

**CITY OF NEWTON**

**BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS**

**Chair, Kathleen M. McCarthy, Dina E. Conlin & Anil Adyanthaya**

**Fax: (617) 552-7063 Email: [Licensing@newtonma.gov](mailto:Licensing@newtonma.gov)**

**Minutes**

DATE: August 18, 2020 **This meeting was conducted via conference call 617-454-5555 access code 1420**

PRESENT: Commissioners Kathleen McCarthy, Dina Conlin and Anil Adyanthaya

STAFF: Sergeant Kevin Rudd and Manuela Familia

TIME: 7:30PM – Regular meeting of the Board

The June 16, 2020 Minutes were **approved 3-0**.

**CHANGE OF HOURS**

Application filed by Paula Saavedra, 398 Watertown Street, Newton, MA 02458. **For a change of hours from Monday through Sunday from 5:00PM – 12:00AM to Monday through Sunday 11:30AM – 12:00AM to be exercised at Saavedra Restaurant, LLC d/b/a Patzcuaro, 398-400 Watertown Street, Newton, MA 02458. PRESENT ON THE CALL: Paula Saavedra. Approved 3-0**

**CHANGE OF MANAGER**

Application filed by Chrissy Wills, 155 Otis Street, Northborough, MA 01532. **For a change of manager from Michael E. Emery to Michael Gillis to be exercised at Bertucci's Restaurants, LLC d/b/a Bertucci's Brick Oven Ristorante, 275 Centre Street, Newton, MA 02458. PRESENT ON THE CALL: Michael Gillis. Approved 3-0; contingent upon receipt of Tips certification.**

**NEW ALL ALCOHOL LICENSE, NEW COMMON VICTUALLER AND ENTERTAINMENT**

Application filed by attorney Kristen Scanlon, Scanlon Law, LLC, 354 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. **For a new all alcohol license, new common victualler and annual entertainment to be exercised at Mida Newton, LLC d/b/a MIDA Newton, 261 Walnut Street, Newton, MA 02460. The manager will be Seth Gerber. The hours of operations will be Sunday through Saturday from 10:00AM – 1:00AM. There will be 130 seats inside and 44 seats outside. Entertainment will consist of background music and 3 televisions. PRESENT ON THE CALL: Kristen Scanlon, Esq; Brian Lester, Douglass Williams and Seth Gerber. All approved 3-0; contingent upon receipt of insurance, workers compensation insurance and certificate of occupancy.**

**REQUEST TO BE HEARD:**

Newton City Council President and Councilor-at-Large Ward 2 Susan Albright is requesting to discuss with the Licensing Commission a reduction to the liquor licensing fees for Newton restaurants this year. **PRESENT ON THE CALL: Susan Albright, Newton City Councilor Ward 2; Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer, City of Newton; Greig Reibman, President of the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce; Gloria Gavis, Former Newton Licensing Commissioner; Maura E. O'Keefe, Assistant City Solicitor.**

Councilor Albright presented reasons why the Board should consider reducing its fees. She stated how restaurants while closed, could not sell the product that they had a license for. She also mentioned the memo that was signed by 18 of the City Councilors which support the request to reduce the licensing fees. Exhibit 1.

Jonathan Yeo mentioned how Mayor Fuller, Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux and himself have been discussing this matter. They agree in the importance of the health vitality of the village centers. He mentioned how with help of City Councilors, the City of Newton was able to establish Alfresco dining and put up barriers for outdoor dining. He informed the Commission that closing off full streets for outdoor dining were looked at but they were unable to come

up with a solution yet. He informed the Board that the main concern that Mayor Fuller, Maureen Lemieux and himself have is not financial but an equity concerned. It would not be fair to offer this break to one segment of businesses and not another. He reminded the Commission of the assistance offered to businesses through the Newton COVID-19 Small Business Recovery Grant Program and the Paycheck Protection Program. In conclusion Jonathan Yeo informed the Licensing Board the Mayor's office is not in support of the request. While they strongly believe they need to help Newton restaurants this is not the way to do it.

Greg Reibman spoke in support of the reduction of fees. He informed the Commission that the Massachusetts Restaurant Association predicts that they will lose about one third of the restaurants statewide in the next year. He expressed that restaurant operators are exhausted and frustrated and do not feel supported financially. He explained that in Needham some businesses were disappointed but, he believes that everyone benefits from the foot traffic restaurants brings. He believes is a small solution but a solution that would help.

Commission Chair McCarthy reminded everyone this is discussion. In order to vote on this request, it will be noticed in a future meeting. A decision on this would have to be made prior to November, which is when the renewal application for 2021 are sent out to licensees.

Gloria Gavis spoke in support of the reduction of fees. She feels that restaurants are vital for the economic vitality. She believes that if the Licensing Commission could provide some relief it would help. She also expressed that this relief doesn't not have to be permanent and it could be revisited later when Covid19 is more under control. She stated that neighboring towns are lapping us for relief to restaurants.

Commission Chair McCarthy stated for the record that she has reviewed all the emails submitted in support of this discussion.

Commission Chair asked Councilor Albright if she had reach out to other city departments for fee reduction reliefs. Councilor Albright answered no.

Commissioner Dina Conlin stated that there is no perfect solution but that the Commission will take everything into consideration when making a decision.

Commissioner Anil Adyanthaya asked if there were other cities and towns other than Needham that have reduced their licensing fees, Councilor Albright answered she did not know, she did not pursue the information. Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce President, Greig Reibman answered he is not aware of any other city or towns that have reduced their fees.

**This matter will be place in the September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Agenda for a Commission vote. Voted in favor 3-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:32PM.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Manuela Familia  
Administrative Clerk



Newton Board of License Commissioners  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

August 17, 2020

Dear Chair McCarthy,

We are writing in support of reducing the licensing fee for the various liquor licenses in Newton. We are concerned about the struggling Newton restaurants. Our villages are made vibrant through the many eating establishments in our city and we know that losing them would reduce the reasons that bring residents to our villages. COVID has dealt a severe blow to their viability and we are hopeful that this small reduction would help some who are teetering on the edge of deciding to stay in business or not.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter,

Susan S. Albright, President  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 2

Richard A. Lipof, Vice-President  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 8

Alison M. Leary  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 1

Andrea W. Kelley  
Councilor-at-Large Ward 3

Andreae Downs  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 5

Alicia G. Bowman  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 6

David A. Kalis  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 8

Leonard J. Gentile  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 4

Victoria L. Danberg  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 6

Deborah J. Crossley  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 5

Pamela Wright  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 3

Alison M. Leary  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 1

Joshua Krintzman  
Councilor-at-Large, Ward 4

Holly Ryan  
Ward Councilor, Ward 8

Julia Malakie  
Ward Councilor, Ward 3

Maria Scibelli Greenberg  
Ward Councilor, Ward 1

Christopher J. Markiewicz  
Ward Councilor, Ward 4