



Minutes

March 12, 2018
Alexandria, Louisiana

The City of Alexandria Alcohol Beverage and Drug Abuse Control Commission (ABC) met in the Council Chambers on February 1, 2018 at 4:30 P.M. pursuant to requests for ABC recommendations for the City Council.

PRESENT: Mr. Thomas Cupples , Acting Chairman
Mrs. Laurie Sampey
Mr. Robert Jordan
Mrs. Erma Davis.

ABSENT: Mrs. Connie Mallory

Legal Counsel, Mr. Trey Gist opened the meeting at 4:30 PM. Mr. Gist explained the rules of procedure for the meeting. The applicant or their assigned representative must give their name and address and explain the request. Speakers for and against the agenda items would alternate with the ABC asking questions as needed.

ITEM #1

TO HEAR OPPOSITION SHOWING CAUSE WHY THE FOLLOWING APPLICATION FOR A LIQUOR LICENSE SHOULD BE DENIED:

JR FOODMART 2, LLC d/b/a JR'S FOODMART
2305 LEE STREET, ALEXANDRIA, LA. 71301

Mr. Gist gave a brief overview of why an application can be opposed and explained that those who oppose the license have the burden to establish evidence of why the application should be denied or granted. Mr. Gist proceeds to state the Sales and Tax Use Code, recap the opposition, identify the oppositionist Jack Henton and Joseph Fuller and recite their letters of opposition

Mr. Henton is called to speak and states his concerns. He then addresses a breakdown of crimes and the crime rates in 2016 in Alexandria .He is concerned for his family and the Community in which he lives because of the number of local outlets selling alcohol. Mr. Henton sites two murders in the neighborhood .He says the community came together and agreed to speak out in opposition in matters that affect the failure of the leadership in the community to protect their environment.

Mr. Fuller, also in opposition, speaks about his observation of how the neighborhood has declined and that by regulating the liquor stores will help .He says they have targeted South Alexandria because he believes they can restore the community by helping people fix their housing issues. He states they are not out to just target liquor stores but just wants to limit them in that area. Mr. Fuller feels the store is too close to Bolton High School. He wants to change South Alexandria and it needs to start somewhere and there is a need to make changes in certain areas.

The Chairman than call for the applicant Mrs. Rochelle Manuel to address the Commission. Mrs. Manuel states that no one has approached, nor spoke with her concerning her plans for this store. She then tells of her three week walk around the neighborhood and submits a petition signed by .400 members within the neighboring community that are in favor of her opening locally. Mrs. Manuel states she will not sell alcohol to intoxicated buyers .She further informs that she knows most of the neighborhood by name and that a lot of them drop by just to visit and have coffee. She says her daughter will be opening a snow cone stand and once a month invite other youth from the community to show them how to run a business. She informs that she will have fresh vegetables from the Farmers Market and sale other types of fresh food .She states she runs a legitimate business and has raised funds for unfortunate kids. She is a PTA mom and she is for the youth. Mrs. Manuel states she does not want to be labeled a liquor store because she considers herself more of a Food Mart. She says she would just like to be given the chance to make a difference.

Those in opposition are called forward, first being Mr. Earl Ashley, Jr. a veteran of Alexandria. He states his concern about the rise in crime in the last 8 years in that area and his concern about a Daycare being nearby

Next Velva Boles speaks about how she relocated to South Alexandria 6 years ago and was curious of the quality in different areas of the city. She states that Jackson Street Ext. has fewer alcohol distributors and it seems there is less deterioration in that area in comparison. However she feels a food store in the neighborhood would be an asset but would not like to see alcohol sold there.

Linda Moran is introduced, also in opposition and states she does not agree with more liquor sales in that area.

Last in opposition is Mrs. Ingrid Johnson a local business attorney. She considers herself a youth leader and she and her daughters walk the neighbor daily. She wants them to express their observation of what they see and states they express a feeling of

hopelessness for their community. Mrs. Johnson is opposed to another alcohol facility but likes the idea of Rochelle offering the goods things she is proposing to bring to the community Mrs. Johnson wants to be the voice of the community and come together and take a stand.

Those in favor are invited to speak. Mrs. Tamara Coleman speaks of her degree and the history behind it. She is a local of the neighborhood and is pairing with Mrs. Manuel in the attempt to better the community. Mrs. Coleman brings up the fact that local grocery stores sell alcohol. She informs that she actively works with youth to build their morality and she would like to start the Buy Black Back movement. Mrs. Coleman says that crime is a city wide issue here and not just isolated to that neighborhood. She believes the hardship of black youth need to see positive neighborhood improvement.

Mr. Fredell Griffin comes forward as a veteran of the neighborhood and states his achievements in the community. He agrees the area has declined but its cause could not be narrowed down to just alcohol sales. He then gives several examples of other crimes that the Councilmen have not addressed and that this is really a social issue. Mr. Griffin petitions the Board to give them a chance to improve the future of the neighborhood.

Rev. Dr. B. J. Belvin is the mother in law to Mrs. Manuel and wants everyone to see the big picture. First she believes that Rochelle business would not survive the competition without the sale of alcoholic beverages and that alcohol is not the only source or cause of crime. She feels it is indeed a personal attack when you take someone's right away from them. Mrs. Belvin addresses how she had confronted members of the city on other issues and they were ignored. She reiterated Rochelle is a good parent and asks the Board to consider the Petition signed by the community.

Reverend Floyd Kirts a local pastor resides in the Sonia quarters that Mr. Green and Mr. Fuller help put together. He states that he himself is a wine drinker and then commends Mrs. Manuel on her plan of action for the neighborhood. He sees the activity locally and the crime is not just because of alcohol sales.

Ebony Freeman is Mrs. Manuel's best friend and conversed with her upon the initial plans to purchase the store. And states that Rochelle will be doing a great service to the community.

Mrs. Kateshia Green the last supporter called forward, states she has heard the local's opinions but not a lot of facts. She feels that Mrs. Manuel would be at a disadvantage if not allowed to sale alcohol and it will decrease the chances of her success and she believes Mrs. Manuel should be allowed to be on an equal playing ground. Offering things that have not been offered in the neighbor would be a bonus to everyone including people that have to walk with no means of transportation.

The Chairman ask the panel if they have any questions, in which Mrs. Davis responds. Mrs. Davis then directs a question to Mrs. Rochelle wanting to know if she has considered just opening a food mart without sales of alcohol. Mrs Manuel replies that she

would not be able to compete with neighboring businesses that way and that she separates herself from other businesses because she has a good repor with the community and knows most of them personally. Mrs. Davis asks to see the Petition.. Mrs. Manuel says she does not intend to stop there but has more future plans for growth and improvement of the community.

Mr. Jordan ask Mrs. Manuel if she had yet purchased the property, in which Mrs. Manuel replies no. Mr. Jordan states his opinion of why he would be in favor and hopes the Board will see her efforts and that it produces a good outcome.

A recess is called by Mr. Cupples. Upon convening Mr. Gist gives direction on how to call a motion.

Mr. Cupples motions to dismiss the complaints
Mrs. Sampey seconds and a vote is taking by roll call.
Mr. Cupples, Mrs.Sampey, and Mr. Jordan are all in favor

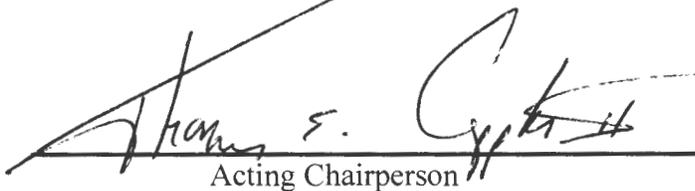
Mrs. Davis opposes and is not in favor.

There is a conclusion of Item # 1 on the Agenda.

After discussion, Mr. Cupples made a motion to recommend the City Council dismiss the complaints and allow Mrs. Manuel to be issued a liquor license .Mr. Jordan made a second to the motion.

A motion to approve the minutes from December 19, 2018 was made by Mr. Cupples concurred by a second.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:35 PM.


Acting Chairperson