



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes - Final ALCOHOL BEVERAGE LICENSING TASK FORCE

JUSTICE LOUIS BUTLER, CHAIR

**Joel Brennan, Sallie Ferguson, Rebecca Grill, Edward J. Lump, Comptroller Wally Morics,
Sharon Nowak, Bruce Schrimpf, Chet Ulickey**

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Thursday, April 16, 2009

7:00 PM

301-B, City Hall

Meeting commenced at 7:07 p.m.

Present 9 - Morics, Schrimpf, Grill, Brennan, Ulickey, Butler, Ferguson, Lump and Nowak

1. Introduction of members and opening remarks, Chair Justice Louis Butler.

The chair introduced the task force members. He thanked the task force members for their work and reminded the audience that the recommendations are preliminary.

2. Comments from the general public on the proposed recommendations made by the task force regarding the city's alcohol beverage licensing process.

Keith Stanley, Mainstreet Manager for the SoHi District and a resident of the Sherman Park area. He said that many of his concerns have already been addressed by the task force in its recommendations. He recommended better access for the public to information on when hearings are taking place and mentioned that one has to search through the city's website to get meeting information. He was also in favor of pre-meetings with applicants, residents and council members to avoid some discussions that take time during license meetings. Mr. Stanley also said that there should be a way that the community could give input on the issue of concentration, which is a big problem in the area in which he works, which is an area in transition.

Thomas McNeal, previous alcohol beverage licensee, at the table. He said he agrees with the recommendation for time limits for people testifying, and that testimony from supporters and objectors should be taken into account equally. He also said that the testimony at committee should be based on what's in the actual notice only and should not contain unsubstantiated claims by objectors. He said that the committee uses some testimony without proof against applicants.

He also agreed with expanding the radius for notification of neighbors, but he was not in favor of people who live miles away from the license location giving testimony, including neighborhood organizations that usually oppose liquor licenses.

John Shelton at the table. He mentioned a situation involving AK Food Mart, in which a license was approved by committee but then returned to committee and later denied due to concentration, occurred.

Sharon Ward, representing a small south side bar call Warski's, at the table. She thanked the task force members for their work and said that she would like the recommendations to spell out clearly and concisely what the changes to correct policies will be or could be. Ms. Ward also said that she hopes that

recommendations for any changes in the procedures for applying for alcohol beverage licenses are made available to the public so that it can respond to them.

Parshotam Singh, proprietor of AK Food Mart, at the table. He said that there was a long delay in the scheduling of his application and that other liquor licenses have been approved in the area of his store even though he was denied due to concentration. He said that he read the recommendations and that he appreciated them.

Darren Deboe, current licensee, said that he hopes that some positive things can come out of the task force recommendations and that there has been concern over the years from applicants over treatment at the committee meetings. He also said that he believes that aldermanic privilege does exist with regards to the Licenses Committee and that some applicants feel they are "dead in the water" if the local council member does not support the license. Mr. Deboe said that one individual should not have that kind of power over something as special as the privilege of holding a license.

Mohammed Chaudury, a restaurant owner who held an Extended Hours license, at the table. He said that the committee members should be current or former small businesspeople so they can have a better perspective on the issues that face the licensees and applicants.

Mr. Shelton asked to ask one more question, which was allowed by the chair. He asked how the Licenses Committee could approve licenses for some and not others. Mr. Butler said that the question is beyond the scope of the task force, but that the task force has made recommendations to try to address those kinds of concerns.

*Meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.
Staff Assistant Tobie Black*