

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE REGULATION ADMINISTRATION
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD

- - - - -X

IN THE MATTER OF: :

Mohammad J. Hosseini
Manager's Application
FACT FINDING HEARING

- - - - -X

Wednesday July 27, 2016

Whereupon, the above referenced matter came on for hearing at the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, Reeves Center, 2000 14th Street, N.W., Suite 400S, Washington, D.C. 20009.

1

2 CHAIRPERSON:

3 DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Presiding

4

5 OTHER PERSONS PRESENT:

6

7 RUTHANNE MILLER, BOARD MEMBER

8 JAMES SHORT, BOARD MEMBER

9 MIKE SILVERSTEIN, BOARD MEMBER

10 NICK ALBERTI, BOARD MEMBER

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. We're
3 back on the record, and we have a -- a fact finding
4 hearing for Mr. Mohammad J. Hosseini. And again, he has
5 applied for a -- a manager's license. And in reviewing
6 your -- your background The Board is concerned regarding
7 what -- what's on the -- what's on your -- your criminal
8 history. And so one of the reasons why we -- we
9 contacted you today is for you to explain what was going
10 on. Although I think -- I'm not sure what was the
11 charge and maybe it was ten years ago.

12 MR. HOSSEINI: Yeah. It was nine years ago.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Nine years ago.

14 MR. HOSSEINI: Right.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And to just provide
16 The Board some further information.

17 MR. HOSSEINI: I plead guilty to one count
18 of grand larceny. I mean I was charged with other
19 counts, but I pleaded guilty to one count. And I had --
20 I was on probation for three. I didn't do any time.
21 They just put me on probation for three years. And I
22 haven't been convicted or arrested for anything since

1 then. So my probation, I finished after three years.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So how old were you,
3 sir, when it occurred?

4 MR. HOSSEINI: I was 21.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay.

6 MR. HOSSEINI: I'm 30 now. I mean I was
7 involved with a female, and I made some terrible
8 decisions. And I mean I've gone past it in my life.
9 I've been married since. It's just a part of the my
10 life that I wish had never happened. And -- but I mean
11 I'm just -- I mean I don't know if there's any
12 questions. That was what happened at that time in my
13 life. And I think I've gone past it at this point.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: We're going to -- the
15 board members might ask you some questions. So I was
16 just giving you to -- the opportunity to tell us prior
17 to the board members asking questions. So I don't know
18 what they're going to ask. So --

19 MR. HOSSEINI: Oh, okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I mean I was like
21 telling you what it is --

22 MR. HOSSEINI: Okay.

1 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- why it was that we
2 brought you in.

3 MR. HOSSEINI: Yeah. Absolutely.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So just because that.

5 MR. HOSSEINI: Right.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

7 MR. HOSSEINI: Would you like me to speak
8 with you after that or --

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Tell us whatever you
10 want to tell us. You're -- all right.

11 MR. HOSSEINI: All right.

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: This is -- this is
13 your opportunity to tell The Board.

14 MR. HOSSEINI: Correct. So it was a point
15 in my life, I was 21. I -- what happened was that
16 someone that I knew learned how to print some Change
17 Express -- it was something that would -- you would take
18 into a bank, and then it was your coins. It would print
19 out -- you would put your coins into the machine, and it
20 would print out a receipt. So the person that I was
21 involved with gave me some receipts, and I took it to
22 the bank and got some money. And basically I was -- and

1 they -- for several accounts, several occasions. The
2 bank found out, they arrested me. And I ended up -- I
3 plead guilty to one count like I said, a felony. And I
4 was on probation for three years. And I mean ever since
5 then I think I've changed my life around and has decided
6 to -- I haven't had any interactions with the law at
7 all. My probation is over and since then I've been
8 married. I've decided to go a different direction in my
9 life.

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do we have any
11 questions by any board members? Go ahead, Mr. Short.

12 MR. SHORT: Good morning, Mr. --

13 MR. HOSSEINI: Hosseini.

14 MR. SHORT: -- Hosseini.

15 MR. HOSSEINI: Good morning.

16 MR. SHORT: Mr. Hosseini, you -- you know --
17 are you in the industry now? Are you in the --

18 MR. HOSSEINI: Yes, I am in the --

19 MR. SHORT: -- hospitality community?

20 MR. HOSSEINI: Yes.

21 MR. SHORT: Where do you work?

22 MR. HOSSEINI: I work at the Graham Hotel in

1 Georgetown.

2 MR. SHORT: How long have you been with
3 them?

4 MR. HOSSEINI: It's about three months now.

5 MR. SHORT: Three months. So a lot of
6 well-to-do people coming through there I would imagine.

7 MR. HOSSEINI: They do. A lot of -- we get
8 a lot of celebrities, see a lot of important people that
9 come into the hotel.

10 MR. SHORT: I do know you -- you're probably
11 then familiar that some of the establishments nationwide
12 have had a problem with people giving their credit
13 information to someone behind the bar or in a
14 restaurant.

15 MR. HOSSEINI: Right.

16 MR. SHORT: And the next thing you know
17 their credit is ruined.

18 MR. HOSSEINI: Right.

19 MR. SHORT: And that's because of what?

20 MR. HOSSEINI: It could -- I mean a variety
21 of different reasons. But I don't think that would
22 really affect -- I mean I'm very grateful for the job

1 that I have. I've been blessed to -- to be working at
2 this establishment, and the last thing that I would --
3 ever would want to do is to harm any of the guests that
4 we have that come through the hotel. I mean we're a
5 very high-end hotel. It's a boutique hotel. It's a --
6 the last thing that I would want to do is put this
7 opportunity that I have right now into -- in jeopardy
8 and to harm anyone or myself at the end of the day.

9 MR. SHORT: Some of the richest people in
10 the world pass through that -- that facility. And so
11 I -- I ask that question of you just to -- to get an
12 answer, and you gave me the right answer. I don't know
13 about the rest of the board members.

14 MR. HOSSEINI: Well, thank you.

15 MR. SHORT: But you having a manager's
16 license at that establishment which I don't think has
17 ever been before this board since I've been a part of
18 The Board, and I -- I don't think it has any history
19 of -- of problems.

20 MR. HOSSEINI: No.

21 MR. SHORT: So if they hired, you they must
22 have done a pretty -- pretty good background check on

1 you too.

2 MR. HOSSEINI: Yeah. I mean I've worked at
3 a lot of other restaurants, bars.

4 MR. SHORT: Such as?

5 MR. HOSSEINI: So I've worked in L2 Lounge,
6 which is a members only place. It's in Georgetown as
7 well. So everyone that comes in -- it's also a very
8 high-end place. It's a lot of the -- people pay a
9 membership fee, and they also do a lot of private events
10 for different companies. And celebrities also come in
11 there as well. I've worked in -- I managed a nightclub
12 in College Park, Maryland for about three years. I've
13 worked in -- as a bartender in many restaurants in D.C.,
14 a club in [inaudible 55:04. I've worked in --

15 MR. SHORT: My last question, when did you
16 finish your probation?

17 MR. HOSSEINI: Three years after. So this
18 was 2008. I would say 2011. That's when -- I mean I
19 haven't been convicted or even arrested for anything
20 else since then. So after three years the deal was that
21 if I don't get arrested for anything, I would -- that
22 automatically probation would be over. If I did, then I

1 would have to do some time.

2 MR. SHORT: Any children?

3 MR. HOSSEINI: Not yet. I'm married, but
4 not yet.

5 MR. SHORT: All right. Okay.

6 MR. HOSSEINI: Hopefully in the near future.

7 MR. SHORT: Good luck to you.

8 MR. HOSSEINI: Thank you.

9 MR. SHORT: That's all I have, Mr. Chair.
10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Any other
12 questions by any of the board members? Yes, Ms. Miller.

13 MS. MILLER: Good morning.

14 MR. HOSSEINI: Good morning.

15 MS. MILLER: I'm just curious how long did
16 you participate in that scheme or whatever you call it?

17 MR. HOSSEINI: Right. So it was about a
18 month I guess.

19 MS. MILLER: Just a month?

20 MR. HOSSEINI: Yeah. It -- it lasted just
21 about a month. And then after -- and I mean after that
22 I guess they started investigating, and I was caught.

1 And it -- it was brief, it didn't take a very long time.
2 Honestly I don't even remember the exact dates because
3 it was such a long time ago. But if I had to guess, it
4 would be about a month.

5 MS. MILLER: And did you profit from it
6 monetarily?

7 MR. HOSSEINI: So, yes, I did. But however,
8 I had to pay the money back.

9 MS. MILLER: Uh-huh.

10 MR. HOSSEINI: Yes. So once I was arrested
11 they asked me to return all the money, and I did. So --

12 MS. MILLER: Can you say what -- what led
13 you to get involved with that? Was it the -- your
14 relationship, was that what it was?

15 MR. HOSSEINI: It -- part of it I think I
16 was just being young and stupid and wanting to
17 experience or live on the edge of -- I don't -- I don't
18 know. It's -- and it didn't really help that I was
19 involved with another person as well. They were just a
20 really bad influence on me, and I was young. And I
21 guess for -- it wasn't necessarily for personal gain. I
22 think I was just young and trying experiment and live on

1 the edge. And I mean I -- it happened so quickly, and
2 immediately I was arrested. And now it's in the past
3 for me. I mean it's part of me, but I -- I've learned
4 how to live with it for this -- so far.

5 MS. MILLER: Okay. Yeah. That's a long
6 time ago. But these -- these records follow you, and we
7 look back at least ten years.

8 MR. HOSSEINI: Well, that's the story of my
9 life.

10 MS. MILLER: Yeah. My last question is just
11 a basic, you know, any lessons learned from -- from
12 that?

13 MR. HOSSEINI: I've learned a lot from it.
14 I don't think I would ever do anything like that in my
15 life. I would think twice before I do anything. I mean
16 I think I have -- it's a horrible thing that happened in
17 my life, but I think I learned a lot from it and it made
18 me a complete different person. I second guess
19 everything I do now. I try to make sure I stay away
20 from things that are even gray. Not -- things that are
21 not black and white, but even if they're gray, I try to
22 stay away from them and just experience that I've gained

1 because of this. I don't want to say that it's good,
2 but its changed my life. So --

3 MS. MILLER: So my last question I guess is
4 when -- when you apply for -- for jobs in the
5 hospitality industry like you have now do -- have they
6 looked at your background?

7 MR. HOSSEINI: Yes.

8 MS. MILLER: Yeah.

9 MR. HOSSEINI: It's a hotel. So of course
10 they do.

11 MS. MILLER: Right. Okay.

12 MR. HOSSEINI: They -- they run our credit,
13 our background. Most restaurants do as well.

14 MS. MILLER: Uh-huh.

15 MR. HOSSEINI: And they are aware. But
16 because it was such a long time ago and because I have
17 changed I guess. And the experience that I've gained in
18 this industry, they I mean have decided to give me
19 another chance which I'm very grateful for.

20 MS. MILLER: Okay. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other questions
22 by -- yes, Mr. Silverstein.

1 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Thank you for coming,
2 Mr. Hosseini. I share with Mr. Short and others always
3 the concern about the safety of patrons and especially
4 the concern with skimming in credit cards and -- and
5 things of that sort. Having listened to you and all of
6 us here understanding that you already have a conviction
7 hanging over your head, I simply can't imagine you being
8 foolish enough -- you seem to be a very bright fellow --
9 to engage in anything like that or allow it to occur on
10 your watch.

11 MR. HOSSEINI: Yes.

12 MR. SILVERSTEIN: I think you've -- you've
13 learned a very painful lesson, and you intend to lead an
14 honorable life.

15 MR. HOSSEINI: Thank you.

16 MR. SILVERSTEIN: And I -- I'm going to vote
17 for you, and I -- I wish you well.

18 MR. HOSSEINI: Thank you.

19 MR. SILVERSTEIN: And -- and hope that you
20 can keep everybody else there on the straight and narrow
21 as well, that --

22 MR. HOSSEINI: I hope so too.

1 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Often, you know, when --
2 when you've -- when you've made a mistake and you turn
3 to people and say hey, I've made that mistake, don't do
4 it, you have a whole lot more cred than anybody else.

5 MR. HOSSEINI: That's true.

6 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Good luck to you, sir.

7 MR. HOSSEINI: Thank you very much.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do we have any other
9 questions by any other board members? Do you have any
10 -- do you have anything else you want to say, sir,
11 before you make -- The Board makes its decision?

12 MR. HOSSEINI: Thank you for the opportunity
13 to allow me to come and explain today. I appreciate it.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you.
15 All right. With that said, I make a motion that we do
16 approve the -- the license for -- manager's license for
17 Mr. Hosseini. Is there a second?

18 MS. MILLER: Second.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Miller has
20 seconded the motion. Those in favor say aye. [Chorus
21 of ayes]. Those opposed. [No audible response]. Those
22 abstain.

1 MR. SHORT: Abstain.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Short has --
3 has -- have abstained. The matter passed four-zero-one
4 with one abstention. The Board will sign off on this
5 license today, and you can -- once The Board signs off
6 you can go get your license, sir. And good luck.

7 MR. HOSSEINI: Thank you so much. I really
8 appreciate it. Should I wait around?

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, wait.

10 MR. ALBERTI: If you want to stay --

11 MR. HOSSEINI: Thank you so much. I
12 appreciate it.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah. Everyone can
14 come back in. Yeah. We're -- yeah, everyone can come
15 back in.

16 (Whereupon the above-entitled matter was
17 concluded.)

18

19

20

21

22