

LA GRANGE LIQUOR COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING

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

Monday, April 8, 2019 – 6:45 p.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

A special meeting of the La Grange Liquor Commission was called to order at 6:47 p.m. by Liquor Commissioner Thomas Livingston.

Present and constituting a quorum were Liquor Commissioner Thomas Livingston, Commissioner Mike Kotynek and Commissioner Mark Kuchler.

Absent: None.

Also present: Village Manager Andrianna Peterson, Community Development Director Charity Jones, Police Chief Kurt Bluder, and Administrative Intern Kevin Noreikis.

2. Approval of the Minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Kuchler and seconded by Commissioner Kotynek to approve the minutes of March 11, 2019, as submitted. The motion carried on a voice vote.

3. Liquor License Request Class A-2 / Milkstop LLC d/b/a Milkstop

Liquor Commissioner Livingston asked Village Manager Peterson to provide an overview of the liquor license application.

The Village has received an application for a Class A-2 liquor license for Milkstop LLC d/b/a Milkstop at 700 W. Burlington Mary Libsch is a member (12.5% ownership), Chris Spagnola is a manager (12.5% ownership), Sharon Owens is a partner (37.5% ownership), Mary Jo Quirk is a manager (18.75% ownership) and Steve Quirk is member (18.75% ownership). Both Mary Libsch and Chris Spagnola will be liquor managers.

Owner Chris Spagnola described the concept behind Milkstop as being a neighborhood restaurant and café serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. They decided to name it Milkstop as the Stone Avenue Station used to historically be a “Milkstop” in the late 1800’s.

Commissioner Kuchler welcomed Mr. Spagnola and Mrs. Libsch back to La Grange and commended them on their location choice. He also inquired as to the projected timeline for the opening of the restaurant. Mr. Spagnola responded that they anticipate opening in June, 2019.

Commissioner Kuchler inquired if they will be advertising during the Pet Parade and West End Art Fair. Mr. Spagnola responded that they are anticipating a good deal of business for those events. As they have been part of the La Grange community for so long in different ventures, it feels like being part of a family. Milkstop will be joining the La Grange Business Association and is planning on staying very active within the community.

Commissioner Kotynek asked what their past liquor experience consisted of. Ms. Libsch responded that while operating both Meson and Sunflower Bistro they held full liquor licenses. When operating Knead Marketplace and Back Alley Burger, they first had a Bring-Your-Own license and then a beer and wine license. Mr. Spagnola added that they have never had any issues with liquor control.

Mr. Spagnola expressed their excitement to once again be back in La Grange as they have had positive experiences here.

After discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Kotynek and seconded by Commissioner Kuchler that the Liquor Commission recommends: (a) that the Village Board of Trustees creates one new Class A-2 Liquor License and (b) that the Liquor Commissioner issues that license to Milkstop LLC d/b/a Milkstop at 700 W. Burlington. Motion carried.

President Livingston thanked the applicants for their investment and stated that the recommendation for approval would be made to the Village Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting on April 22, 2019.

4. Liquor License Request Class A-3 / Blackberry Market Inc. d/b/a Blackberry Market

Liquor Commissioner Livingston asked Village Manager Peterson to provide an overview of the liquor license application.

The Village has received an application for a Class A-3 liquor license for Blackberry Market Inc. d/b/a Blackberry Market at 36 S. La Grange Road. Anna Davidson is an owner (50% ownership) and Robert Davidson is an owner (50% ownership). Kevin Grace will be the liquor manager.

Ms. Davidson explained the Blackberry Market concept; a fast casual bakery café selling pastries, salads and the like. It will be a family oriented business with liquor accounting for a small fraction of sales. In addition to operating as a bakery café, Ms. Davidson explained that they will also host private events such as wedding/baby showers and reunions. This will be their second location, with the first being located in Glen Ellyn which has been operating for the past six years.

Commissioner Kuchler inquired as to how liquor will function at private events. Ms. Davidson responded that all employees handling alcohol will be BASSET trained. The biggest sellers at private events are beer, wine and mimosas.

Commissioner Kotynek asked if the La Grange location will be operating differently from the Glen Ellyn location. Ms. Davidson responded that it is mostly due to the layout of the different locations. While there are small differences in operations, she explained, they plan on continuing what they know and do well.

Commissioner Kuchler inquired as to the investor support they would be receiving. Ms. Davidson responded that it was minimal and included a small business loan as well as a façade loan from FNBC.

Commissioner Kuchler asked why they chose La Grange for their next restaurant. Ms. Davidson replied that while doing research it felt as though the surrounding communities all used downtown La Grange as a hub. It is a more urban feel than Glen Ellyn with a good deal of diversity, a strong senior community and the ability to draw from surrounding suburbs to create an active downtown.

Ms. Davidson explained that she plans to be in La Grange full time once the location opens in early May. She has also started working with the La Grange Business Association to take advantage of local connections and start spreading the word.

After discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Kuchler and seconded by Commissioner Kotynek that the Liquor Commission recommends: (a) that the Village Board of Trustees creates one new Class A-3 Liquor License and (b) that the Liquor Commissioner issues that license to Blackberry Market Inc. d/b/a Blackberry Market at 36 S. La Grange Road. Motion carried.

President Livingston thanked the applicants for their investment and stated that the recommendation for approval would be made to the Village Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting on April 22, 2019.

5. Other Business

Prospective business owner John Janowski described his nano-brewery concept which he is considering to be located in the West End. It would include 12 taps, growler fills, distribution facilities and a 3 drink limit.

Commissioner Livingston thanked Mr. Janowski. The Village balances new concepts with the existing restaurant mix. Mr. Livingston asked if he had considered locations in the industrial district. Mr. Janowski responded that breweries are more successful in areas with foot traffic.

Commissioner Kuchler noted that due to the Villages orientation toward families, there is a zoning distinction for the use in the industrial district as compared to the West End and downtown areas which require a food component.

Commissioner Livingston thanked Mr. Janowski for attending and presenting his business concept. He encouraged him to meet with staff as a next step.

6. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Kotynek 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 7:26 p.m.

Submitted by:
Andrianna Peterson
Village Manager

Date Approved: