

**Woburn License Commission
Regular Meeting
Committee Room
Thursday, February 15, 2023**

Voting Members present: Chairman Thomas Skeffington and Commissioner David Gilgun, and Commissioner William Pappalardo.

Also present: Woburn Police Capt. John Murphy

Chairman Skeffington convened the meeting of the License Commission at 6 p.m.

- 1. Dog House Bar & Grill, 434 Main Street, application for change of manager (continued from meeting of January 19, 2023):** Representing Dog House Bar & Grill were Attorney Joseph R. Tarby III, Rubin Rudman, 500 Unicorn Park, Woburn, MA, and Jade Archdeacon, 434 Main Street, Woburn, MA. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded by Commissioner Gilgun to take from the table items #1 and #2 on the posted agenda and collectively; approved, 3-0. Attorney Tarby said applications for change of manager were filed for both establishments in October. He said there has been back and forth discussion about obtaining a letter from the U.S. Attorney's office indicating there was no objection to the appointment of Ms. Archdeacon as manager of both establishments. He said on February 1, 2023, U.S. Attorney Rachael Rollins sent a letter to defense Attorney Paul Kelly indicating she has no objection to the appointment of Ms. Archdeacon. He asked the commission to formally approve the appointment of Ms. Archdeacon and instruct the clerk to forward the paperwork to the ABCC. Commissioner Pappalardo said the letter does indicate the court is supportive of Ms. Archdeacon being named manager. Chairman Skeffington said the commission's reticence to approve the application was never about Ms. Archdeacon's character. He said the commission has no issue with Ms. Archdeacon, and he is sure she is going to do a fine job. He said he wants to ask the commission to make the approval of Ms. Archdeacon contingent upon the outcome of the trial, if there are any changes. He said he is sure at that point the commission will get some direction from the ABCC. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded by Commissioner Gilgun to approve the application for Ms. Archdeacon as manager of both the Dog House Bar & Grill and Tudo Na Brasa/Taste of Brazil, contingent upon any changes there may be depending upon the outcome of the trial of the outgoing manager; approved, 3-0.
- 2. Tudo Na Brasa/Taste of Brazil, 414 Main Street, application for change of manager (continued from meeting of December 15, 2022):** See preceding item.
- 3. Extended Stay hotel, 831 Main St., incident on October 23, 2022 (continued from meeting of December 15, 2022):** Representing Extended Stay were Attorney Joseph Tarby, 500 Unicorn Park, Woburn, MA; Sherri Foster, Director of Safety & Security, Jofre Nieto, General Manager, and Julio Rosa, District Manager, Extended Stay America,

831 Main Street, Woburn, MA. Attorney Tarby said Extended Stay understands the nature of the complaints. He said Extended Stay wants to make sure things keep moving in a positive direction. He said after last month's meeting, Ms. Foster met with Police Chief Robert Rufo and Capt. Murphy on January 25. He said a number of procedural changes have been made to the hotel and the changes have been received very well by the Woburn Police Dept. Ms. Foster said she would like to submit a letter to the commission detailing the changes and updates to procedures at the hotel. She apologized for not attending the License Commission meeting in December because she was ill. She said she was hired by Extended Stay last May. She said she understands the Extended Stay in Woburn has been a problem for the License Commission and the Woburn Police Dept. for quite some time. She said she met with hotel staff on January 25 and made recommendations. She said she is retired law enforcement. She said she has had open, candid conversations with hotel employees. She said most of the problems have been fixed. She said she continues to train staff in a manner that hopefully will be more amenable to law enforcement. She referred to the memo she presented to the commission and enumerated the following changes to the hotel: 1.) "Police only" parking signs have been added at the hotel. Ms. Foster said the signs will serve as a deterrent. 2.) The hotel is issuing parking passes, which must be displayed on guest's vehicles at all times. Ms. Foster said the hotel has contracted with Murray's Towing for towing services. She said vehicles without passes will be towed. She said this is part of the "broken windows" theory, in that unkempt properties attract a criminal element and well-maintained property acts as a deterrent. 3.) Room rates have been raised. Ms. Foster said higher room rates eliminate unwanted clientele. 4.) CCTV cameras are being added to increase visibility of areas around the hotel. Ms. Foster said this was requested by Chief Rufo and Capt. Murphy. She said she likes cameras. She said she likes lighting more. 5.) Cameras that will capture license plate numbers of cars upon entry and exit are on order. 6.) Buzzers are being installed on exit doors, to prevent guests from propping open doors and allowing non-guests to enter. Ms. Foster said this is being done for safety reasons. 7.) Entry has been limited to the front entrance to ensure that guests enter through the lobby. 8.) Staff has been trained on how to interact with law enforcement. 9.) The hotel will comply with all city ordinances. 10.) The hotel has been offered as a venue for law enforcement training. Woburn Police officers have an open invitation to stop by to have coffee, use the facilities, do paperwork, or simply rest. 11.) Off-duty officers have been employed to work at the hotel on an as-needed basis. There will be an officer at the hotel from 7:30-11:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. 12.) The hotel has requested and received an increase in patrols of the hotel parking area. 13.) Woburn Police have been provided with contact information for Mr. Nieto, Mr. Rosa and Ms. Foster. Ms. Foster said the number of calls has decreased. She said the calls that are now being made to police are calls that should be made. Capt. Murphy said there was an instance when an employee called about a motorcycle that turned out to be stolen. He said he is pleased the hotel is being more proactive. Ms. Foster said they are committed to making Extended Stay not the worst hotel in Woburn. Capt. Murphy said there are still calls for service, but the staff is being proactive. He said Extended Stay has collaborated with Red Roof Inn about some issues. He said the situation is heading in the right direction. He said Extended Stay has committed funding. He said there has been more than lip service. He said they seem amenable to suggestion. Commissioner Gilgun thanked Ms. Foster for

flying in. He said this has been a very cooperative meeting. He said the commission has had real problems at Extended Stay. He said Woburn Police were not allowed to look at a video that would have helped with an investigation. He said he is happy that policy has been changed. He said there is an ordinance change before the City Council that would allow police to see video surveillance. He said it is unbelievable to him that police were not allowed to access the video. He said there was another instance when Capt. Murphy went to the hotel to speak to the manager and the manager instructed another employee to tell Capt. Murphy he was too busy to see him. He said it has to stop. Ms. Foster said if it was up to her, she would allow police access to everything. She apologized and said staff is being educated to be better. Commissioner Gilgun said Extended Stay is in one of the best locations in the city. He said there have been cars vandalized in the parking lot. He said there have been reports of people smoking pot in a van. He said it has really gotten out of control. He said the License Commission controls the innkeepers licenses. He said he does not want a Woburn Police officer getting hurt because employees at a hotel are not being cooperative. He asked what the higher ups at Extended Stay think about increasing cooperation with police. Ms. Foster said they are 100 percent behind her. She said she had no previous hotel experience before she started working for Extended Stay. She said she had been a police officer since 1984. She said she knows what is right and what is wrong. She said as long as she is director of security, police are going to get what they need. Commissioner Gilgun said he wants Woburn Police to be able to access video surveillance. Attorney Tarby said he has reviewed the proposed ordinance. He said Extended Stay is aware of what is happening. Capt. Murphy said he appreciates the support for the ordinance. He said time is of the essence in 99 percent of these cases. He said hopefully the ordinance will be passed. He thanked the commission and the council for their hard work to help provide police with a tool they need. Commissioner Gilgun said he agrees that time is of the essence. He said the employee at Extended Stay with whom the investigating detective spoke said police would have to get a court order in order to obtain the video. Capt. Murphy said is it important to note that police were looking for video of a common area. He said the employee told the investigating detective to get a subpoena. Capt. Murphy said police want an original copy of the video. Ms. Foster said she understands. She said this ordinance will help the hotel. She said they are hiring better people. She said hotel personnel will welcome any suggestions. Commissioner Pappalardo said he wants to echo Commissioner Gilgun's concerns. He said problems at Extended Stay have been going on for way too long. He said the list of changes that was submitted by Ms. Foster is impressive. He thanked Ms. Foster for coming in. He said this is a good list. He asked if the hotel has seen any benefits from the new procedures. Capt. Murphy said the number of calls is down over the last month. He said the incident with the stolen motorcycle was handled effectively because a hotel employee called police right away. He said police were able to determine the motorcycle was stolen out of Quincy. He said the parking passes will help police. Commissioner Pappalardo asked when the camera that will record license plates will be operational. Mr. Rosa said he expects the camera will be operational within 60 days. Commissioner Pappalardo asked if police will be able to access video surveillance while the City Council considers the ordinance change. Ms. Foster said the corporate policy has not changed, but police can view the video in the interim. She said hotel staff is being educated to give police what they need. Commissioner Pappalardo asked Ms. Foster if

the commission can contact her if they need to. Ms. Foster answered affirmatively. Capt. Murphy said he has Ms. Foster's telephone number. He said if Extended Stay backslides, he will inform the commission. Chairman Skeffington thanked Ms. Foster for attending the meeting. He said the commission has not been too nice to Extended Stay. He said the city was in a great place with hotels a couple of years ago but things have gone downhill. He said the commission is not out to get Extended Stay or Red Roof Inn. He said he hopes the hotels can work together. He said former Woburn High football coach Peter Sullivan used to when you work together, you are unbeatable. He said the commission is not going to get to a point where any establishment makes 50 calls a month to police. Ward 6 City Councilor Lou DiMambro asked when the camera for the main entrance will be operational. Ms. Foster said the camera was ordered in January and she expects it to arrive within two days. Chairman Skeffington said hopefully the ordinance change passes within 90 days and everyone will have a camera. Capt. Murphy said Massachusetts license plates are reflective and this is a special camera that will allow the plate to be read. Chairman Skeffington said the ordinance states you just can't film everywhere. He said there are privacy laws. He said he thinks it will all get worked out. Councilor DiMambro asked if police will be able to go in and out randomly. Capt. Murphy said officers will get to know hotel staff. He said there will be deterrent runs. Ms. Foster said police can come and go when they want to. She said members of the commission should not be afraid to contact her. Motion made by Commissioner Gilgun and seconded by Commissioner Pappalardo to accept the memorandum from Ms. Foster and place it on file; approved, 3-0.

4. **St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 280 Main St., application for a special 1-day liquor license for a dinner dance from 6-11 p.m. on Saturday, April 15, 2023:** Representing St. Charles Borromeo Parish were Fr. Raphael Pinto and Moira Pesotti, 8 Myrtle St., Woburn, MA. Ms. Pesotti said St. Charles is seeking a special 1-day license for a dinner dance as a fundraiser for the entire parish. She said this event has been held in the past. She said there have never been any problems with this event. Chairman Skeffington said this event has been run successfully in the past. Chairman Skeffington said the package the applicant filed is great. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded by Commissioner Gilgun to grant the special 1-day license and waive the application fee; approved, 3-0.
5. **NY Foods LLC, dba Teresa's Ristorante, application for a new liquor license at 400 Trade Center:** Representing the applicant was Nicholas Yebba Sr., owner and CEO of Teresa's Hospitality Group, 149 South Main Street, Middleton, MA. Mr. Yebba said also in attendance are Nicholas Yebba Jr., Executive Chef; Sean Davis, Vice President of Operations; and John Halsey, Leasing Manager, Cummings Properties, 200 West Cummings Park, Woburn, MA. Mr. Yebba Sr. said Teresa's Hospitality Group owns and operates the following locations: Teresa's Italian Eatery in Middleton, Teresa's Prime Steakhouse in North Reading and Teresa's Grill Nineteen in North Reading. He said he has been in the restaurant business for 17 years, during which time there has been not one ABCC complaint. He said he takes a lot of pride in that. He said they are very careful and conservative with alcohol site. He said they are seeking a liquor license to occupy the old Strega site. Commissioner Pappalardo asked if this will be a high-end restaurant. Mr.

Yebba said this will be a mid-range restaurant. He said Teresa's Prime is kind of high-end, and Grill Nineteen is in the middle and the Woburn restaurant will be a bit higher than up the middle. He said it will be similar to the restaurant in Middleton, where he said you can get a good meal for \$20-\$25. Commissioner Pappalardo said he sees there will also be a takeout option. Mr. Yebba said they do off-site catering. He said he expects to be involved in the community. He said the restaurant industry has been a 17-year whirlwind for them. He said he is very proud of their restaurants. Commissioner Pappalardo asked if there will be a function room. Mr. Yebba said there will be a private dining area. Chairman Skeffington said he has been to the restaurant in Middleton for brunch. He said it was absolutely phenomenal. He said he has also heard very good things about the restaurants in North Reading. He said he is very excited Mr. Yebba is going to open a restaurant in Woburn. He said Mr. Yebba's restaurant is not high, high end but it will not be cheap. He said he thinks the takeout component will be a knockout. He said he thinks Teresa's will knock it out of the park for years. Chairman Skeffington asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the commission in regard to the petition. Ward 6 City Councilor Lou DiMambro asked how the veal is. Mr. Yebba said the veal arrives daily from Giovanni Veal in Woburn. Chairman Skeffington advised Mr. Yebba to contact Capt. Murphy. He said there is a mandatory liquor license renewal meeting in October. He said the commission typically completes the renewal process in 10-12 days. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded by Commissioner Gilgun to grant the application for a new liquor license; approved, 3-0. Mr. Yebba said they are looking forward to being part of the community. He thanked the commission for their time and effort. He said they are hoping to be open by Easter at the earliest or Mother's Day at the latest.

6. **Showcase Cinema de Lux, 25 Middlesex Canal Park Drive, application for change of manager:** Representing the applicant were Shaun Judge, area manager for National Amusements, and Jeffrey P. Murphy, both of 25 Middlesex Canal Park Drive, Woburn, MA. Mr. Judge said Mr. Murphy has been working for National Amusements since 2000. He said Mr. Murphy started as an usher in Revere and was promoted to house manager in Woburn in 2007. He said Mr. Murphy moved to Florida but came back to Massachusetts in 2013. He said Mr. Murphy has also worked at the theaters in Foxboro, Randolph and Dedham, all of which have liquor licenses. He said company policy is to ask for identification from every customer. Chairman Skeffington asked if there have been any issues at Showcase Cinemas since the premises got a liquor license. Capt. Murphy said there have been no issues with Showcase Cinema's liquor license. Chairman Skeffington asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the board in regard to the petition. There were no respondents. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded by Commissioner Gilgun to grant the change of manager application; approved, 3-0.
7. **Discussion of activities at social clubs:** Chairman Skeffington said there was a recent incident at the American Legion. He said he spoke to Capt. Murphy and he said staff at the American Legion was cooperative. Chairman Skeffington said he spoke with City Solicitor Ellen Callahan Doucette about the rules and regulations at social clubs. He said City Solicitor Callahan Doucette is going to review the rules and regulations for social clubs. He said the rules are vague. He said she is going to tighten up the language. He

said there have been some problems at a couple of the social clubs. He said some the clubs are being used as concert venues and comedy clubs. He said the clubs are supposed to be restricted to members and their invited guests, unless someone rents the venue. He said clubs are not allowed to serve food to go. He said he has gotten phone calls from people in other establishments who cannot compete with \$8 pizzas. He said he wants to continue this discussion until the next meeting so the City Solicitor has time to review the rules and regulations. He said City Solicitor Callahan Doucette is going to tighten up the language so the commission can adopt it. Capt. Murphy said he has some suggestions he would like to include in the regulations. Chairman Skeffington advised Capt. Murphy to send an email with any suggestions to the commission. Commissioner Gilgun asked Councilor DiMambro if he has gotten any complaints about any of the licensees in North Woburn. Councilor DiMambro said the activities are some of the clubs have been talked about. Chairman Skeffington said in his opinion the area north of Ferullo Field is starting to flourish. He said Elena's restaurant has been a good addition to the area. He said North Woburn could still use a good place for breakfast. Councilor DiMambro said it might be worth the city's while to tighten up the rules and regulations so there are no gray areas. Chairman Skeffington said he would like to continue the discussion to the next meeting. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded Commissioner Gilgun to continue the hearing until the commission's meeting in March; approved, 3-0.

- 8. Approval of meeting minutes from January 19, 2023:** Chairman Skeffington said the vote to approve the minutes from last month's meeting should reflect a 2-0 vote, as Commissioner Pappalardo was not present. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded by Commissioner Gilgun to approve the minutes from the meeting of January 19, 2023, as amended; approved, 3-0.
- 9. Any other matters that may be legally before the Commission:** Chairman Skeffington he wants to thank Capt. Murphy for the tremendous effort he has made with Extended Stay. He asked Capt. Murphy to convey the same appreciation to Police Chief Robert Rufo. Capt. Murphy said when the meeting was held with Ms. Foster, police were able to convey the commission's displeasure with the recent activities at Extend Stay. Commissioner Pappalardo said those sentiments were also reenforced by Commissioner Gilgun. Chairman Skeffington said we are all Woburn citizens here and the commission had to take action because law enforcement was going in blind to potentially dangerous situations. Lou DiMambro, Ward 6 City Councilor, said he would like to convey appreciation to the council on behalf of Ward 3 Councilor Jeffrey Dillon, who could not attend tonight's meeting due to as family commitment, as well as his own, for the commission's efforts at Extended Stay. He said he and Councilor Dillon support the commission 100 percent. He said he also wants to thank the commission on behalf of all of North Woburn.
- 10. Motion made by Commissioner Pappalardo and seconded by Commissioner Gilgun to adjourn; approved, 3-0.** Chairman Skeffington adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees