



City of Milwaukee

City Hall
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Meeting Minutes

LICENSES COMMITTEE

ALD. JOCASTA ZAMARRIPA, CHAIR

Ald. Andrea M. Pratt, VICE-CHAIR

Ald. Mark Chambers, Jr., Ald. Peter Burgelis and Ald. Alex Brower

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Thursday, November 6, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 301B, Third Floor, City Hall

Special

The meeting was called to order at 9:13 am

Present 5 - Zamarripa, Pratt, Chambers Jr., Burgelis, Moore

Excused 1 - Brower

1. [251157](#) Motion relating to the recommendations of the Licenses Committee relating to licenses.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

03 MUSA, Alaa I, Agent for "CASABLANCA RESTAURANT, LLC", Class B Tavern, Public Entertainment Premises, Food Dealer and Sidewalk Dining Licenses Renewal Application for "CASABLANCA RESTAURANT" at 728 E BRADY St. (Expired 10/14/2025)

The meeting was called to order at 9:13 am and paused due the applicant's counsel request to attend a virtual hearing at the Kenosha Court.

Ald. Burgelis objected to the recess on the basis that the counsel could have requested the accommodation in advance and not until now with staff and police officers here ready to testify.

The meeting reconvened at 9:48 am.

The applicant was present with Atty. Ovbiagele on his behalf.

The applicant was sworn in.

The police report was read.

Atty. Ovbiagele requested that item 18. be held open due still an open case.

Ald. Zamarripa said that same item was held open at last year's hearing.

Sgt. Velasquez said that the case is scheduled for January 26, 2026.

Atty. Adamson (OCA) said that the delay is due the extended leave of absence during the process and the caseload at the municipal court.

Ald. Chambers moved to hold item 18. open. (Prevailed 4-0-1) (Abstention from Ald. Zamarripa).

Atty. Adamson and Atty. Helsel representing MPD presented their objection against the renewal for the licenses of Alaa I Musa for Casablanca explaining that the agent has a 30 year master lease for 910 E Keefe, a building with multiple responses from MPD and DNS, that there is a legitimate occupancy permit for an art studio on southern portion of the building, but no licenses for the full bar built up and for the people living in the tower.

Atty. Adamson explained that Casablanca hosted a new year's eve event and that the intention was to move the party after midnight at the Keefe location. He added that the temporary permit for Caliph Muab El was denied and that Caliph Muab EL and Mr. Musa were advised by MPD not to have the party due the lack of permit.

MPD against Casablanca called the following to testify:

MPD: Officers Hernandez, Valder, Keolivay, Grikowski, Letteer Detectives Boulke and Smith.

Agent Mary Berkhalter – DOC Parole Agent

Lorie Gallup – DNS

The licensee called the following to testify:

Caliph Muab El and Sedan Smith.

Michael Sander - Brady St BID was present to testify with no position.

Ald. Brower testified as the local alderman for Brady St.

Atty. Adamson asked the committee not to renew the licenses for Casablanca on the basis that the agent is obstructing different city departments to do their jobs on behalf of the health and safety of the community and that he cannot be trusted with a license while is doing illegal activities at other premises without the proper licenses and permits.

Atty. Ovbiagele said that the 12-31-24 event should not have happened and that his client made a wrong call. He added that Casablanca has not been a frequent flyer at the Licenses' Committee hearings, that there are three incidents on the police report with one being held open, one for a premises check and a third one that does not involve fights or fire arms. He also explained that his client will walk out with nothing from the Keefe building after investing millions of dollars, that the punishment requested does not fit the alleged crime and that there is no evidence that the operation of Casablanca is related to what happened at the Keefe building.

Mr. Musa said that he will inform the committee once he is out of the master lease.

Ald. Burgelis moved approval with a warning letter and holding open item 18 on the police report. There were no objections. (Prevailed 5-0)

Ald. Zamarripa said that she was very angry reading the police report and watching the videos and that everything what happened at 910 E Keefe was Mr. Musa's fault.

AMENDED

Aye 5 - Zamarripa, Pratt, Chambers Jr., Burgelis, and Moore

No 0

Excused 1 - Brower

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

Aye 5 - Zamarripa, Pratt, Chambers Jr., Burgelis, and Moore

No 0

Excused 1 - Brower

The meeting adjourned at 3:42 pm

*Yadira Melendez
Staff Assistant*

Detailed information relating to the contents of this file may be found by searching under this number at <http://milwaukee.legistar.com/legislation>.

Alternatively, the complete file including detailed information identifying the specific subject matters to be discussed at the meeting may be inspected at the office of the License Division, Room 105, City Hall, 200 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, 53202, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.