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CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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LICENSES COMMITTEE

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In the Matter of the Class "B" Tavern transfer
application for:

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GENINNE RICE
"GEE GEE's BAR & GRILL"

8

3501 North 6th Street

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to

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3001 North Richards Street

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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ALD. JAMES WITKOWIAK - Chair

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ALD. JAMES BOHL, JR., - Vice-Chairman

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ALD. TERRY WITKOWSKI

15

ALD. ROBERT PUENTE

16

ALD. WILLIE WADE

17

LICENSING DIVISION by REBECCA BARRON

18

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES by TOM WESSEL

19

HEALTH DEPARTMENT by PAUL ZEMKE

20

POLICE DEPARTMENT by SEARGENT CHET ULICKEY

21

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY by ATTORNEY BRUCE SCHRIMPF

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Proceedings had and testimony given in
the above-entitled matter, before the LICENSES
COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE, on
the 11th day of September, 2007.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Geninne Rice,
Class "B" Tavern transfer application for "Gee
Gee's Bar & Grill" from 3501 North 6th Street to
3001 North Richards Street.

Good afternoon.

THE APPLICANT: Hi.

MR. WHITCOMB: Good afternoon, Mr.
Chairman.

CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Would you raise
your right hand, we'll swear you in?

(Whereupon the Applicant was sworn.)

CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Your name and
address for the record, please.

THE APPLICANT: Geninne Rice, 3001
North Richards.

CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: And state your
appearance, please?

MR. WHITCOMB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
My name is Michael Whitcomb. I'm an attorney
representing the applicant.

CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay.

MR. WHITCOMB: And this is for a
transfer of a license.

CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Yes. Did Ms. Rice

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1 admit to receiving a notice in the mail there's a
2 possibility the application could be denied
3 because of items contained on the police report,
4 and neighborhood objections to loitering,
5 littering, drug criminal activity, fights,
6 gunshots, shootings, fitness of location based on
7 concentration of alcohol beverage outlets in the
8 neighborhood and conduct which is detrimental to
9 the health, safety and welfare of the
10 neighborhood?

11 MR. WHITCOMB: So acknowledged.

12 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Health Department?

13 HEALTH: The Health Department needs an
14 inspection of the facility. Also, any plans to
15 be submitted for any construction or remodeling.

16 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Neighborhood
17 Services.

18 DNS: Hold for occupancy permit.

19 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Sergeant, could we
20 have a police report, please?

21 SERGEANT ULICKEY: On 1/21 of '06 at
22 two a.m. the applicant received a citation for
23 presence of minor prohibited at 3501 North 6th
24 Street. She was found guilty and fined 100
25 dollars.

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1 On 3/26 of '06 at 1:19 officers
2 responded to a shooting at 3501 North 6th Street.
3 Investigation revealed that three people were
4 shot, and there were two suspects. Both victims
5 and suspects were patrons of Carter's Corner at
6 that - - at this address.

7 On 3/13 of '07 Milwaukee Police
8 conducted a tavern check at 3501 North 6th
9 Street. Officers found an entry door to the
10 tavern locked when they tried to enter. The
11 licensee, Geninne Carter, was on the scene and
12 was informed that the door must remain open and
13 that officers would be checking periodically to
14 ensure that it was. Carter stated she understood
15 and would comply.

16 On 3/15 of '07 Milwaukee Police
17 observed a patron pull on the entry door to 3501
18 North 6th Street but was unable to get in.
19 Security door man there - - Or then came to let
20 in after - - Or into the tavern after waiting for
21 about a minute. The licensee - - The licensee,
22 Geninne Carter was on the scene and advised of
23 being warned previously to keep the door open. A
24 citation was issued to Carter, and she stated she
25 understood. Trying to keep control of the bar

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1 due to it being in a bad area. She was found
2 guilty of locked entry door and fined 356
3 dollars.

4 On 3/17 of '07 Milwaukee Police were
5 investigating a strong-arm complaint that
6 occurred inside 3501 North 6th Street. Victim
7 stated she and a known acquaintance were inside
8 Gee Gee's and were not getting along. Victim
9 stated she decided to leave when she was punched
10 in the face several times and kicked by the known
11 subject and her purse was taken. She stated that
12 she and the known acquaintance were then kicked
13 out by the bouncer, and that she was unable to
14 get back into the tavern. The suspect then fled
15 6th - - southbound on 6th Street.

16 4/19 of '07, 11:45 a.m. Milwaukee
17 Police were dispatched to 3501 North 6th Street
18 for trouble with a subject complaint. Anonymous
19 call stated there were subjects inside the tavern
20 smoking weed and crack. Investigation revealed
21 that there was an underage person inside the
22 tavern, however, officers did not find him to be
23 drinking any alcohol. This person was cited for
24 presence of underage. There was no evidence of
25 anyone smoking any illegal drugs. The licensee

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1 was issued a citation for presence of minor
2 prohibited. She was found guilty and fined 426
3 dollars.

4 On 4/21 of '07 at 12:08 a.m. Milwaukee
5 Police were dispatched to 3501 North 6th Street.
6 Officer spoke with the licensee, Geninne Carter,
7 about a report of a patron with a marijuana
8 cigar. Officers then observed the subject
9 rolling another blunt-type cigar when he noticed
10 officers. Officers arrested the subject and
11 charged him with possession of marijuana.

12 On 4/25 of '07 at 1:02 a.m. Milwaukee
13 Police were dispatched to shots fired complaint
14 at 600 West Keefe. Investigation revealed that a
15 fight had taken place inside of Gee Gee's at 3501
16 North 6th, at which time the security escorted
17 the patrons outside. Fight continued outside
18 when one of the patrons hit another with her
19 vehicle. Subject was arrested for recklessly
20 endangering safety, OWI and OAR. It should be
21 noted that no one from the tavern bothered to
22 call police regarding the fight.

23 On 5/12 of '07 officers were patrolling
24 the area of 1100 West Keefe when they heard
25 approximately four gunshots being fired from the

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1 area of 6th and Keefe. On their arrival they
2 observed 20 to 30 subjects running and leaving
3 the area of the tavern, Club Gee Gee's, 3501
4 North 6th Street. Officers checked the area and
5 recovered a black steel 7.62 by 25 pistol, semi-
6 automatic, directly outside the bar in the rear.
7 The gun had no un-fired cartridges inside the
8 chamber and none were inside the magazine. The
9 gun did not smell like it had been recently
10 fired. There were no casings around the bar nor
11 on the street. All the patrons had left the
12 premises and there was no apparent evidence of a
13 shooting in the area. The officers checked
14 inside the tavern, spoke to the licensee. She
15 told them she did not hear any gunshots and the
16 gun was inventoried.

17 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Is that all? Do
18 you have any questions about the police report?

19 MR. WHITCOMB: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

20 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Go ahead and
21 proceed.

22 MR. WHITCOMB: Sergeant, incident
23 number nine, do your reports indicate at what
24 time those observations were made?

25 SERGEANT ULICKEY: No, I do not have

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1 them on this report.

2 MR. WHITCOMB: No further questions of
3 the Sergeant, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Thank you.

5 MR. WHITCOMB: Prior to hearing from
6 citizens, might I just address the - - the
7 incidents contained in the report?

8 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Go ahead.

9 MR. WHITCOMB: Thank you.

10 It's my understanding that the first
11 two incidents which occurred in early 2006 were
12 considered by this committee last year at the
13 time of renewal, and at that time a ten day
14 suspension was imposed.

15 Incident number three, that was a
16 tavern check. The entry door was, indeed,
17 locked. Locked, and Ms. Carter, now Ms. Rice,
18 indicated she said to keep the door open.
19 However, two days later it was again found to be
20 locked. There's a new security personnel at the
21 door, and he thought he was supposed to keep it
22 locked, and he had not been told about what
23 instructions were received earlier.

24 The incident number five, the strong-
25 arm complaint, none of that in the report is

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1 accurate. The woman who filed the complaint at
2 earlier - - was in the tavern earlier, had broken
3 a mirror in the woman's restroom. She was
4 bandaged by Ms. Rice. Ms. Rice allowed her to
5 remain in the tavern. However, later on in the
6 evening her behavior became erratic, believed to
7 be stimulated by other than alcohol, and she was
8 asked to leave, which she did. All that which
9 she reports to the police is total fabrication.

10 As to the incident number six, that was
11 an anonymous call. We suspect that was a former
12 bartender that had a grudge that called the
13 police. There wasn't any evidence of any
14 wrongdoing found.

15 Incident number seven, that was a call
16 made. When the police arrived, Ms. Rice
17 basically gave the officer a heads-up, and that
18 customer was banned permanently from the bar.
19 Rather than trying to involve herself in the
20 matter, I think she did the appropriate thing.

21 Incident number eight, this was an
22 incident where two females became loud and
23 boisterous in the tavern. They were separated
24 and security was instructed, one was escorted out
25 of the tavern as is the practice. They waited a

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1 period of time to allow that person to leave the
2 area. Thereafter, they escorted the other woman
3 out of the - - the tavern, and afterwards
4 commotion was heard from the outside. The tavern
5 didn't believe that there was a necessity to call
6 the police. They thought it was under control.
7 They separated the two women. One was escorted
8 out first. Approximately five to ten minutes
9 later the other was escorted out. We don't know
10 anything further about what happened outside, but
11 I think the tavern had acted appropriately.

12 Incident number nine, the reason for
13 the question asked to the time of the incident
14 was, we believe, it was - - it was after bar
15 time, that these individuals observed by the
16 police officers were people that - - were people
17 that customarily hang out at a gas station that's
18 behind the tavern. And when they saw the police,
19 they took off, and that the weapon that was
20 found, they may have had it, but it wasn't
21 affiliated with the tavern. It's our belief, or
22 the applicant's belief that this was from the
23 group of people that customarily hang out at the
24 gas station, which is directly behind the tavern.

25 Those would be our comments regarding

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1 the incidents of the police report.

2 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Thank you. To
3 this point, do and of my committee members have
4 any questions of Mr. Whitcomb? Thank you.

5 Can I see a show of hands here who is
6 here to testify relative to the transfer to 3001
7 North Richards Street? Can I see a show of
8 hands, who is here to testify? Okay. Who is
9 here to testify in opposition to this? Anyone
10 here to testify in opposition to it? No. Okay.
11 You're all here to testify in support?

12 THE WITNESSES: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Could you all
14 raise your right hands? We'll swear you all in
15 at the same time.

16 (Whereupon the witnesses were sworn.)

17 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. Could you
18 come up, please, one at a time, perhaps the
19 standing microphone might work better here.
20 State your name and address for the record, and
21 give us your - - your testimony.

22 MR. WHITCOMB: Mr. Chairman, for - -
23 just for an introductory historical perspective.
24 This location had been a tavern. I believe it's
25 been closed for about three years. It was called

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1 Steve's Riviera Club, and it was - - was closed
2 at the - - at a renewal at the request of the
3 neighbors. And the owner of the facility is here
4 today, as well, in support, and a strong
5 neighborhood representative in - - in that area.
6 So with those introductory thoughts.

7 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. Could we
8 have the people come and testify, please?

9 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Mr. Chair.

10 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman Puente.

11 ALDERMAN PUENTE: In all the incidents,
12 they list an address of 3501 North 6th, but yet,
13 as you just stated, 3001 North Richards.

14 MR. WHITCOMB: It's a transfer.

15 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: It's a transfer
16 application. These are incidents that occurred
17 at the old location.

18 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Okay. Thank you.

19 MR. WHITCOMB: That operation licensed
20 facility ceased at the end of July, and she
21 started looking for another location that didn't
22 attract such a transient personnel.

23 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Could I have your
25 name and address for the record, please?

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1 THE WITNESS: Darlene Holmes, 2943
2 North Richards Street.

3 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: And for the
4 record, how close do you live to this location?

5 THE WITNESS: About six houses.

6 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Darlene, and your
7 testimony is?

8 THE WITNESS: I approve of - - I am the
9 owner. Also, I spoke against closing Michelle's
10 club, Riviera, because she wasn't really a good
11 business person. I have dropped by her place. I
12 really like the security guards at the door, and
13 she was actively sitting there, which showed me
14 that she would be a good business person for our
15 neighborhood.

16 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Questions by
17 members of the committee? Mr. Whitcomb, anything
18 of this witness?

19 MR. WHITCOMB: Just, Ms. Holmes, you're
20 quite active in your neighborhood.

21 THE WITNESS: Yes, I am.

22 MR. WHITCOMB: And would I be correct
23 in describing your role in the neighborhood as
24 being somewhat of the godmother that keeps
25 control of the neighborhood?

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1 THE WITNESS: To my side, because I'm
2 in the 2900 block. So we kind of have like two
3 - - two people that usually do it, but, yeah, on
4 my side of the street, I am.
5 MR. WHITCOMB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
6 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: And you say that
7 you came here and testified - -
8 THE WITNESS: To support her.
9 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Yeah, but in a
10 previous hearing, against to - -
11 THE WITNESS: When we closed down
12 Michelle's.
13 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. And you
14 feel that this would be different now - -
15 THE WITNESS: Correct.
16 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: - - and an asset
17 to the neighborhood?
18 THE WITNESS: Correct. Because that
19 particular business owner was absent a lot, and
20 other people ran her business. So when I came
21 into her place, she was actually sitting there in
22 her business.
23 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. All right.
24 Thank you.
25 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

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1 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Next person to
2 testify, please.

3 MR. WHITCOMB: Just, Ms. Holmes, a
4 follow-up question.

5 THE WITNESS: Oh, sure.

6 MR. WHITCOMB: And once Ms. Rice has
7 the operation up and going, there's a plan to
8 remodel and redo the kitchen in the
9 establishment. Correct?

10 THE WITNESS: Well, there's actually no
11 remodeling that's needed. She would just be - -
12 She would have to apply with the Board of Health
13 to come in and - -

14 MR. WHITCOMB: Right now, you'd be
15 willing to assist her in operating that - -

16 THE WITNESS: Correct.

17 MR. WHITCOMB: - - that kitchen.

18 THE WITNESS: Correct.

19 MR. WHITCOMB: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Thank you. Does
21 anyone know what the - - the capacity is or the
22 proposed capacity is of this place?

23 DNS: No, I do not have anything on
24 that one at all.

25 ALDERMAN PUENTE: And do you have any

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1 old records from three years ago?

2 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: No. Yeah, we can
3 get that. And just - - Just for - - for the
4 record, question to the applicant. Is Geninne
5 Rice and Geninne Carter one and the same person?

6 THE APPLICANT: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: From the
8 applicant, I want to hear from.

9 THE APPLICANT: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. All right.
11 Ma'am, your name and address for the record,
12 please.

13 THE WITNESS: My name is Ethell
14 Highshaw. I live at 3009 North Richards. I'm
15 directly right next door from the bar. I've been
16 there since 1975. And I feel that she - - She
17 came and talked to me and my mom, because my mom
18 is like 86 years old. And the way she wants to
19 run her bar, I feel that it will be a good
20 change, because, therefore, we don't have any
21 like little restaurants in that area, and she
22 wants to sell food from like 11:30 in the morning
23 to like 11:30 at night. And she seems like
24 she'll be a good candidate for our - - for our
25 neighborhood. And like the other lady spoke

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1 about, she controlled the 2900 block. I control
2 the 3000 block, and I'm not going to have no mess
3 on 3009 North Richards, because my mom is 86
4 years old. So I feel that she should have a
5 chance to get her bar.

6 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Well, when I come
7 over there, I'm - - I'm glad to know now who I
8 got to pay attention to.

9 THE WITNESS: Yeah, especially pay
10 attention to me, because I look at all cars,
11 license plates, everything. I'm what they call
12 the FBI on the block.

13 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: I promise you I'll
14 behave.

15 THE WITNESS: Okay.

16 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Questions by
17 members of the committee? No. Mr. Whitcomb, any
18 questions of this witness.

19 MR. WHITCOMB: No questions.

20 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Thank you for your
21 testimony. Next person to testify. You're
22 probably on the third block, right? Are you the
23 godmother of the third block? Name and address
24 for the record.

25 THE WITNESS: My name is Natasha

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1 Alexander. And actually I'm an employee of
2 Geninne's for like a year. And me working with
3 her, I never had any problems as far as any
4 harassment or any, you know, any type of
5 problems. We work - - I've always felt safe with
6 working with her. And actually, I'm right around
7 the corner from the new bar, which is on 2929
8 North Holton. So, I feel that she would be a
9 good - - She is a good business person, and I
10 will have a good chance of exploring something
11 new with her.

12 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Any questions of
13 this witness? Mr. Whitcomb?

14 MR. WHITCOMB: No questions. Thank
15 you.

16 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Next person to
17 testify? Name and address.

18 THE WITNESS: My name is Greg Crump. I
19 live at 3009 North Richards, right next door to
20 the bar. And she came and spoke with us about
21 having the bar there, and, you know, and I was
22 amazed about, you know, what was - - she was
23 going to have going on with food and, you know,
24 things for the kids. And that was something that
25 I liked that, you know, I'm a young person

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1 myself. And she had a bar over there on 6th
2 Street. I went in there like one time, just to
3 see, when she said she was coming, you know, to
4 open a bar there, I went there to see how she
5 handles things. And, yes, she's like a drill
6 sergeant at the door. So it wasn't - - It
7 wouldn't be a problem. And I don't know Mrs.
8 Rice from Adam and Eve, but she seemed like a
9 good business person and a good lady to run that
10 establishment that's there. So it wouldn't be a
11 problem, like I said, I'm right next door, and
12 she said she's going to up the age limit to 25
13 and up, which that's best for the, you know, the
14 younger people stay up out of there and hold down
15 a lot of problems. And another thing, is that
16 she talked to me about being a bouncer or a
17 security guard at her door. I thought about it,
18 because I know everybody around there. I been
19 there all my life. I haven't been nowhere else.
20 I'm fine with everybody. I don't have no problems
21 with no one. I get along with everybody and
22 pretty much everybody will listen to me, so I
23 don't have no type of problem, you know, with
24 her, with her establishment.

25 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Any questions of

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1 this witness. Mr. Whitcomb, any questions?

2 MR. WHITCOMB: No questions.

3 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Thank you for your
4 testimony. Next person to testify, please?

5 That's it. Okay. Did I check with Health
6 Department and Neighborhood Services? I did.

7 Okay. Ms. Rice, you - - you plan on serving food
8 there.

9 THE APPLICANT: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. Like a,
11 just a rough idea, what sort of food? What - -
12 What's your menu going to be like?

13 THE APPLICANT: Just the average.
14 Pizza, hot dogs, soul food, if I may, steaks.
15 Something where people can come and have a nice
16 meal, working class people, and have a glass of
17 wine and enjoy themselves.

18 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Do you - - Do you
19 - - Mr. Whitcomb, I just - - I asked that
20 question before. Do you - - Or, Ms. Rice, maybe,
21 do you have an idea of what - - what you think
22 the capacity of the place is going to be?

23 THE APPLICANT: I have no idea. We're
24 guessing it's at least 100. Oh, we don't know.

25 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Do one of the

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1 other witnesses come that knows this information?
2 THE WITNESS: I had it licensed
3 probably a year or so ago just for occupancy, and
4 it was 75 at that time.

5 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: 75.

6 THE WITNESS: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. All right.

8 Thank you.

9 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

10 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Did you serve food
11 in your - - in your other place?

12 THE APPLICANT: No.

13 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: No, okay. Just a
14 personal thing, I think serving food is a good
15 idea. Just to - - it kind of softens the - - It
16 softens the whole atmosphere of the place. It
17 usually brings in a better group of - - that are
18 interested in eating and drinking as opposed to
19 drinking only. You know what I mean.

20 THE APPLICANT: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Any other
22 questions by members of the committee? Comments
23 from the Alderman's office, please.

24 ALDERMAN'S AIDE: The Alderman is not
25 in support of this matter, due to constituent

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1 complaints, as well as multiple police contact
2 with her establishment, and high alcohol
3 concentration in that area.

4 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Are both of these
5 addresses in the 6th District? 3501 North 6th
6 Street and 3001 North Richards?

7 ALDERMAN'S AIDE: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: And what is the -
9 - To the best of our knowledge, what is the - -
10 Maybe Mr. Whitcomb can answer this. What is the
11 eventual plan for 3501 North 6th Street, the
12 place that she's in now?

13 MR. WHITCOMB: I don't know what the
14 landlord intends to do with it. She was leasing
15 that property. The property on Richards Street,
16 if she has the license, she is going to acquire -
17 - purchase. And I don't - - I don't know what
18 the landlord - - what plans the landlord has for
19 South 6th Street. Or North 6th Street, I'm
20 sorry.

21 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Mr. Chairman.

22 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman
23 Witkowski?

24 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: How far - - How
25 many blocks away is this from your last place?

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1 MR. WHITCOMB: Approximately two miles.
2 It's 30 and 30.
3 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Do you expect the
4 same clientele, the same people?
5 THE APPLICANT: Not at all.
6 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Are they aware
7 that you're opening up another place?
8 THE APPLICANT: I haven't advertised or
9 anything, no, sir.
10 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Thank you.
11 MR. WHITCOMB: Gee Gee's hasn't been
12 open for a couple of months now.
13 THE APPLICANT: A couple of months.
14 MR. WHITCOMB: And - -
15 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Go ahead.
16 MR. WHITCOMB: Ms. Rice has operated a
17 number of taverns, most recently by herself, and
18 years before that with her husband, thus the name
19 Carter's Corners before it was - - the name was
20 changed to Gee Gee's after she was divorced. Her
21 business, her tavern business is what sustains
22 her, and - - and her - - her daughter at
23 Platteville. Right?
24 THE APPLICANT: Yes.
25 MR. WHITCOMB: She's a junior at

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1 Platteville right now. The location on 6th
2 Street was not what she intended it to be, based
3 not on her plan of operation, but on having
4 Richards Street, which is a more - - It's not - -
5 It's off the main drag, I should say. Geared
6 more towards or I'm going to say exclusively
7 towards the neighbors and the neighborhood,
8 having a neighborhood establishment. Be a
9 totally different clientele, an astute question
10 by Alderman Witkowski, the - - the people that
11 caused problems on North 6th Street were not
12 regular clientele. Her new location, she
13 anticipates that 80 percent of her business will
14 be from the neighborhood and will be repeat
15 clientele. She is the first client that I have
16 had, and I've been doing this for quite a - - a
17 few years, that had already - - By the time she
18 came into my office, she had already consulted
19 people in the neighborhood. She had already
20 canvassed the neighborhood, spoke to them, and
21 the two godmothers, I don't believe anyone could
22 get over on, as far as convincing them of
23 something other than the truth. And with their
24 support and guidance and oversight, I'm certain
25 that this will be a successful and peaceful

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1 operation in the area.
2 Upon transfer of the license, she plans
3 to purchase the building, remodel, upgrade the
4 kitchen. And with the assistance of Ms. Holmes,
5 run the kitchen. This is an opportunity for this
6 committee and for the local Alderman, really to
7 grant a three month license. She will be back
8 before this committee in three months on renewal.
9 This is a transfer. It will give the - - the
10 local Alderman and the neighborhood basically a
11 three month window to see if what she professes
12 she will do, to be a good neighbor in the
13 neighborhood, prove her ground. The objections
14 of the police department or the report of the
15 police department at this hearing, I don't think
16 are relevant, but I wanted to bring it to the
17 attention. I certainly think that they would be
18 relevant at - - at the renewal time, and maybe
19 considered once again there. But all of those
20 incidents at the other location were not
21 attributable to management style, other than the
22 failure to inform the security officer not to
23 lock - - lock the door. That this committee
24 provide Ms. Rice an opportunity to operate in
25 this neighborhood. She has the oversight of the

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1 godmothers. She's also, pursuant to my request,
2 has Mr. McNeil, a very established tavern owner
3 in the neighborhood, provid her with guidance and
4 support. I respectfully ask on behalf of Ms.
5 Rice, that this committee recommend to the
6 Council that this license be transferred, and
7 when - - when Ms. Rice is back before this
8 committee at renewal time, which I'm told now she
9 will be, because those police reports are still
10 there, that this committee will not hear anything
11 of the nature that occurred last year at Gee
12 Gee's. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would you like
13 to say anything?

14 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Mr. Chair.

15 THE APPLICANT: No.

16 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman Puente.

17 ALDERMAN PUENTE: What are the
18 circumstances as it pertains to why Gee Gee's
19 hasn't been open for the last two months?

20 MR. WHITCOMB: The landlord asked her
21 to leave, because of the problems in the
22 neighborhood. And she - - She acquiesced. My
23 view of it is that when she was in business with
24 her husband, the two of them could manage just
25 about any establishment. But when they parted

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1 and she undertook the operation herself, at that
2 location with that type of clientele, it was a
3 bit beyond her at that location.
4 ALDERMAN PUENTE: And what time did she
5 take sole ownership of Gee Gee's?
6 MR. WHITCOMB: I believe it was in
7 two - -
8 THE APPLICANT: Two, three years.
9 Three years, February.
10 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Excuse me?
11 THE APPLICANT: It will be three years,
12 February.
13 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Okay. A lot of these
14 incidents just happened recently. And when was
15 your divorce?
16 THE APPLICANT: July.
17 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Of what year?
18 THE APPLICANT: '07.
19 ALDERMAN PUENTE: July of '07. Okay.
20 And then a question for the Assistant City
21 Attorney, before I move to make the police report
22 part of the permanent record. If we take this
23 into consideration regarding the transfer of the
24 license, can we also three months from now when
25 she - -

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1 MR. SCHRIMPF: Sure. You'll be able
2 to, because the issue then is going to be renewal
3 of the license as opposed to the issue right now,
4 which is transfer of the license.

5 ALDERMAN PUENTE: All right. Thank
6 you. Mr. Chair, then I would move that the
7 police report become part of the permanent
8 record.

9 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman Puente
10 moves to make the entire police report part of
11 the permanent record in this hearing, and hearing
12 no objections, so ordered.

13 To the Alderman's office, was the
14 neighborhood notified by - - by mail of this
15 hearing?

16 ALDERMAN'S AIDE: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: I want to ask just
18 Ethell and Darlene, besides the fact that you may
19 have been contacted by someone else, did you
20 receive something in the mail saying that this
21 hearing would take place today?

22 THE WITNESS: Yes.

23 THE WITNESS: I did. They just sent a
24 card to say that she would be applying, but they
25 didn't send a actual letter to tell when the date

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1 was or anything about the meeting itself.

2 THE WITNESS: They sent me the card and
3 the letter.

4 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: And the letter.

5 THE WITNESS: I got the letter on
6 Saturday. I got the card the week before that.
7 I sent it back the same day I got it. I sent it
8 right back.

9 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. And then
10 you also received a letter saying that it was - -

11 THE WITNESS: I received the letter on
12 Saturday.

13 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Saying that it was
14 being heard today.

15 THE WITNESS: It was saying at what
16 time it was on today.

17 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: The reason I asked
18 that question is I just want to - - There's been
19 some comments made about to people in the
20 neighborhood not wanting this, so I just wanted
21 to make sure that notices were sent out.

22 So other than the people that have
23 already testified, is there anyone here to
24 testify. Let the record show no one else
25 acknowledges that question.

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1 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Mr. Chair.
2 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman Puente.
3 ALDERMAN PUENTE: For the Alderman's
4 office, they did do a card survey?
5 ALDERMAN'S AIDE: Yes.
6 ALDERMAN PUENTE: And what was the
7 outcome of it? I heard what you said already,
8 but do you have the numbers?
9 ALDERMAN'S AIDE: No, I - -
10 MR. WHITCOMB: I would object to any
11 representation of what any neighbor may have
12 reported concerning this transfer, based upon
13 hearsay objections. I have to do that to protect
14 the record.
15 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Yes.
16 ALDERMAN PUENTE: I don't take it
17 personally.
18 MR. WHITCOMB: Well, you're staring at
19 me.
20 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Well, that's because
21 I want to hear what you have to say. You had my
22 undivided attention.
23 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: And we understand
24 that. Any further questions by members of the
25 committee? Anything further you'd like to say

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1 before we take this matter into committee?

2 MR. WHITCOMB: No, Mr. Chairman. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Anything further
5 from the Alderman's office?

6 ALDERMAN'S AIDE: No.

7 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. This matter
8 is in committee.

9 MR. WHITCOMB: Just - -

10 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: This matter is not
11 in committee. Mr. Whitcomb.

12 MR. WHITCOMB: At one point I did - - I
13 just looked at my notes. Ms. Rice plans to have
14 four security personnel, two inside and two on
15 the outside, as she had at her other
16 establishments.

17 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. This matter
18 is in committee.

19 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: Move to deny based
20 on items contained on the police report.

21 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: The motion is to
22 recommend denial based on items contained on the
23 police report. On the motion, is there any
24 discussion on the motion? I will object to the
25 motion. Are there any other objections to the

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1 motion besides mine?

2 ALDERMAN PUENTE: I'll object.

3 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Motion fails on a
4 vote of two to one. This matter is still in
5 committee.

6 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: You're not going
7 to ask if there are any other objections?
8 There's only the three of us.

9 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Can't pass the
10 buck any further. This is it. This matter is
11 still in committee.

12 ALDERMAN PUENTE: Mr. Chair, I would
13 move approval, very reluctantly. This is one of
14 those borderlines. We will have another, if you
15 will, kick at the cat in about three months, so
16 you better prove yourself. I - - There better
17 not be anything on the police report, because I'm
18 telling you, you know, this was very, very
19 borderline for me. But I will recommend
20 approval, and we will try to allow you an
21 opportunity to do something good here. In - -
22 Despite items contained in the police report, and
23 also, regarding the neighborhood testimony that -
24 - Everybody here was in favor of it. I heard
25 nobody come down here and to speak to us against

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1 it, and that swayed me this way, too, so. Thank
2 you, Mr. Chair.
3 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Motion by Alderman
4 Puente is to recommend approval of the transfer
5 of this license, despite items contained in the
6 notice. Just a note to the applicant, I am
7 concerned because of the extensiveness of this
8 police report at the previous location, however,
9 your - - your counselor here did a adequate job
10 in explaining most of these incidents and when I
11 listened to that, a lot of the things, it's
12 possible it wasn't there, so I wouldn't know
13 exactly, but it's possible that a lot of these
14 things were not connected directly to you or the
15 management of that tavern that that happened.
16 And I'm hoping that what you tell us is correct,
17 that it was just a matter of - - of - - of having
18 a good business in a bad location. And I was
19 also - - I was careful to question that the
20 neighborhood was notified, and if there was
21 people that were adamantly opposed, and I
22 understand everybody can't get off of work and
23 people have their opinions. There's probably
24 some people on the block that didn't want this to
25 happen, but unfortunately we can only go by the

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1 evidence that we have at the table. And everyone
2 came and spoke in favor of it, including someone
3 who - - who spoke about closing the place that
4 was there previously, is willing to give this
5 applicant a try. So for all those different
6 reasons, I'll fall off the fence in - - in favor
7 of supporting the motion to give this applicant a
8 try, and hopefully, you will enhance this
9 neighborhood with the - - reopening this
10 establishment. And if not, you will have to come
11 and deal with us at some point in the near
12 future. So motion by Alderman Puente is to
13 recommend approval of this transfer, despite
14 items contained in the notice. Are there any
15 objections to that motion?

16 ALDERMAN WITKOWSKI: One objection.

17 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Hearing one
18 objection, the motion carries on a vote of two to
19 one.

20 THE APPLICANT: Thank you.

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3 STATE OF WISCONSIN)

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5 MILWAUKEE COUNTY)

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I, JEAN M. BARINA, of Milwaukee Reporters
Associated, Inc., 5124 West Blue Mound Road,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208, certify that the foregoing
proceedings is a full and complete transcript of the
Gee Gee's Bar & Grill portion of the Licenses Hearing.

JEAN M. BARINA
Court Reporter

Dated this day of Octobe, 2007.

