

ALCOHOL CONTROL COMMISSION

Monday, July 19, 2021

The Alcohol Control Commission met at 5:00 p.m. this date in the City Commission Chambers of City Hall, 601 Broad Street. Monica Sheppard, Chair, was present along with John Kendrick, Harold Morgan, Steve VanMeter, Billy Cooper, and Commissioner Quick. Assistant City Attorney Stephen Moseley and Major Rodney Bailey were also present.

Minutes – June 21, 2021

The minutes of the June 21, 2021 meeting, as submitted in writing by the Secretary, were approved by unanimous consent.

Karma Event Center, 2700 Martha Berry Highway

The application of Rodrigo Barahona Morales, owner and manager of Karma Event Center, 2700 Martha Berry Highway, was presented. Mr. Morales requested that a new Beer and Wine Pouring License be issued to him at that location. Mr. Morales explained that he is leasing the area in the building at 2700 Martha Berry Highway near Mt. Berry Square Mall. Specifically, Mr. Morales will be using the rear portion of this building, which is approximately 12,000 square feet in size. He plans to have an event center where live bands and DJs can perform and have patron dancing. Beer and wine will be sold and served at this facility.

There was considerable discussion between Mr. Morales and the ACC regarding the specifics of his business. Mr. Morales estimated his capacity for this center will be approximately 1,000 persons. He plans to be open Thursday, Friday, and Saturdays from approximately 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Mr. Morales has operated alcohol pouring establishments previously in the City of Rome.

The ACC expressed their concerns regarding a center of this size and capacity. Mr. Morales stated he would likely allow persons between the ages of 18 – 20 into the facility. ACC members are aware of the difficulty of preventing “of-age” customers from sharing alcoholic beverages with those underage. Mr. Morales stated that he will have his employees professionally trained regarding the service of alcohol and the prevention of underage consumption. He will have as many security guards as the Rome Police Chief designates (per Rome’s Alcohol Ordinance). Mr. Morales was cautioned regarding customers secretly bringing distilled spirits into his establishment. Mr. Morales was also warned that he needs to be vigilant to prevent the noise level from the bands and disc jockeys from disturbing anyone in the surrounding area. There was also discussion regarding the amount of parking needed for such a large establishment. If there is not sufficient space on his lot for the required number of parking spaces, he would likely be required to lease parking spaces from the nearby Mt. Berry Square Mall or other

properties. Mr. Morales concluded his comments by stating that he will not allow any patrons to bring a firearm into his establishment, and he will not allow smoking inside the facility.

Mr. VanMeter moved to approved the license request for a Beer and Wine Pouring License as submitted, subject to all final inspections and approvals by the appropriate City officials. Mr. Morales is to come back to the ACC and present more details regarding his business plan as he gets closer to an opening date. Mr. Cooper seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

Las Mesas Mexican Grill, 2817 Martha Berry Highway

The application of Juan Manuel Aguirre, owner and manager of Las Mesas Mexican Grill, 2817 Martha Berry Highway, was presented. Mr. Aguirre requested a new Beer, Wine, and Liquor Pouring License be issued to him at that location. Mr. Aguirre was present, and all papers were in order. Secretary Smith explained that this is the former location of World of Wings and more recently, La Conquista restaurant. Mr. Aguirre and his associates explained that professional training will be provided to all employees regarding the service of alcohol, and they would take the appropriate steps to be sure that no underage or other inappropriate alcohol activity occurs.

Mr. Morgan moved to approve the license request as submitted for a Beer, Wine, and Liquor Pouring License at this facility. Mr. Kendrick seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

River Remedy Brewing Company, 320 Glen Milner Boulevard

The application of Justin Shepard, manager of River Remedy Brewing Company, 320 Glen Milner Boulevard, was presented. Mr. Shepard requested that a new Beer and Wine Package and Pouring License be issued to him at that location. Secretary Smith explained that there was previously an alcohol pouring license at this establishment, and it was in operation as the Rivers Edge Social Club.

Mr. Shepard explained that, initially, this business began as a tap-room type establishment; however, he and his partners are moving toward converting this business into a micro-brewery. Once the necessary federal and state permits are secure and the brewery equipment is ready, a conversion will take place to a micro-brewery.

Mr. Shepard further explained that the inside seating capacity is approximately 48 persons. They will occasionally have solo musical artists or musical groups playing. There is a possibility of food trucks being in operation on this site.

Mr. Morgan moved to approve the new Beer and Wine Package and Pouring License at this facility as requested, subject to all final inspections and approvals by the appropriate City officials. Mr. VanMeter seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

1901 Dean Convenience, 1901 Dean Avenue

The application of Souleymane Kouyate, manager of the 1901 Dean Convenience, 1901 Dean Avenue, was presented. Mr. Kouyate requested that a new Beer and Wine Package License be issued to him at that location. Secretary Smith explained that there has been a package license at this location for many years as the Roy’s Little Garden and more recently, as Rick’s Little Garden. This establishment has been closed for the past several months, and there are possibly some City of Rome Code issues that need to be corrected before reopening.

It was explained that this will be a 24-hours per day, 7 days a week facility with three employees and perhaps other employees as needed. The ACC was told that the employees will be properly trained regarding the sale of alcohol, and there will be a cash register scan system in place for all alcohol sales. There will also be gaming machines at this facility. It is expected to take at least 30 days for the building to be corrected and ready for reopening.

Mr. Morgan moved to approve the Beer and Wine Package License request as submitted, subject to all final inspections and approvals by the appropriate City officials. Mr. VanMeter seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

Arabian Nights and Café, 1600 Shorter Avenue, Suite G – Special Entertainment Request

Mr. David Holbrook was present, along with the owner of Arabian Nights and Café, 1600 Shorter Avenue, Suite G. A request has been made for permission for special entertainment at this establishment. Mr. Holbrook explained that he and his partners produce wrestling events in our community and have held wrestling shows at several establishments locally, including those with alcohol pouring. The request is for a family-friendly wrestling event on Saturday, July 24th from 8 p.m. until approximately 11 p.m.

Mr. Holbrook explained that he will produce this wrestling show and provide security for the event. This will be a family-friendly show, and all ages will be allowed into the facility. The owner of the Arabian Nights was cautioned that he should take extra steps to ensure that only persons of age are able to consume beer or wine during this event.

Mr. Kendrick moved to approve the request for the wrestling event at Arabian Nights. Mr. Morgan seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor. It was also specified that, if this event takes places without incident, there may be additional wrestling events of the same nature at this establishment with a maximum of one event per month through the end of 2021.

Secretary Smith stated that both the City of Rome and the State of Georgia have some concerns regarding the advertisements that have been seen regarding Arabian Nights. Apparently, some of the advertisements have indicated that distilled spirits are available

at Arabian Nights; however, no distilled spirits license is issued at that location. The owner of Arabian Nights explained that the items that are sold at Arabian Nights are wine-based products with a maximum alcohol content of 24% and are not distilled spirits. *This was verified by the Rome Police Department on July 24, 2021.*

The owner of Arabian Nights was also cautioned regarding an Instagram video in which a young lady appears to be dancing in an “adult entertainment” manner. Although this female was clothed, she appeared to be receiving money for her dancing show. The owner of Arabian Nights reported that this was simply a patron that was dancing, and he has no control over how patrons dance. He was cautioned by the ACC members to keep check on his customers and not to allow inappropriate dancing that could violate Rome’s Adult Entertainment Ordinance.

Police Report

Rome Police Major Rodney Bailey was present and presented a police report for the previous 30 days. There were no specific events to discuss; however, there was a general discussion about police calls for service at alcohol establishments. The possibility of requiring cameras at pouring establishments with entertainment was also discussed.

Adjourned

With there being no further business, Chair Sheppard adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Joseph F. Smith
City Clerk