

ALCOHOL CONTROL COMMISSION

Monday, July 17, 2023

The Alcohol Control Commission met at 5:00 p.m. this date in the City Commission Chambers of City Hall, 601 Broad Street. Billy Cooper, Steve VanMeter, Harold Morgan, Doug Phipps, Taylor McMichael, and Commissioner McDaniel were present. Also present were Rome Police Major Chris DeHart and Mr. Jacob Harper representing the City Attorney's Office.

Minutes – June 13, 2023

The minutes of the June 13, 2023, meeting, as submitted in writing by the Secretary, were approved by unanimous consent.

The Calhoun Ave. Inc. – 618 Calhoun Ave

The application of Jessica Lakisha Dhawan, manager of The Calhoun Ave. Inc., 618 Calhoun Avenue was presented. Ms. Dhawan requested a new beer and wine package license be issued to her at that location. Secretary Smith reported that this establishment has been the site of previous convenience stores with alcohol package license.

Ms. Dhawan explained that their hours of operation will be from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m. Monday – Saturday and 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m. on Sunday. She commented on the cameras and recording system on site, as well as their training program. Ms. Dhawan indicated that employees will go through an online training process and there will be a system in place to scan the IDs of those purchasing alcohol. This establishment plans to have 6 coin operated amusement machines in the back corner of the store (no separate room). Ms. Dhawan said that she is the owner of this store and has operate a similar business in Riverdale. This Riverdale store has had no previous violations according to Ms. Dhawan.

After discussion of this matter by the ACC members, Mr. Morgan moved to approve the request for a beer and wine package license at this location as requested, subject to all final inspections and approvals by the appropriate City officials. Mr. VanMeter seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

Turn Up – 1103 Calhoun Ave.

The application of Esha Sundrani, manager of Turn Up, 1103 Calhoun Avenue, was presented. Ms. Sundrani is requesting that a new liquor pouring license be issued to her at that location. Secretary Smith reported that the Alcohol Control Commission had previously approved a beer and wine pouring license at this location in late 2021, however there appears to have been very little activity at this site after the issuance of that license. Ms. Sundrani stated that the business has changed hands and that the new

operators have installed a kitchen and will operate a restaurant at this location, with the addition of liquor pouring.

There was lengthy discussion concerning this request. Ms. Sundrani stated that this establishment would be open from approximately noon each day until late night, closing at approximately 2:00 a.m. They will offer hookah at this site, as well as coin operated amusement machines (that will be in a separate room) and Ms. Sundrani stated that alcohol would not be allowed in the coin operated amusement machines room. She further explained that this establishment has an occupancy capacity of approximately 600 persons, and she plans to employ an average of 10 persons. During times of large crowds, she plans to have 8 security personnel, four of which being off-duty POST certified officers. Ms. Sundrani was instructed to meet with the Police Chief or the Police Chief Representative to develop a security plan for her establishment. She will have entertainment and will feature bands and/or DJs. She was cautioned that any entertainment beyond bands, DJs, or customary patron dancing, would require prior ACC approval.

Ms. Sundrani explained that there will be VIP rooms at this establishment, and they will provide a higher level of service for those portions of the business. Ms. Sundrani indicated that she understands the details of Rome's Entertainment Ordinances.

After a conversation regarding the training of the employees at this establishment, the conversation turned to the topic of food service. Secretary Smith expressed his opinion that this establishment could have difficulty meeting Rome's 50% food/drink ratio. Experience has shown that entertainment type venues, such as this, often struggle to maintain a required level of food service. Ms. Sundrani was instructed to keep all documentation regarding food and alcohol sales, especially invoices and other receipts for the acquisition of food, should an audit become necessary. It is the City's understanding that smoking can be allowed at this restaurant, as long as all patrons are 21 and older and the appropriate signage is on the entrance doors. Ms. Sundrani stated she does not yet have a menu established and they hope to open this establishment in the middle of August 2023. Ms. Sundrani is also aware of the monthly report which will outline her food and alcohol sales. This report is used for the reporting and payment of the monthly mixed drink tax and as a means of monitoring the food/drink ratio.

With the discussion concluded, Mr. Phipps moved to approve the request for a new liquor pouring license for Turn Up at 1103 Calhoun Avenue as requested, subject to all final inspections and approvals by the appropriate City officials. Mr. Morgan seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

Alibi, 214 Broad Street – Extended Service Hours

Mr. Brandon Pledger, owner and operator of Alibi, 214 Broad Street, was present and addressed the Commission. Mr. Pledger serves distilled spirits at Alibi and does not serve

food. He received permission from the City Commission for this arrangement with the understanding that his food/drink ratio would be comprised of items other than food. Mr. Pledger sells custom firearms and other merchandise in a portion of this business.

Part of his special permission for this type of business, is that he closes no later than 11:00 p.m. each night, unless he receives prior approval from the Alcohol Control Commission.

The purpose of tonight's visit was for Mr. Pledger to request permission to operate his establishment later than 11:00 p.m. on 11 days during August – December. Mr. Pledger's written request and the specific days and reasons for the later night events are attached to these minutes. Mr. Pledger also stated that he is exceeding Rome's food/drink ratio at this point. He further stated that there are no late night gun sales at this establishment, with those portions of the business typically occurring during the day.

After a brief discussion between Mr. Pledger and the Alcohol Control Commission members, Mr. VanMeter moved to approve the request for the extended hours as outlined by Mr. Pledger. Mr. Morgan seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

Peaches, 325 Broad Street – Food/Drink Ratio Update

Ms. Stephanie Shaw, owner and manager of Peaches, 325 Broad Street, was present. Ms. Shaw was at today's ACC meeting to update the members regarding her new food service plan. Ms. Shaw has partnered with Tiger and Bea's to operate her kitchen. Ms. Shaw submitted a spreadsheet outlining the food and other sales that have taken place at her establishment during the month of June and July (to date). Ms. Shaw indicated that she would like to reapply for her liquor pouring license. She was informed at the time her license was revoked by the City Commission (effective May 15, 2023), that if she established food service sufficient to meet Rome's food/drink ratio, and presented a convincing plan of sustainable food sales, she may apply for a liquor pouring license after 90 days. Ms. Shaw indicated that she will likely be at the August meeting of the Alcohol Control Commission for that application. Secretary Smith informed her that since the City Commission had revoked her license, the City Commission would be required for the reissuance. If Ms. Shaw gains approval from the Alcohol Control Commission, that request would then be referred to the City Commission for final approval.

Ms. Shaw requested permission to hold Teen Nights. Secretary Smith reported that there was no prohibition against that, however she would be responsible for ensuring all alcohol was secured and that the teens behaved in an appropriate manner. She was encouraged to closely monitor those entering her establishment to ensure they had not consumed alcohol before entering her business. Ms. Shaw is also aware of Rome's curfew ordinance.

Food/Drink Ratio Survey

Secretary Smith presented a survey of other Georgia Cities regarding their requirement for a food/drink ratio. Of the 14 other Georgia Cities surveyed, 12 of those have a food/drink ratio similar to Rome's. That survey is attached to these minutes.

There was discussion by the ACC members concerning the merits of a food/drink ratio. While most agree that the food/drink ratio does not prevent individuals from over consuming or require those individuals consuming alcohol to consume food of any type, the food/drink ratio may have other benefits.

Chairman Cooper stated that the City Commission should consider amending their charter to allow fines to be imposed in excess of \$2,000.

One of the guests in attendance at tonight's meeting suggested that Rome establish mandatory training for all persons working in the alcohol industry. While no recommendation was made today regarding the food/drink ratio, the Alcohol Control Commission members will continue to consider possible recommendations for the future.

Police Report

Rome Police Major DeHart was present and stated that there were no incidences at alcohol establishments to report.

Adjourn

With there being no further business, Chair Sheppard adjourned the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

Joseph F. Smith
City Clerk

Blue Pig, LLC
DBA Combat Market
DBA Alibi Prohibition Lounge
214 Broad Street
Rome, Georgia 30161

June 29, 2023

City of Rome, Georgia
ATTN: Alcohol Control Commission
601 Broad Street
Rome, Georgia 30161

To Whom It May Concern:

In accordance with the City Commission's ruling in regards to my variance, please accept this letter as my official request to stay open late on specific dates and events. Dates and times of the requested events are listed below. It is planned a "Last Call" will be sounded 30 minutes to an hour before each specified closing time. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

August 4 (12am) First Friday
August 11 (2am) Roaring 20's Party and Grand Opening
September 1 (12am) First Friday
October 6-7 (12am) Going Caching Rome
October 14 (12am) Fiddling Fest
October 20-21 (12am) Rome River Jam
November 4 (12am) Large Concert at Forum
November 10 (2am) US Marine Corps Birthday Party
November 11 (12am) Veterans Day Celebration
November 28 (12am) Rome Christmas Parade (Date is TBA)
December 31- (2am) New Years Eve

I know this may seem like an abundance of dates; however, it seems more probable to request all known event dates in one request as opposed to submitting several request.

Very Respectfully,


J. Brandon Pledger
CEO, Blue Pig LLC.



FOOD/DRINK RATIO SURVEY

July 2023

<u>City</u>	<u>Ratio Required</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Cartersville	Yes	45%
Dalton	Yes	50%
Carrollton	Yes	50%
LaGrange	Yes	50%
Acworth	No	----
Smyrna	Yes	50%
Marietta	No	----
Gainesville	Yes	50%
Calhoun	Yes	60%
Kennesaw	Yes	50%
Athens	Yes	50%
Alpharetta	Yes	50%
Woodstock	Yes	50%
Brookhaven	Yes	60%
Rome	Yes	50%

This survey was conducted via the on line code of ordinances for each city.