



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN OF LAKE LURE ABC BOARD

MONDAY, MAY 16, 2022
3:30 PM.

THIS MEETING WAS HELD AT LAKE LURE TOWN HALL.

Present: Linda Samarotto, Chairwoman
Richard Sayles, Board Member
Peter O’Leary, Board Member
Bob Cassano, Board Member
Esther Lusk, Board Member

Russ Dunst, ABC Store Manager
Rhonda Cook, Accountant
Jim Proctor, Town Council Liaison

Absent: N/A

Town Staff: Olivia Stewman, Town Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Linda Samarotto called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

II. AGENDA ADOPTION

Mr. Richard Sayles made a motion to approve the agenda, as presented. Chair Samarotto seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There were no conflicts of interest.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of the April 18, 2022 Regular ABC Board Meeting

Ms. Esther Lusk made a motion to approve the April 18, 2022 regular meeting minutes, as presented. Mr. Sayles seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of ABC Store Operations

Chair Samarotto thanked Ms. Lusk for gathering information in regard to the mandated delivery option being discussed at the state level. The Board reviewed information that was provided by Ms. Lusk.

Store Manager Russ Dunst reviewed the monthly report. Dunst noted an issue with overtime, which he stated to now be resolved. Dunst noted that the Lake Lure ABC is in the top 5 amount of credit card sales in state.

Accountant Rhonda Cook and Mr. Dunst reported to be managing finances. Ms. Cook stated that moving forward she will review and approve payment for all orders.

Manager Dunst reported that he had received notice from state regarding expiring permits, Dunst explained that expirations took place in April and he was sent program to review licenses expiring in Rutherford County. Mr. Dunst noted businesses in the community that have expired liquor license.

Manager Dunst reported fully functioning alarms at the store after having a prior issue with a window sensor. Dunst stated that there is also a panic button near the register.

Dunst announced that the store had gotten a refrigerator unit. Dunst also noted that he is trying to improve the store by findings posters of movies filmed in Lake Lure, because it seems to be a good talking point and way to connect with customers.

The Board discussed LBD delivery mandate update after reviewing documents provided by Ms. Lusk. Ms. Lusk thinks that store management and the Board need to look into annual financial figures versus the cost of insurance that would be needed to offer delivery services. Ms. Lusk explained that county unemployment rate plays into getting a waiver to not deliver and she is uncertain why that is a factor. Commissioner Proctor stated that unemployment rate is a factor because of the possibility of hiring individuals to deliver. The Board noted the issues that could emerge in regard to driver insurance and vehicle insurance. It was noted that what the Town had originally sent to the state did not include numbers and that data should be sent when reaching out again. Dunst noted that he is going to speak with a manager from Hendersonville because Hendersonville is delivering liquor across their multiple ABC Stores and may be able to provide insight in regard to insurance. Ms. Lusk stated that she will try to get as many specifics as possible and send as an addendum to the state. Dunst noted that multiple municipalities in the area are petitioning against this mandate. The Board discussed what will happen if a delivery system is not in place by July 1. It was noted that if the Town must deliver and no one orders delivery, there will be a complete loss of money to pay a delivery employee, insurance, etc. The idea of hiring an independent contractor to deliver but Mr. Dunst indicated that there are no independent contractors in the area. Board members suggested that if the mandate is not waived for the Lake Lure ABS Store, the Town should hire an independent contractor from a different location because they will likely not be needed as delivery will not be utilized in the community.

Manager Dunst noted that on June 30th the store will be closed for inventory and it is end of fiscal year. Dunst reminded the Board that the new budget is due July 1st. Dunst announced that the store would also be closed on July 4th. Dunst noted that he has a manager meeting in Concord July 10th through July 13th.

Dunst announced that the store will have an audit during first or second week of July.

The Board discussed the difficulties in acquiring bourbon (i.e. Buffalo Trace) and it was noted that the regional representatives for the state ABC Commission gathered and determined to allocate bourbons to stores with the most sales. Dunst noted that with Lake Lure being relatively small, it may be difficult to be one of the greatest sellers in the state. Mr. Sayles asked if this information was delivered via email and Dunst said yes. Mr. Sayles asked for Dunst to send the email to the Board. It was determined that Manager Dunst will continue to order bourbons regardless. Mr. Sayles mentioned looking into acquiring a barrel.

Ms. Cook noted that she is getting bills transitioned from the former accountant in order to get up to date and will close the year out. Ms. Cook reported that the Store is getting on track.

Chair Samarotto asked about a second cooling unit. Dunst noted that there may not be enough room in the store for an additional cooling unit. Mr. Cassano suggested reviewing the current set up for a while then re-evaluate the need for a second cooling unit.

Manager Dunst reported that the internet has improved since switching to PANGAEA.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Ms. Lusk made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Sayles seconded and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.

ATTEST

Olivia Stewman, Town Clerk

Linda Samarotto, Chairwoman