor in the Village. Commissioner Asperger explained that the Village is a family oriented community and a Class A-2 liquor license requires that more than 60% of the gross annual revenue of the dining establishment must result from the sale of food. Adding that there is no set number of liquor licenses but

rather that licenses are considered on an individual basis, Commissioner Asperger asked Mr. Wu to explain his plans for his restaurant in La Grange.

Staff reports that all of the elements of the applicant's application are in order and that there are no known issues with the application.

Mr. Wu noted that he started with a restaurant in Tinley Park and then proceeded to open the Big Tuna restaurant in Orland Park and also in Frankfort. Mr. Wu indicated he has been seeking a location for a fine dining and sushi bar restaurant and customers from his other locations recommended the La Grange area.

Commissioner Kuchler asked why he changed the name for the La Grange location and if current restaurants had a bearing on his decision making. Mr. Wu indicated that he wanted a more unique and family name. Initially, he had some concerns with on-site parking, however he is convinced that the close proximity of the parking structure and foot traffic will encourage customers.

Commissioner Kuchler inquired how often Mr. Wu would be present at the La Grange location. Mr. Wu noted that he has an experienced manager who has worked for his other locations and he would be spending time in La Grange as well. Mr. Wu noted that all managers have received alcohol awareness training.

Commissioner Asperger inquired when the restaurant was expected to open and Mr. Wu responded that he anticipated by the end of the month.

It was moved by Commissioner Langan and seconded by Commissioner Kuchler that the Liquor Commission make a recommendation: (a) that the Village Board of Trustees create a new Class A-2 liquor license and (b) that the Liquor Commissioner issue that license to Woow Sushi La Grange, LLC d/b/a Woow Sushi Japanese Restaurant to be located at 33 S. La Grange Road.

Commissioner Asperger stated that the recommendation would be made to the Village Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting on April 23, 2012.

4. Liquor License Request / Liquor License Applicant

Furaha LLC d/b/a Vino e Birra

Commissioner Asperger noted that Jennifer Kintzle is purchasing the existing Vino e Birra located at 18 W. Burlington Avenue. Ms. Kintzle is applying for a Class C-2 Wine Boutique License the same license which had been issued to the previous owners.

Explaining that there is no set number of liquor licenses but rather that licenses are considered on an individual basis, Commissioner Asperger informed Ms. Kintzle that the

Village is a family oriented community and random compliance checks are conducted to maintain responsible sales and service of liquor. Commissioner Asperger requested Ms. Kintzle to provide her background and experience.

Ms. Kintzle noted that she will be relocating from Iowa and that she has an accounting and marketing background and interest in wine. Ms. Kintzle added that when she saw the Vino e Birra for sale on line she was interested and feels it will be a successful venue.

Commissioner Langan asked Ms. Kintzle to describe what a typical weekend will be like at Vino e Birra. Ms. Kintzle noted that she plans to continue the Saturday wine and beer tastings and expects to maintain the business according to the current terms of the license and in compliance with all provisions.

Ms Peterson noted that she had previously met with the applicant to explain the specific provisions of the license, including that beer cannot be sold by the glass, and that the license does not allow a “wine bar.”

Attorney Burkland reviewed the liquor code regulations for this category of license. He noted that the current owner has been operating in violation of several regulations and the Village has been in the process of considering compliance proceedings against the current liquor license. He stated that the new licensee must expect that the Village will monitor the operation of the store, including its Facebook page and other media, to be sure that the violations have stopped. Ms Kintzle indicated that she understood these things when she applied for the license and that she intended to discontinue all activities that are in violation of the regulations. Ms Kintzle further noted that she would be revising and updating electronic and other advertising for the business.

Attorney Burkland inquired how tastings would be provided. Ms. Kintzle responded that tastings would be handled by the distributors and her store manager Robert Jungwirth would monitor the register. The amount served at the tastings would not exceed the license limits. Further, Attorney Burkland noted that only accessories related specifically to wine can be sold. Ms. Kintzle indicated that she understands that limitation.

It was moved by Commissioner Langan and seconded by Commissioner Kuchler that the Liquor Commission make a recommendation: (a) that the Village Board of Trustees create a new Class C-2 liquor license and (b) that the Liquor Commissioner issue that license to Furaha LLC d/b/a Vino e Birra located at 18 W. Burlington Avenue.

Commissioner Asperger stated that the recommendation would be made to the Village Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting on April 23, 2012.

5. Other Business

The Commissioners agreed to convene on April 23, 2012 prior to the regular Village Board meeting to discuss various liquor related matters.

6. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Langan and seconded by Commissioner Kuchler that the meeting of the Liquor Commission be adjourned. The motion carried on a voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Submitted by:
Andrianna Peterson
Assistant Village Manager

Date Approved: April 23, 2012