

**DOWNERS GROVE LIQUOR COMMISSION  
VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
801 BURLINGTON AVENUE**

Thursday, December 5, 2019

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Strelau called the December 5, 2019 Liquor Commission meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Mr. Clary, Mr. Heafner, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Krusenoski, Chairman Strelau

**ABSENT:** Ms. Flanagan, Mr. Jacobson

**STAFF:** Carol Kuchynka, Liaison to the Liquor Commission, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca

**OTHERS:** Aravind Koganti, Giri Marni, Betsy Beckmann, Thomas Beckmann, Alison Beckmann, Court Reporter

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Strelau asked for approval of the minutes for the November 7, 2019 Liquor Commission meeting and asked members if there were any corrections, changes or additions.

Hearing no changes, corrections or additions, the November 7, 2019 minutes of the Liquor Commission meeting were approved as written.

Chairman Strelau reminded those present that this evening's meeting was being recorded on Village-owned equipment. Staff was present to keep minutes for the record and a court reporter was present taking the minutes verbatim.

**IV. APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE**

Chairman Strelau made the following statements:

"The next order of business is to conduct a public hearing for liquor license applications. For the benefit of all present, I would like to state that this Commission does not determine the granting or denial of the issuance of any license. We may, at the end of each hearing, make a finding or recommendation with respect to the application. If necessary, the Commission may adjourn a hearing to a later date in order to have benefit of further information."

"At the conclusion of the hearing, the Commission will summarize its findings and determine any recommendations it wishes to make to the Liquor Commissioner."

"The Liquor Commissioner, who is the Mayor of Downers Grove, will, pursuant to Section 3-12 of the Ordinance, render decisions regarding issuance of available liquor licenses within 60 days."

"Hearings by this Commission are held according to the following format: 1) reading of information pertinent to the application, 2) comments from the applicant, 3) discussion by the Commission, 4) comments from staff, 5) comments from the public, and 6) motion and finding by the Commission."

**Bowl of Biryani – 1211 A Butterfield Road**

Chairman Strelau stated that the first order of business was an application hearing for Bowl of Biryani, LLC d/b/a Bowl of Biryani located at 1211 A Butterfield Road. She stated that the applicant was seeking a Class "R-1", full alcohol, on-premise consumption liquor license and a Class "O" outdoor liquor license.

Chairman Strelau asked that any individual(s) representing the applicant step forward and be seated. She asked that any individual(s) giving testimony, state and spell their name for the record, indicate their affiliation with the establishment and be sworn in by the court reporter.

Mr. Aravind Koganti and Mr. Giri Marni were sworn in by the court reporter. Mr. Koganti introduced himself as liquor manager and part owner of Bowl of Biryani. Mr. Marni introduced himself as a business partner.

Chairman Strelau asked the applicant to present its case.

Mr. Marni stated that they were opening a new Indian restaurant at 1211 Butterfield and wish to serve alcohol to customers. He added that their main focus is food service and that they were requesting alcohol service as a convenience to customers.

Chairman Strelau requested questions from the Commission.

Mr. Clary asked if they operated any other locations. Mr. Koganti replied yes, in Aurora.

Mr. Clary asked if the Aurora restaurant was similar and how long they have operated. Mr. Koganti stated that they have served Indian cuisine at Hyderabad House restaurant for the past four years.

Mr. Clary asked if they had any past violations. Mr. Koganti replied no.

Mr. Clary noted that their employee manual was very thorough and had no other questions.

Mr. Johnson had no questions.

Mr. Heafner asked what percentage of sales will be alcohol related. Mr. Marni replied 10-15%.

Mr. Heafner asked if they are seeking an outdoor liquor license. Mr. Marni replied yes.

Mr. Heafner asked them to explain the outdoor layout. Chairman Strelau asked if there was a photo of the outdoor seating area. Mr. Krusenoski noted it was on page 23 of the packet.

Ms. Kuchynka stated that the relatively large establishment is 12,400 square feet. She added that there are two outdoor enclosed dining areas on each side of the main entrance to the building. She advised that the outdoor seating plan can be found attached to the outdoor application.

Ms. Kuchynka stated that the floor plan has been updated from the original plan sent in the packet. She noted the third bar area will be closed off and utilized as a kitchen storage area. She added that the main

dining buffet station has been expanded and relocated toward the back area of the main dining floor, next to the now closed-off third bar area. Mr. Marni provided a large copy of the revised plan to the Commission for their review.

Ms. Kuchynka asked Mr. Marni to explain the floor plan for the remainder of the facility.

Mr. Marni stated that there is a private dining area with a bar that they plan to keep closed off unless there is a private event. He stated that they plan to hire contracted servers for that area so as not to burden the main restaurant staff.

Mr. Marni stated that they will utilize the main bar for liquor service. He stated that they plan to divide the restaurant into three sections for dining and plan to seat one section of the restaurant at a time, only opening up each section as they get busy. He confirmed that they opted to close off the third bar area.

Ms. Kuchynka asked Mr. Koganti to explain how they expect to operate during lunch. Mr. Koganti replied that the main focus of operation during the weekday will be a buffet style lunch to accommodate the surrounding office workers.

Mr. Heafner asked how many servers they plan to have. Mr. Marni replied 5-7 servers, which may be increased depending on how busy they become. He added that there will be additional back-end employees as well.

Mr. Heafner asked if they plan to bring any servers from their current establishment. Mr. Koganti replied that they will take a few and hire additional experienced servers and bartenders. Mr. Marni stated that the existing employees will help train and get them set up at the new facility.

Mr. Krusenoski asked if there were plans to hold weddings at the facility. Mr. Marni and Mr. Koganti replied no. Mr. Koganti stated that the private party room will accommodate about 60-80 guests.

Mr. Krusenoski stated that they mentioned hiring contracted servers for private parties. Mr. Koganti replied yes. Chairman Strelau asked how hiring the contracted servers will work. Mr. Koganti stated that they will contract wait staff for serving the parties for a few hours in addition to their primary staff on the regular floor. Ms. Kuchynka noted that any person handling alcohol will need to have BASSETT or TIPs certification. Mr. Koganti advised that they would utilize their staff to handle alcohol, but use the contracted servers for food handling as they do not plan to have full time staff dedicated to the private party room.

Mr. Krusenoski stated that unlike the previous operations at this location, alcohol will not be the main focus of their business. He stated that it is even more important in this case to pay attention to detail and set the tone and not violate the rules of proper liquor service. He stated a violation and penalties would be devastating for such a small percentage of liquor sales revenue.

Mr. Krusenoski stated that they need to reinforce the importance of checking IDs and not serving anyone under age. Mr. Marni stated that they will make sure they follow the rules.

Chairman Strelau stated that the manual was extensive, however, the manual is only as good as how well it is articulated to employees and how well they follow it. She asked how often they hold meetings with the staff at the Aurora location. Mr. Koganti replied that they hold meetings every Sunday with their entire staff and discuss issues and will plan to do so regularly at this location.

Chairman Strelau asked how large the Aurora facility is. Mr. Koganti replied 7,000 square feet. Mr. Marni stated that they realize this facility is much larger which is why they plan on opening sections of the establishment only as needed.

Chairman Strelau asked staff for recommendations or comments pertinent to this application. Ms. Kuchynka replied that issuance of the license is contingent upon receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy, satisfactory background checks, the annual fee, insurance, employee certifications and finalized menu.

Chairman Strelau asked for comments from the public. There were none.

Hearing the testimony given in this case, Chairman Strelau asked for a recommendation from the Commission concerning its finding of "qualified" or "not qualified" with respect to the applicant with regard to their Class "R-1" liquor license application.

**MR. KRUSENOSKI MOVED TO FIND BOWL OF BIRYANI, LLC D/B/A BOWL OF BIRYANI LOCATED AT 1211 A BUTTERFIELD ROAD QUALIFIED FOR A CLASS "R-1" FULL ALCOHOL ON-PREMISE CONSUMPTION LIQUOR LICENSE. MR. CLARY SECONDED.**

**VOTE:**

**Aye:** Mr. Krusenoski, Mr. Clary, Mr. Heafner, Mr. Johnson, Chairman Strelau

**Nay:** None

**Abstain:** None

**MOTION CARRIED: 5:0:0**

Ms. Kuchynka requested a motion for the Class "O" outdoor application.

Chairman Strelau asked for clarification about the patio enclosure. Mr. Marni replied that it is fully enclosed by fencing with a 3-4 inch gap at the top under the eave.

Chairman Strelau asked how many seats are in the patio area. Ms. Kuchynka advised that there are two patio areas located under the building overhang, one on each side of the entry way to the establishment. The group reviewed the plans and noted nine tables in the (north) patio and twelve tables in the (south) patio. Ms. Kuchynka advised that the only way into each of the patio areas is through the establishment.

Hearing the testimony given in this case, Chairman Strelau asked for a recommendation from the Commission concerning its finding of "qualified" or "not qualified" with respect to the applicant with regard to their Class "O" liquor license application.

**MR. CLARY MOVED TO FIND BOWL OF BIRYANI, LLC D/B/A BOWL OF BIRYANI LOCATED AT 1211 A BUTTERFIELD ROAD QUALIFIED FOR A CLASS "O" OUTDOOR LIQUOR LICENSE. MR. JOHNSON SECONDED.**

**VOTE:**

**Aye:** Mr. Clary, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Heafner, Mr. Krusenoski, Chairman Strelau

**Nay:** None

**Abstain:** None

**MOTION CARRIED: 5:0:0**

**Goldfinger Brewery – 513 Rogers Street**

Chairman Strelau stated that the next order of business was an application hearing for Goldfinger Brewing Company, LLC d/b/a Goldfinger Brewery located at 513 Rogers Street. She stated that the applicant was seeking a Class "BF", beer and wine, on and off-premise consumption liquor license.

Chairman Strelau asked that any individual(s) representing the applicant step forward and be seated. She asked that any individual(s) giving testimony, state and spell their name for the record, indicate their affiliation with the establishment and be sworn in by the court reporter.

Mr. Thomas Beckmann was sworn in by the court reporter. Mr. Beckmann introduced himself as the master brewer and owner of Goldfinger Brewery.

Chairman Strelau asked the applicant to present its case.

Mr. Beckmann stated he currently resides in Downers Grove with his extended family and would like to expand his roots by opening a business in town. He stated that Goldfinger Brewery is a microbrewery with attached tap room. He stated that they will produce traditional lager beers. He stated that the Goldfinger name pays homage to his ancestors in Poland who were brewing equipment manufacturers, hops dealers and brewers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Mr. Beckmann stated that they plan to focus on producing a limited number (4-6) lager beers for sale by the glass, growler or crowler, kegs, wholesale kegs and self-distribution of product to local establishments. He stated that it is their goal to produce quality lager beer and provide a comfortable atmosphere for the community.

Mr. Beckmann stated that he is a certified master brewer, being trained in Chicago and Munich, Germany. He stated he worked at Lagunitas Brewing Company and spent the last two years as head brewer at Emmett's Ale House in Downers Grove.

Chairman Strelau asked for questions from the Commission.

Mr. Krusenoski asked staff if the license is the same as Alter. Ms. Kuchynka replied yes.

Mr. Krusenoski asked if food service will be required. Ms. Kuchynka replied food service is not required.

Mr. Krusenoski stated that the floor plan has seating for about sixty. Mr. Beckmann replied yes.

Mr. Krusenoski asked if patrons will get drinks directly from the main bar or if there will be table service. Mr. Beckman replied there will be no table service. He stated that the only service will be over the bar. He noted that non-alcoholic beverages will also be available.

Mr. Beckman stated that the only table service done will be the clearing of glassware. He noted that in addition to bartenders a staff member will roam and monitor both the lounge and gaming areas.

Mr. Beckman stated that the gaming area has seating but is mostly for resting between playing games.

Mr. Krusenoski asked what the former business was in the location. Mr. Beckmann replied Perma Seal.

Mr. Krusenoski stated that the main business will be beer sales. He stated that a violation could be negative to their entire operation. He stated that the tone must be set from day one that there will be no exception from following the rules. He stated that regular or daily meetings with staff should be done to remind staff about the importance of proper liquor service. Mr. Beckmann agreed. He stated that he will have direct influence on training and will set the tone. He stated that he is BASSET certified and will be one of the primary staff serving his beer. He stated that he wants to be involved in explaining to the customer what they will experience and answer any questions they may have about the beer.

Mr. Krusenoski hoped that local breweries were helpful to him. Mr. Beckmann stated that Emmett's has been incredibly supportive and has offered to help in any way they can. He stated that they have kept him on staff for the time being to transition over to their new brew master. He stated he has worked closely with Alter representatives who have been key in referring him to equipment manufacturers. He stated that there is a community amongst the brewers who hope to make Downers Grove a great place to find artisanal beer.

Mr. Heafner asked how much volume they anticipate crafting. Mr. Beckmann replied the initial target for the first year is 1,000 barrels. He predicted that 80% will be sold through the tap room and 20% to local businesses. He stated that ultimately their goal was 80% wholesale distribution.

Mr. Heafner asked what types of games will be in the game room. Mr. Beckmann replied that they plan to have shuffle board, two dart boards, board games and he would like to have a mini take-one, leave-one book library. He stated that they are hoping to go off the old world style where patrons go to a brewery to have a social experience and relax.

Mr. Johnson stated that Mr. Beckmann indicated that he would have 4-6 brews at a time. He asked what the alcohol content of those would be. Mr. Beckman replied that there will be three core beers available year round. He stated that an original lager will be 5%, a pilsner will be 5.1% and a dark lager will be 4.9%. He stated that the rotating seasonal will range from 5 ½ % to 8 ½ %. He stated that a classic Polish Baltic Porter which is a lager version of a stout will have the larger alcohol per volume.

Mr. Johnson stated that it appeared that the BASSET card submitted expired in November. Mr. Beckmann replied that was the temporary card issued online. He will provide the correct certificate to the Village.

Mr. Clary agreed with Mr. Krusenoski's statements that they need to be diligent. He stated that one violation could cost them a lot.

Mr. Heafner asked Mr. Beckmann when he anticipated opening. Mr. Beckmann replied May.

Mr. Heafner asked Mr. Beckmann how far out he will need to begin brewing. Mr. Beckmann replied that they need two months for production. He stated that he already has the Brewers' Notice from the Federal government and needed to finalize the local license now so that he may get the State license to begin production.

Chairman Strelau welcomed them as another brewery in town. She stated that some of the original issues with Alter were growing pains although they did not offer food, but they have managed ways to get food into the facility if patrons want it.

Ms. Kuchynka asked Mr. Beckmann to explain the options he has for the availability of food. Mr. Beckmann stated that he is a brewer and does not know much about running a kitchen. He stated that they plan on using the app called "Second Kitchen". He stated that table tents will have information on local restaurants with a condensed version of their menu. He stated that patrons can pull the app up on their phone or they will have a tablet at the bar. He stated that the app feels and functions as if the kitchen is on-premise. He stated that there is an agreement with those establishments who will deliver the items directly to a table.

Mr. Beckmann stated that they plan to offer snacks. He stated that the spent grain from the brewing process will be picked up from a bison farm located in southern Illinois. He stated that they will make jerky sticks made exclusively out of spent grain fed to the bison.

Chairman Strelau recalled hearing that they will offer glasses, growlers and "crawlers". She asked him to explain what a crawler is. Mr. Beckmann replied that it is a 32 ounce can. He stated that it is a smaller version of the growler and is becoming a new popular packaging option.

Chairman Strelau stated the importance of having a tight rein on the staff. He stated that they do not have any margin for error as liquor sales are their entire business. She encouraged them to follow the rules.

Chairman Strelau asked staff for recommendations or comments pertinent to this application. Ms. Kuchynka replied that issuance of the license is contingent upon receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy, insurance, annual fee, satisfactory background checks and employee certifications.

Chairman Strelau asked for comments from the public. There were none.

Hearing the testimony given in this case, Chairman Strelau asked for a recommendation from the Commission concerning its finding of "qualified" or "not qualified" with respect to the applicant with regard to their Class "BF" liquor license application.

**MR. HEAFNER MOVED TO FIND GOLDFINGER BREWING COMPANY, LLC D/B/A GOLDFINGER BREWERY LOCATED AT 513 ROGERS STREET QUALIFIED FOR A CLASS "BF" BEER AND WINE, ON AND OFF-PREMISE CONSUMPTION LIQUOR LICENSE. MR. JOHNSON SECONDED.**

**VOTE:**

**Aye:** Mr. Heafner, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Clary, Mr. Krusenoski, Chairman Strelau

**Nay:** None

**Abstain:** None

**MOTION CARRIED: 5:0:0**

## V. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Strelau asked if there was any discussion, update from staff or comments from the Commission regarding any new business.

Ms. Kuchynka asked Mr. Beckmann to remain seated concerning the discussion of a liquor ordinance amendment.

Ms. Kuchynka provided the Commission with a draft ordinance concerning an amendment to the Class O outdoor liquor license related to the Class BF license classification. She stated that Class BF brew facilities are currently not allowed to qualify for an outdoor liquor license and operate as a beer garden.

Ms. Kuchynka stated that the original building permit plans for Goldfinger included an outdoor patio and noted that Mr. Beckmann expressed interest in allowing an outdoor seating area in addition to the brewery. She stated that Class O licenses are issued to those establishments where the principal operation of the outdoor area is for dining purposes. She stated that without food service, Goldfinger cannot qualify for the license class as written. She stated that the draft ordinance would allow Class BF holders the ability to have an outdoor seating area and bring Class C club licensees (non-profit, fraternal organizations) into better compliance.

Ms. Kuchynka stated that food service requirements will remain unchanged for all other Class O license holders.

Ms. Kuchynka asked Mr. Beckmann to discuss his request for an amendment to the code with the Commission.

Mr. Beckmann stated that the Fairview Avenue corridor area could benefit from new businesses and an outdoor area would bring something more attractive for pedestrians. He stated that their location has good visibility from Maple Avenue and the Metra line. He hoped to install a greenery laden patio area and that would make the look of the manufacturing area more pleasing.

Mr. Krusenoski asked where the patio would be located. Mr. Beckmann replied in the parking lot area on the eastern side of the building adjacent to their main entrance. He stated that they plan to pour a concrete pad and enclose the patio seating area. He stated that access to the patio will be through the game room area which would have garage doors that open and close. He stated that would create better ambiance and let in natural light to the facility. He added that he would like to offer patrons the ability to sit outdoors during nice weather. He stated they are in close proximity to Doggie Depo and would give dog owners the option to swing in with their pets and sit outside.

Mr. Krusenoski stated that, in principle, he had no objection to outdoor dining at brew pubs.

Ms. Kuchynka noted that the outdoor area, like all others, will need to remain enclosed.

Ms. Kuchynka stated that if and when the amendment is approved, Mr. Beckmann would need to apply for the Class O and appear before the Commission for the application hearing.

Mr. Krusenoski asked if Alter was the only other Class BF license holder. Ms. Kuchynka replied yes. She stated that Alter has inquired about this license class, however, due to constraints, including but not limited to, greenspace requirements, parking and fire lane issues, they do not have the room for an outdoor seating area.



Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Beckmann how the barrier will function pragmatically and esthetically for the location. Mr. Beckmann replied that he did not have a copy of the original plans for the outdoor area with him. He advised that there would be German style communal picnic tables with umbrellas planned. He stated that they planned to enclose the area with a wooden fence to accent the exterior area of the building.

Attorney Petrarca wanted to advise the Commission that they are not considering plans for the layout at this time and were looking simply to amend the ordinance. She added that Mr. Beckmann will be required to come back should the ordinance be amended.

Mr. Clary stated he thought the ordinance was fine and had no objections to the outdoor license change.

Chairman Strelau asked if there are any size restrictions for outdoor seating areas. Ms. Kuchynka replied no. She informed the Commission that in this instance a Temporary Use License from Community Development would be required. She stated that is a separate annual license from the Village that they will need to obtain in addition to the Class O liquor license. She stated that inspections are required annually. Attorney Petrarca noted that the temporary use ordinance limits use of the café from March 15<sup>th</sup> through November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Strelau stated that the Village does not allow “beer gardens” and asked how the Village defines a beer garden. Ms. Kuchynka replied the principal operation being for dining purposes and bars/portable beer tubs not being allowed. Attorney Petrarca added that as they only serve beer, the outdoor area would essentially serve as a “beer garden”.

Chairman Strelau stated that if the licensee follows liquor rules inside, there should be no difference in allowing them to do the same practice on the outside.

Attorney Petrarca asked for a motion from the Commission to forward the ordinance to the Village Council for consideration.

**MR. HEAFNER MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO FORWARD THE DRAFT ORDINANCE CONCERNING THE CLASS O LIQUOR LICENSE AMENDMENT TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION. MR. JOHNSON SECONDED.**

**VOTE:**

**Aye:** Mr. Heafner, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Clary, Mr. Krusenoski, Chairman Strelau

**Nay:** None

**Abstain:** None

**MOTION CARRIED: 5:0:0**

Ms. Kuchynka advised that she will forward the ordinance draft to the Village Council sometime in early 2020. She added that if and when the change is approved, Mr. Beckmann will have the opportunity to return to the Commission and apply for the Class O license.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Strelau asked if there was any discussion, update from staff or comments from the Commission regarding any old business.

Ms. Kuchynka referred to the month end report. She stated that the Mayor sent letters to The Foxtail and DG Food & Liquor Mart concerning his intent to issue the licenses. She advised that DG Food Mart had their closing on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and advised their license had since been issued.

Ms. Kuchynka advised the Commission that Bed, Bath & Beyond forfeited their license and advised that they wanted to discontinue selling liquor as it was not the direction they wanted to go nor in the future plans for the store.

Ms. Kuchynka advised that there will not be a January 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

## **VII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were none.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Concluding business for the evening, Chairman Strelau called for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Clary moved to adjourn the December 5, 2019 meeting. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 7:30 p.m.