

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Board of License Commissioners**  
**Caroline County, Maryland**

**DATE:** April 26, 2023

**PLACE:** Hybrid Meeting via Microsoft Teams  
Health & Public Services Building  
403 South 7th Street, Room 111  
Denton, MD 21629

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Greg Eigenbrode, Chair  
Glen Plutschak, Member  
Michael Mann, Alternate

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Crystal Dadds, Assistant Director of Codes  
Stewart Barroll, Board Attorney  
Philip Moore, Alcoholic Beverage Inspector  
Catherine McCulley, Board Administrative Assistant

Chairman Eigenbrode called to order the meeting of the Caroline County Board of License Commissioners at 9:30 AM.

**New Business**

**Town of Federalsburg – Bicentennial Festival – May 20, 2023**

Mr. Eigenbrode swore in Ms. Debra Sewell (102 W. Central Avenue, Federalsburg, MD).

In celebration of its bicentennial, Federalsburg will have a festival downtown. It begins at 1 pm with a parade downtown and will end with fireworks at about 9 pm. They want to include a beer garden that serves beer and wine. They've designated an area by the town dock for the alcohol sales. It will be close to the E. Central Avenue bridge. It will only be accessible by going around the buildings and no car traffic will be allowed. They will be working with Delmarva Craft who has partnered with other organizations in Caroline County. They will be serving the alcohol, checking IDs, and wrist banding participants.

Mr. Eigenbrode asked if the area for alcohol would be roped off.

Ms. Sewell replied that Public Works will set up flexible [snow] fencing around the area. Bands will be playing in this area, and people will bring lawn chairs and will enjoy beverages there. She indicated the area marked in red on the site plan and explained that the side without the red line is the creek.

Inspector Moore asked if Delmarva Craft would be purchasing the alcohol.

Ms. Sewell said the town is purchasing the alcohol, but Delmarva Craft will be bringing it to the festival for the town.

Mr. Moore inquired where they would be purchasing the alcohol.

Ms. Sewell said she did not have that information with her. Mr. Carter of Delmarva Craft will be partnering with local wineries and breweries. He won't be getting it from a distributor.

Mr. Moore said to make sure that Mr. Carter was familiar with the county rules, and if there are any questions do not hesitate to contact us. He will need to have invoices, records, TiPS card.

Ms. Sewell said Mr. Carter and his staff will have TiPS cards.

Mr. Moore explained that each county is different, so Mr. Carter needs to make sure he understands the County rules and state law as well.

Ms. Sewell said that Mr. Carter had partnered with Tracey Snyder with the Chamber of Commerce for the Artisans Market event last month.

Mr. Plutschak encouraged Ms. Sewell to have Mr. Carter call Mr. Moore since it was their first event.

Ms. Sewell responded that it was not their first event. They held an event in the fall where they served the alcohol themselves, but due to the anticipated size of this event, they wanted to get someone who could do it professionally.

Mr. Moore said Ms. Sewell could go to the Board's office and get one of Mr. Moore's business cards and contact him. The best way would be via email.

Mr. Mann asked if there were a rain date; Ms. Sewell responded that due to the complexity of the event, there could not be a rain date.

Mr. Mann asked if the serving hours would be 2 pm until 8:30 pm.

Ms. Sewell said that would be the serving hours because they wanted the serving to stop before the fireworks at 9 pm.

Mr. Eigenbrode asked if they were charging admission at the festival.

Ms. Sewell said they were not, but of course there would be a price for the alcohol. It will be a free, family-friendly festival held downtown. Streets will be blocked off between Main Street & Central Avenue to the top of the hill at Reliance Avenue. Most of the activities will be held there on the waterfront.

Mr. Mann asked whether if when people purchased alcohol, they would get a wristband.

Ms. Sewell confirmed this.

**Motion:** Mr. Plutschak made a motion to approve the Town of Federalsburg's request to hold a Bicentennial Festival on May 20 from 2-8:30 pm with the contingency that someone from Delmarva Craft speaks with Alcohol Inspector Trey Moore to make sure everyone is on the same page regarding regulations.

**Second:** Mr. Mann seconded the motion.

**Vote:** All members voted in favor (3-0).

**Discussion: Law Enforcement Agencies (cont'd.)**

Mr. Plutschak reported back from a meeting with local law enforcement and Juvenile Services. A local representative and Joe Grabis (Regional Intake Director) attended from Juvenile Services. Mr. Plutschak felt all attending were supportive of efforts for closing what the Board has seen as gaps between the number of juveniles attempting to purchase alcohol and the few that are reported to Juvenile Services for this. Juvenile Services has reported at the last Board meeting that they had only received two referrals in the last couple of years.

Law enforcement attending included most of the Chiefs and several more officers. The Sheriff was also there however, the State's Attorney was not. The Denton Police Department was not there, but the Chief seems very much on our side. He did not hear anything from the Chiefs, Maryland State Police, or DJS to indicate that [closing this gap] was something they didn't want to get into. Law enforcement is looking at the offender who is making the sales. They said they were willing to work with us. Stewart [Barroll] did a wonderful job of explaining the law regarding fake ID's. Sergeant Stanco [First Sergeant Frank J. Stanco of Easton Barracks] said they could send cadets with [Mr. Moore] when he goes out some time and they may send an officer as well. He was surprised by MSP's offer, but they seemed to be on board. The Board will need to follow up with Sergeant Stanco. Chief McDermott from Federalsburg Police Department would like to meet with Mr. Moore. In addition, the Local Drug & Alcohol Abuse Council (LDAAC) would like to meet with Mr. Moore and one or more Board members. Mr. Plutschak questioned the timing of that meeting.

Ms. Dadds asserted that the LDAAC had previously been more focused on drug issues and not alcohol. Since COVID, their meetings have been more sporadic. She believes it is held monthly, the day after the Liquor Board meeting. She was not sure who was heading the group now. Mr. Moore said the leadership had changed 3 times since he had been involved with it.

Mr. Plutschak said he could attend tomorrow's meeting, but Mr. Moore could not.

Mr. Moore said that when Sara Visintainer ran it, it was run well, but since COVID, it has not been consistent.

Mr. Plutschak said he thought the LDAAC was now trying to focus more on alcohol. He asked if he had to contact someone before attending the meeting. Ms. Dadds said they would get the details and let him know.

Mr. Plutschak suggested the following:

1. Someone [from the Board or Mr. Moore] attend the LDAAC meeting regularly;
2. Mr. Moore visit with Chief McDermott; and
3. Take advantage of First Sergeant Stanco's offer; he will get more details on this.

Mr. Plutschak asked Mr. Moore if he knew Sergeant Stanco.

Mr. Moore said he did not. When he started as Liquor Inspector, he got in touch with MSP but at that time, they were going to charge the County for the cadet and the officer.

Ms. Dadds added that this has usually been the case; the County was charged the overtime for the cadet and the officer. There is nothing in the budget for it.

Mr. Eigenbrode remarked that when MSP conducts the compliance checks, they can actually press charges against the employee who made the sale.

Ms. Dadds said that one time LDAAC had received some grant money to be used for this.

Mr. Eigenbrode said he was open to doing that [using a cadet and an officer to conduct compliance checks.

Mr. Mann said that maybe people are becoming more aware of the alcohol issues and perhaps there will be some grant money for that.

Mr. Moore said he would reach out to Sergeant Stanco when he gets the information from Mr. Plutschak. He appreciates their offer and would like to do it, but the cost was why it has changed to using volunteers.

Ms. Dadds commented that it has been a struggle, and they had worked with Ron Dixon when he was still with the Sheriff's Department, and he was willing to do it, but we have not talked to Sheriff Baker.

Mr. Plutschak remarked that Sheriff Baker did not make an offer at all. He feels if the Board wants the police to work with them, the Board will have to reach out to them. He thinks Mr. Moore could visit with each Chief, perhaps once a year, because the Chiefs are the ones who can make changes. Chief McDermott has asked to meet with Mr. Moore, so perhaps start with him. He thinks perhaps Mr. Moore or a Board member could attend the Chiefs' monthly meeting, but he has not asked the Chiefs about this.

Ms. Dadds commented that Mr. Moore had been in contact with one officer from Federalsburg who had a concern about an establishment selling to minors.

Mr. Barroll, like Mr. Plutschak, felt law enforcement and DJS were supportive of closing the gap the Board has seen. He said Mr. Plutschak gave an excellent presentation at the meeting and felt it was well received. There was one Chief who commented that the public doesn't want them [law enforcement] to enforce as much as this would be another point of resistance resulting in negative feedback for the police. He was the only one to express this, and he could not remember which Chief this was.

Mr. Barroll told Mr. Moore he would be happy to attend any of these meetings with him, just let him know when it would be. It is an important issue. Having been a representative for minors and their parents for years, he knows [minors drinking] leads to auto accidents, health problems, school problems, and it's disrespect for the law learned at a very early age.

Mr. Moore said when he first got here, he did meet with all the Police Chiefs, Natural Resources Police, and State Police. He gave them his phone numbers. People have changed positions since then. Over the years he's had a good working relationship with Ridgely PD, but they've changed officers and Police Chiefs. It may be time to do another round [of introductions].

Mr. Mann said it was the same with Greensboro: new chief, staff and all new officers.

Mr. Plutschak said the Greensboro Chief had attended the meeting.

Mr. Moore said he tries to give the chiefs some warning when he does checks but does not tell them specifically where he will be. He wants them to know if someone says a Liquor Inspector was there, that it was him. He tries to work with them, and maybe it is time to meet with each of them again.

Mr. Barroll recalled an idea of Mr. Plutschak's of rewarding Licensees who do the right thing.

Mr. Plutschak remarked that incentives work. He remembered from working on the drug court, they were taught about incentives. One positive incentive can change behavior six times faster than the negatives. The court systems, law enforcement and us, all deal with negative sanctions. They can change behavior, but it's nice to reward people when they've done a nice job. He doesn't know exactly how to do that without showing favoritism. Chief McDermott's suggestion was that we focus on clerks who've always carded and done a good job over the years. Perhaps this is something we can think about and work something out in the future. He remembered a Chief, perhaps in Ocean City, who had a program that recognized the clerks who were doing a good job.

Mr. Barroll remarked that this also sends the message that when you use a fake ID, these people are going to catch it and they get rewarded, so this works in both ways.

Mr. Plutschak continued that the criteria would have to be clearly set. He asked Mr. Moore, you deal with clerks all the time, don't you?

Mr. Moore said yes. We've had establishments in here before the Board that have 3 employees, were tested 3 times, and all 3 of those sold to a minor. In his TiPS classes, he teaches how to check IDs, making it fast and efficient without having to do the math. This year so far, the underage checks have gone really well. Maybe when he's completed the checks, if positive, a press release could be published that would look good for the county.

Ms. Dadds said that another struggle has been the difficulty of getting all of the licensed establishments to take our TiPS class. We are not trying to take business away from other instructors, but only Caroline County Licensees and employees can enroll in Mr. Moore's TiPS class. The County does not have the staff time or budget to teach employees from other counties. In addition to the required TiPS curriculum, Mr. Moore's classes also cover local Caroline County rules. When attending a class that has participants from various counties, it is hard to answer questions about each counties different local rules.

Mr. Moore commented that in last night's TiPS class, a question came up about raffle displays in Dorchester County. He told them part of that was under state law, but how they handled it was up to Dorchester County. He discussed how raffles could be done in Caroline with Board approval. He said the classes are surveyed after each class, and he has been rated well by these surveys and he hears good feedback about how he makes it specific to the business.

Mr. Plutschak suggested more information be given to the Licensees that explains how the Caroline County TiPS class can help their business. He was a little stunned to learn in the Chiefs meeting, that via a student survey that was conducted, several businesses in Talbot County, one in Queen Anne's and one in Caroline noted "this is the place you can go for the best chances of not being carded". The one in Caroline County is one that the Board has had issues with.

Mr. Moore said if a positive outcome results when the checks are completed, and he speaks with the Police Chiefs, a general newspaper story could cover how we're working together and we've had such great compliance this year. A lot of the people who have had issues previously have done really well this year. It's gone well so far, but there are a few remaining.

Mr. Plutschak said getting that message out would be good, and he and all the Board have seen a great improvement.

Mr. Moore has noticed the new licensees seem to take more responsibility. He goes out to see them when they first open, and they do recognize what can happen [if selling to minors].

Mr. Mann said he remembers occasionally hearing on WBOC that the Wicomico County Liquor Inspector did 30 inspections this quarter and only one did not pass. Maybe a story like this could be put in the Times Record. That would lead to public awareness that they are checking these places.

Ms. Dadds commented that years ago the local newspaper would attend the Board meetings and would report out what was done at the meeting, whether it was a suspension or underage sales.

Mr. Plutschak concluded that it was a good meeting, and the Board should follow up on the suggestions that were made. Having the County Attorney at the meeting explaining the law regarding fake ID's was really well received and everyone showed interest in that topic. Mr. Moore said he appreciated the support from all the Board.

### **Update: Annual License Renewals**

Ms. Dadds reported that most licenses had been picked up and the outstanding items were taken care of. About 10 remained to be picked up by Friday, and she will contact them today. It has been successful so far.

Mr. Mann inquired about the House Bill where Caroline was added to the Queen Anne County bill to change requirements for Licensees. Ms. Dadds said she had not heard anything but suspected it was passed and will check on it. There was no opposition to the bill.

### **Inspector Report**

Mr. Moore said inspections would pick up in the next month. He's been assisting the American Legion who has had questions about raffles and needed replacement TiPS cards. There was a complaint about an unlicensed establishment in the county. He thinks it is just a private residence where people go to drink with friends. However, someone put a Google review about this establishment, making it look like it was an actual business, but it was just someone making fun of the internet and saying it was a party place. He will keep an eye on it. He went to Red Light Liquors and met with them for the first time. They did their beer and wine tasting and Grand Opening and it was a great turnout for them. They had a food truck outside. Upon entering, he saw a few people drinking at the entrance. They were pouring drinks into McDonald's cups which was exactly what he expected. He talked to one of the owners, RJ, who jumped right on it. He handled it very professionally.

Mr. Moore met with the people doing the tastings, which was a little scary. They did not know how much alcohol they could give; they had no records for the alcohol; they had no idea how much alcohol



they brought to the establishment or how much they were taking out. While he was there, they gave one guy 25 ounces of different beers. He was pretty [inebriated] by the time he left. He talked with each of them. One is a brewery from outside the county; one is a wine distributor. They were not familiar with what they had to do as a tasting. He spoke to Red Light Liquors, who said they understood that those offering the tasting knew what was required. He told them he thought it would be unfair to judge them on one tasting when they had just opened, but this does not look good. He called Agent Steve Stouffer at Alcohol and Tobacco Commission and he said he would forward that information to his supervisors. He gave Red Light Liquors a warning because when he entered the establishment to do an inspection, he discovered 2 bottles of alcohol there that did not have invoices. One bottle was given to them by the Chamber of Commerce, and one was given to them as a prize. He had previously told them they were not supposed to have any alcohol on the property that did not have proper invoices. He told them if he saw this again, he would be bringing it to the Board. He knows they are trying to be positive and do things a little differently and given the fact that they were a new business that had just opened, he gave leniency by way of a verbal warning. Agent Stouffer with the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission arrived at the establishment right after Mr. Moore to also do an inspection.

Inspections will be picking up; currently about 50% of underage checks have been done.

Mr. Mann asked if Mr. Moore had made notes regarding the issues at Red Light Liquors. Mr. Moore assented. Mr. Mann recalled that they had given Red Light Liquors the temporary license on a probationary basis. Mr. Moore said after explaining everything to them, he felt they did understand.

Mr. Eigenbrode commented that they wanted to have tastings from time to time, but they do not have a bar. This is a retail store and the tastings shouldn't be a regular occurrence.

Mr. Moore told Red Light Liquors that he would be reporting to the Board, and it may have an impact on their future tastings.

Mr. Mann said he knew they had a lot going on, a lot to take in, and a lot to keep under control with the Grand Opening, and they are a new establishment.

Ms. Dadds told the Board she had emailed Robyn Ritter because there was a concern as to whether they had received all of the rules and regs at the time of Mr. Moore's visit. She received a call from Ms. Ritter the next day who wanted to make sure she had everything she was supposed to have. Ms. Ritter called the next week with questions about sales and if there were restrictions about pricing. Ms. Dadds went over everything in detail with her and encouraged careful wording in her advertising in that you could not offer "free" alcohol. Mr. Moore did a TiPS training last night with some of their employees.

Mr. Moore followed up regarding their "loyalty" program and told them they had to be very careful not to be encouraging excessive drinking because that would be a violation. For example, you have to buy so much alcohol to get a free t-shirt.

Mr. Plutschak inquired about the Greensboro VFC event [Tractor Pull]. Mr. Moore said the event has not occurred yet however, he will be in attendance and will report back to the Board. He said he had spoken with the Town of Greensboro and had offered additional TiPS classes if they needed more people certified for that event. Both he and Ms. Dadds have answered many questions from them

regarding the event. They told Mr. Moore they were ready, and he expects they will have a good turnout.

Ms. Dadds reported that the bill Mr. Mann had asked about had been passed and will go to the Governor for final passage and will have an effective date of July 1.

She questioned the Board regarding Sean Parker (with Earth Tones Café) who is anticipating two events, as he had last year, Pride Fest (May 27<sup>th</sup>) and Summer Fest (August 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>) He wants to have the exact same set-up as the prior events, just extending the alcohol perimeter and he has provided maps. Drinks will be served inside; no alcohol served outside. Will he need to come back in to present to the Board or are you ok with him doing the same set-up as previously done?

Mr. Moore said there were no problems at last year's events. There was an underage sale violation with that business, but it was not during the events. They had no violations as of the last inspection.

Chairman Eigenbrode and Mr. Plutschak both agreed that he did not have to come back before the Board.

Ms. Dadds told the Board that since Mr. Parker has purchased Harry's he will be back before the Board to move his location. Then he will have a bigger property so he may not need to come before the Board for an expansion of the licensed premise area for the outdoor events.

#### **Adjournment**

**Motion:** Mr. Plutschak made the motion to close the meeting.

**Second:** Mr. Mann seconded.

**Vote:** The members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Chairman Eigenbrode adjourned the Board of Licensed Commissioners meeting for Thursday, April 26, 2023 at 10:20 am.

#### **BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS**

**Greg Eigenbrode, Chairman**



Minutes prepared by:  
Catherine McCulley, Board Administrative Assistant