DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD
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MEETING

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IN THE MATTER OF: :
:
Beirut Nights, LLC, :
:
t/a Beirut Nights :
:
1027 31st Street NW :
:
Fact Finding :
:
Retailer CR - ANC 2E :
:
Hearing :
:
License No. 120090 :
:
:
(Application for New :
:
License) :
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Wednesday
February 16, 2022

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board
met via WebEx videoconference, Chairperson
Donovan W. Anderson presiding.

PRESENT:
DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
BOBBY CATO, JR., Member
RAFI ALIYA CROCKETT, Member
EDWARD S. GRANDIS, Member
JENI HANSEN, Member
JAMES SHORT, JR., Member

ALSO PRESENT:

SARAH FASHBAUGH, DC ABRA Staff
ZAKARIA IBRAHIM, Applicant's Counsel
JOSEPH JARROUJE, Applicant
LEILA JARROUJE, Witness
P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(3:10 p.m.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, the next case on our calendar is Case No -- is a Fact-Finding Hearing on License No. 120090, application for a new license. Ms. Fashbaugh, can you please elevate the rights of the parties in this case please?

MS. FLETCHER: Please stand by.

Joseph Jarrouje, your rights have been elevated. Commissioner Lisa Palmer was on earlier, but she has left. That is all, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, so Joseph Jarrouje?

MR. JARROUJE: Yes, yes. I'm here.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Is there someone else that's supposed to be there, sir or is it just you?

MR. IBRAHIM: Zakaria Ibrahim represented by Beirut Nights.

MS. JARROUJE: And his wife, Leila Jarrouje, just being present just in case he needs to explain more in English.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, I'm saying everyone who needs to be on this case, they're on
this case. That's what I'm trying to ask.

MS. JARROUJE: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Do you guys have a camera that you can turn on?

MS. JARROUJE: Yes, we do. Let's just start the video. I'm sorry. Just a second.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, I can see you. Thank you. All right, okay.

MR. IBRAHIM: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, fine. Okay. Some background to this case.

Previously there was an application for this location occupied by Charcoal Town. The Board denied Charcoal Town's application due to failing to defend a qualification challenge to Board Order No. 2021-260 related to selling alcohol without a license. Subsequently we now have an application by -- I'm sorry, who's the Applicant in this case? Who applied for the license?

MS. JARROUJE: Joseph, my husband.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. And so we're just trying to ascertain who is this person and whether or not -- whether or not this
is the same entity that had requested -- applied
for a license in the previous case. So let's
start off by having you, Mr. Jarrouje, can you
please spell and state your name for the record
please?

MR. JARROUJE: My name Joseph
Jarrouje. I'm the owner of Beirut Nights.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Spell it --
spell your name.

MR. JARROUJE: J-A-R-R-O-U-J-E.

MS. JARROUJE: Family name.

MR. JARROUJE: This is a family name.

My first name, J-O-S-E-P-H.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now the other
two people with you, are they going -- are they
going to testify today?

MR. JARROUJE: Yes, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Can you please
identify yourself and -- Well, let me have the
other people identify themselves by spelling
their names please.

MS. JARROUJE: My name is Leila
name. And I'm his wife, just helping out because
of the English -- in case he needs to express
things that he is not able to quickly say it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And who's the next person?


CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You said consulting firm? What do you mean by consulting firm? I'm just trying to get some clarification?

MR. IBRAHIM: I'm a consulting service for commercial. I process permits, license, or represent Liquor Board or the smoking license, all of that.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, fine. So Mr. Jarrouje, tell me about who are you? Tell me, give me some information about your business model and what it is that you're requesting in this location, sir?

MS. JARROUJE: Okay. Would you mind if I --

MR. IBRAHIM: Let me explain because --

MS. JARROUJE: Would you mind if I explained so it would be quicker?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: If he says that's fine.

MR. JARROUJE: There's a lot of language, Mr. Chair.

MR. IBRAHIM: Okay, if you're -- Okay, he's fine. He's saying if you're fine for me to explain, yes. Okay, so Joseph -- I'm just going introduce you who he is. Joseph, he is a retired vet from Lebanon. He came to the U.S. seven years ago. We came all of us as a family. We have two kids, they are in the university now. And he decided after serving in the Army for many -- for like 25 years, he retired as brigadier.

He said he wants to do something related to our heritage. So he choose Georgetown to introduce something Arabic and Lebanese. Like everybody knows, the tabouleh and all that. To cut a long story short, he wanted to do something related to our tradition in terms of food. So he started looking for a place. He found this place, it was open before under a different name. And then we negotiated with the owner.

And we took the whole place and we changed everything because we want to do it in a different way -- in our way to host like more
people or customers like the age of our kids because I do have 22 and 20 years old. And here's their -- this location, there's a lot of universities. They can come in with their computers, take a bite because it's not a big menu what you have. And enjoy something Middle Eastern. So this is in a nutshell what we're trying to do.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now who is the landlord for 2025 through -- I'm sorry, 1025 through 1027? Who's the landlord?

MS. JARROUJE: Mr. Charif Khangi.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, can you spell it -- can you spell that name please?


CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Now Mr. Jarrouje, have you opened up business before? Have you ever operated a business before or a restaurant before? I guess it's a tavern that's been -- I'm sorry. What type of business -- Have you operated a business like this before?

MS. JARROUJE: Liquor license or a restaurant license, you're asking?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Anything.
Anything.

MS. JARROUJE: Anything. Honestly, this is not something we have done before --

(simultaneous speaking)

MS. JARROUJE: -- in our country, in our home because this is -- this is part of our culture and tradition. Like if you want to come to a house for like Sunday -- like we have like 30 people. They come for - like they please, but this is how the usual invitation is. That's part of what we do in our culture.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now, I know that he said that he bought -- but how did he realize that this place was available? How did he -- specifically, how did he come into this location?

MS. JARROUJE: Okay, I can just explain to him.

(foreign language spoken)

MR. IBRAHIM: He just find that --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who's speaking?

MR. IBRAHIM: This is Zakaria Ibrahim. I believe the landlord, he was having some issue with the old tenant because of his violation and he was about to kick him out. So the old owner,
he asked to sell whatever he had here such as
kitchen, hood, refrigerator, bar. So we find Mr.
Joseph to buy that from him so we can go out here
and finish his lease with the landlord -- because
the landlord was about to get him out of here.
Not just because of the rent, it was just because
of some issue with the client.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, you Mr.
Ibrahim, were you the one who brought this to the
attention of Mr. Jarrouje?

MR. IBRAHIM: No. No, I don't get
involved in such matter. I get involved when
more into license process, not as real estate or
whatever. But they are Lebanese and there is a
community together and I believe the landlord is
Lebanese.

MS. JARROUJE: The landlord, Charif,
is a Lebanese guy, so we all know each other
through the Embassy. So Charif did send word
through -- because my husband is brigadier so he
knows the military attache who is his friend
because they are from the same -- what's the same
-- the same cohort. I don't recall that cohort,
so they are -- so he said the word around. And
this is how he knew about Charif willing to reuse
the place.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So when is that -- So when in fact -- when did you folks first decide to open this restaurant?

MS. JARROUJE: When you want to open such type of work? (foreign language spoken) When he took his pension from Lebanon because you need money for that. So when he took his pension from the Army and he came here. So it was really deciding -- really going into doing it, it was during the COVID. Before that a little bit, so we were looking for a place. And then after that, we heard that the place was available.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So who -- who are the business partners for this -- Who are the business partners? Who are the people who have ownership interest in this -- in this business?

MS. JARROUJE: Nobody. Joseph only.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: One hundred percent?

MS. JARROUJE: One hundred percent, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now do you know -- do you know Mr. Rabir Makhoul, R-A-B-I-R M-A-
K-H-O-U-L?

MS. JARROUJE: Of course. Yes, of course we know Rabir.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: How?

MS. JARROUJE: Rabir, he's the old tenant. He came and took some of his stuff from here. And we were introduced to him when -- through Charif Khangi when Joseph took the place.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But prior to -- prior to Mr. Jarrouje taking ownership of the place, did he know who he was before --

MS. JARROUJE: Yes, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- Mr. Makhoul, M-A-K-H-O-U-L?

MS. JARROUJE: Yes. Yes. Yes, we know -- You're asking if we knew Rabir before we took the place from Charif Khangi?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.

MS. JARROUJE: He answered, yes. We are Lebanese and we know all each other and we have the same friends. Yes. But we're not friends like friends. Yes, we know a lot of Lebanese if this is your question.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have any business relationship with Mr. Makhoul or his
business, Mehyar, LLC -- M-E-H-Y-A-R, LLC? So do you have any business relationships with Mr. Makhoul or his business?

MS. JARROUJE: No.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I need Mr. Jarrouje, I need him -- ask if he can understand that I need -- Does he have any business relationship --

ADMIN. JUDGE MALONE: No, no.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- with Mr. Makhoul or his business?

ADMIN. JUDGE MALONE: No, no, no.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Have you ever worked for him?

MR. JARROUJE: I'm new here. I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Have you ever worked for him?

MR. JARROUJE: No, no, no.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Have you ever performed any type of work for him?

MR. JARROUJE: (foreign language spoken) No, no.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now you're saying that because you're Lebanese and it's a
small community, you know Mr. Makhoul because of the small community. Is that correct?

(foreign language spoken)

MR. JARROUJE: Yeah, but not a friend.

I know him when I rent this place more -- I know him more when I rent this place.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Now has your business received any money, labor, or goods or services from Mr. Makhoul or from his business?

MR. IBRAHIM: Come again, Chairman. I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Has your business -- have you received any money, labor, or goods or services from Meyhar LLC or from Mr. Makhoul?

MR. IBRAHIM: No. We just estimate how much is a hood, how much is a refrigerator, how much is a bar, how much is a chair, and we figure it out and we bring him out instead of taking everything and we'll go order one again.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now will you receive any future money from him?

MR. IBRAHIM: No -- No relation at all.
(simultaneous speaking)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- from him?

MR. IBRAHIM: No more.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any goods and services from him or his entity anytime in the future?

MR. IBRAHIM: We're not happy to see him because we heard a lot and we never expect such amount.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Sir, I didn't hear what you said. Repeat what you just said.

MR. IBRAHIM: He's not happy with him because after he left, we heard a lot of the story, which it doesn't make us comfortable to be close to him either.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now I was told -- I just gave him clarification, did he let -- There was property left in the business. Is that correct?

MR. IBRAHIM: There is what?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Property.

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes. Yes. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And so did you purchase that property with a loan? How did you come about --
MR. IBRAHIM: Discussion came. It is used already. We can show it to you, the shop manager's here, the place is open. It's old sofa, old kitchen, old bar and we can work with the computer to show you what we took and all. There is nothing fancy, but in the state of getting rid of all of that and with the older bar, we just use it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Now I just -- and I might be asking a repetitive question, but I need -- I need answers to these questions. Do you intend to work with him --

MR. IBRAHIM: No.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- as an employee, independent contractor, or any capacity moving forward?

MR. IBRAHIM: We not involved with him at all. He's not allowed even to come here.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

This is for you specifically, Mr. Ibrahim.

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now you stated that you're the consultant. DCRA has informed us that there's a checklist of items to be addressed
before you can obtain a Certificate of Occupancy
at 1025 31st Street NW. Is that correct?

MR. IBRAHIM: That's correct, Chair.

That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So what is it
-- where are you in addressing DCRA?

MR. IBRAHIM: I got a letter, but
we're waiting for the final approval. I was
trying to submit it yesterday because I believe
we need a certificate of occupancy. But I have
no translate. It come kind of late. I don't
want to disturb. But I had an email, which I can
send it to ABRA now showing that our certificate
of occupancy got a number and it was approved for
final inspection. I have the letter here and I'm
going to forward it to ABRA as today and to the
ANC and the Fine Art. I have it. I know that is
not going to be clear for you here, but I can
email it as we speak that all package from all
the violations, where we are as today.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So
you will provide the letter to ABRA that you have
received from -- So basically, it's my
understanding the representations you're making
is that you have gotten the letter from DCRA and
so you're now ready for final inspection. Is that correct?

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes and I can prove it now as we speak. If you wanted me to send it to Martha or Mr. Sean, I can send that whole package --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah.

MR. IBRAHIM: -- regarding the smoke, regarding violations, regarding sign, all this package is ready. I can mail it now as we speak.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, I would like you to mail it sir.

MR. IBRAHIM: Let me go in my office and we're going to mail it to you to Ms. Martha. Is this good?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah, that's fine.

MR. IBRAHIM: Okay. Okay. You can continue with them. I'm going to send --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Ibrahim, you can wait until the hearing is over. You don't have to do it now.

MR. IBRAHIM: I just want to satisfy the Board because really I feel sorry for this young man. He's been pending for three or four
months. I understand the situation, which Mr. Sean communicated with me about the status of the landlord - the tenant before. And whatever happened here, that's got nothing to do or is not related to my client at all. You've got a good man here. He saved the family tavern, he's in order, he's up to code himself with his wife.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Now I found a Certificate of Occupancy -- All right, Mr. Ibrahim, do not send to Ms. Jenkins, send it to Licensing. I think you're -- I think you've been communicating with --

MR. IBRAHIM: Who?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The Licensing Division.

(simultaneous speaking)

MR. IBRAHIM: -- of the Liquor Board or --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah.

MR. IBRAHIM: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah, I think the Licensing Division -- whoever you've been talking to in the Licensing Division, send that package to them. Right?

MR. IBRAHIM: Okay.
MS. JARROUJE: Can you give us the email address?

MR. IBRAHIM: We're going to send it now. I'm sorry. I don't know it.

MS. JARROUJE: He doesn't know the --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

MR. IBRAHIM: I'm just trying to speed the process.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. If you've been speaking to Martha Jenkins, just send it to her. And we'll forward it to --

(simultaneous speaking)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And we'll forward it to the Licensing Division because I don't have --

MR. IBRAHIM: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I don't have the phone number right now to -- I don't have the email address --

MR. IBRAHIM: I'll send you the letter rush. Just give me, toward the end of the day, everything going to be there or I stop by and drop it there because I have all the copies here with me.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You don't have the -- You don't have the licensing number for --

(simultaneous speaking)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- Mr. Gordy --


CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- Sean Gordy?

Do you have that?

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes, I have Mr. Sean Gordy, of course. And if you're looking for the phone number, I have it here.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, no, no. I'm sorry. Just send it to Mr. Gordy. Okay?

MR. IBRAHIM: I will. I will.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Sean Gordy. All right.

MR. IBRAHIM: I will.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, now I know that you had asked for a summer garden. Was the summer garden approved for that address?

MR. IBRAHIM: For 1025, it's under review and hasn't been responded.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, okay.

MR. IBRAHIM: I have that too. It is here, it is a review, and have the permit number
for the inspection.

    CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

    MR. IBRAHIM: I will send it too.

    CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now -

    MR. IBRAHIM: 1027 had a summer garden approved.

    CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah.

    MR. IBRAHIM: 1025, it is pending.

    CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So what connects -- how is 1025 through 1027 31st Street connected? Are they connected?

    MR. IBRAHIM: They are connected -- they are two different buildings, but they're connected from the back. I can show you. We can walk through with the computer if you would like to have an idea.

    CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So where would the -- where is the summer garden then? Are there two -- you don't have to show me, you can just tell me. So where are the summer gardens? Are they --

    MR. IBRAHIM: They are in the back. Both of them in the back. One, it is covered, which is the issue of the violation. It was covered with no permit. And we already submit
through and everything, that's why we're under review. And the other one, it is not covered, which it is allowed. They authorized it already at DCRA and gave us capacity for it.

MS. JARROUJE: There is door -- he's asking how they are linked together. There is a glass door in-between the open areas. Because the other one is covered and the other one is not.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

MS. JARROUJE: The entrance of 125, it has a separate door by itself.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So how do you plan to use -- how do you plan to use the summer gardens? If summer gardens are approved for both locations, how do you plan to utilize that?

MR. IBRAHIM: I didn't get the end of the question. How I'm what?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: How do you plan to utilize how -- what are your plans for the summer garden -- if the summer garden is approved for both properties, how do you plan to utilize both of them?

MR. IBRAHIM: Up to the regular time.
I mean, we're going to use it just for sitting outside having a drink, outside having a hookah, outside as our provision. And that's it, trying to close around -- 12 o'clock, we're going to close the summer garden. There is no need for it after that. And everything is going to be under the law. Mr. Joseph is not here to violate the law or he's trying to beg for cutting corner or anything. He, himself in order.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

MR. IBRAHIM: That's why we are here to help him.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now do you intend to use any neon signs when you open?

MR. IBRAHIM: Neon signs?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah.

MR. IBRAHIM: No.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You know, those plastic bright light --

MR. IBRAHIM: No, I don't think Georgetown, ANC, and Fine Art give us what is allowed and what is not. And that's why the sign being again was made to get up to code with them. But we're not going to use -- regarding your question, we're not going to use a neon sign. Or
if we're going to use anything, it's going to be removable in case it will be moved for something from time to time. But we already discussed the model with ANC and the Fine Art and we find what is the rule over there and we're going to apply it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, now -- So have you done any work on the windows?

MR. IBRAHIM: No. No. In fact, even I have a construction which is directing the restaurant from A-B to B-C. But we still just waiting --

MS. JARROUJE: We're waiting to finish.

MR. IBRAHIM: -- to finish. I don't know when they're going to finish. We talk with ANC. We bring this model, but we cannot do anything about it -- We're waiting for the construction to finish. We can take some pictures for you, Chairman, and send it to see how much hard time he's going through.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I guess what I'm trying to find out -- I guess what I'm trying to find out as far as the windows are concerned, are there any vinyl -- any plans to install vinyl
windows? And if so, have you received the proper
permits for that?

MR. IBRAHIM: I'm not applying for
that. I'm not looking for that. What I'm
looking, I'm going to put a sign -- simple sign.
It's going to be hand writing and we already
submitted that document for DCRA and the Fine
Art. And they give us some comment, which is the
engineering working in it. If you want that, I
can bring it for you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
What about hookah? Do you plan to provide
hookah?

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes, we submit some
document to show that we need hookah. We're
seeking hookah. We get ventilation for the
hookah. Hookah's part of the Middle East
tradition.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But have you --
have you applied to DCRA --
(simultaneous speaking)
MR. IBRAHIM: I didn't. No, it is not
the DCRA no longer. It is the Health Department.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry,
Department of Health. I apologize, sir.
MR. IBRAHIM: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And you have --

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes, I do. And I have a letter I'm going to submit it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay.

MR. IBRAHIM: It's going to answer these questions, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So you have applied to -- You have applied to DCRA -- I'm sorry, Department of Health, I'm sorry --

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- for hookah.

MR. IBRAHIM: I'm dealing with Ms. Carrie. She's the one who's -- program manager, tobacco control program. DCRA is not working with the Health -- with the smoking no more. This is going to get with the Health Department and it is just the tobacco control. And that's who we are dealing with now. And I'm going to submit this document to you as today too.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, thank you. That was my --

(simultaneous speaking)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- it was my error. You are correct. It is the -- It's the
Department of Health. I said DCRA, so I --

MR. IBRAHIM: It's okay.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So

I'm glad that -- I'm glad to hear that you are in
contact with the Department of Health regarding
hookah. All right, any other questions by any
other board members regarding this issue?

MEMBER SHORT: Yes, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry. Go
ahead, Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: Thank you. This is to
the owners and to the agent if you'd like to
answer it. I see where he's provided a letter
where's he applied to the Department of Health
for hookah. We have in the District of Columbia,
too many businesses who don't have permits who
are doing hookah and do not have any permits from
the Department of Health. Will you permit to not
doing any hookah if you get an ABC license until
you get permission from the Department of Health?

MR. IBRAHIM: I can promise you this,
I will. I can keep my promise. But I want to
tell you, Your Honor, Mr. Chairman, I've studied
the smoke and the tobacco program since -- for
years. And that law, it was need something -- we
call it waiver, which it means you're supposed to
sell tobacco and to prove that you sell tobacco
and it is proved in your tax.

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Ibrahim -- Mr.
Ibrahim, thank you for that rambling, but yes or
no? Will you not smoke hookah in your business
or the owner until they get permission from the
Department of Health?

MR. IBRAHIM: The smoking hookah
outside is legal. You don't need no permit,
which it is in our --

(simultaneous speaking)

MEMBER SHORT: That is not -- that is
not what I asked you. Will you please answer yes
or no?

MR. IBRAHIM: If the law asking me to
do so, I'll comply with the law. But --

(simultaneous speaking)

MEMBER SHORT: For the record, I'm
asking you until you get permission from the
Department of Health, you will not sell or permit
persons to do hookah until you get a permit from
the Department of Health. Yes or no?

MR. IBRAHIM: I can, yes. I can.

MEMBER SHORT: Did you say yes or no?
MR. IBRAHIM: Yes.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. So you're saying yes to what, sir? So we're clear for the record.

MR. IBRAHIM: I will not sell hookah until I finish this process. But there is a part in the restaurant, which you don't need license. I will try -- there is no require for the smoke because it's open place, which people can smoke anything if it is a cigarette or a hookah. I know the law, Mr. Chairman. I worked with the Tobacco Control for so long. There is a requirement for the waiver and there is a requirement for having a smoke. DCRA was involved and need ventilation, which this place have it. And outside never required since it is an open place. I can serve with the Liquor Board with this rule as you wish. I'm aware that Tobacco Control, what is coded and what is not. Outside since it is open place, there is no license needed. Inside since we have --

(simultaneous speaking)

MEMBER SHORT: I understand what you're understanding is. But outside of your front door is public space. Correct?
MR. IBRAHIM: Outside, I don't use sidewalk. We refuse to have sidewalk. We have summer garden, which is our property. Do you get my point. There is summer garden and there is sidewalk --

(simultaneous speaking)

MEMBER SHORT: The point is you have to get a permit to have -- to use public space, correct?

MR. IBRAHIM: Summer --

MEMBER SHORT: From the District?

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes. Summer garden is not public space. Sidewalk is the public space. Summer garden, it's a part of the restaurant, which exists and it is open. Summer garden -- sidewalk cafe, you need from the public --

MEMBER SHORT: So that I don't come off as badgering you, Mr. Chairman, I have no questions of this person. I just wanted it on the record that public space is used -- when you get a summer garden, you must have a permit from the city do that. It is not anybody -- everybody just can't walk around and claim public space. You have to get a permit to do that. And we're allowed to sign off to ABRA for you to use that
for a summer garden. So I'm going to say to you, until I see something from the Department of Public Health, notwithstanding what you -- what your understanding is, the law says for me as a board member not to let you permit to use hookah until you get permission from the Department of Health. That's all I have, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You're welcome.

Any other questions by any board member -- any other board member? Mr. Jarrouje, is there anything else you want to say before I bring this hearing to close here?

(foreign language spoken)

MR. JARROUJE: Let me wife -- let my wife tell it.

MS. JARROUJE: I'm going to translate what he wants to say. He's going to say that as a person who lived by the law all his life, he's going to abide by the law, whatever it is. The system is a bit complicated. Now he's learning that. And it was confusing because there's a lot of layers and a lot of details. But bottom line is he want this to work. He wants to have the business going if everything went on fine. And
this is something that we all as a family were looking forward. And when he learned about there were certain violations that we learned of while we're applying for this license, we had Mr. Zakaria Ibrahim with it, with the hope that would be the end of it. I think that's what he wanted to say. Anything else?

MR. JARROUJE: No.

MS. JARROUJE: No.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Mr. Ibrahim, can you -- can you send all the documents to Sean -- sean.gordy2@dc.gov?

MR. IBRAHIM: I got his email and I will contact Mr. Sean today by email and also if the Board will give me a minute to confirm regarding the summer garden if we are allowed -- because there is some change in the law from my understanding, summer garden since it is open, I have no problem with the smoke. But let me confirm with that and I will include it by -- I will admit today that correction to the Tobacco Control to get an answer and will follow through with that. But any other documents, I will send it to Sean today before 5 o'clock.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. All
right, I just want to -- It's my understanding at least from what you stated that there's two summer gardens. You have approval to use one and so you're still waiting for the -- waiting for DCRA for approval to do the other summer garden.

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: As far as hookah is concerned, we don't regulate hookah. Hookah is regulated by -- Hookah is regulated by the Department of Health. And I think the question that Mr. -- Although we do not enforce hookah in establishments, I just think that Mr. Short was asking whether or not you will allow hookah inside your establishment without having a permit. But I don't --

(simultaneous speaking)

MR. IBRAHIM: Until we have permit, we will not use.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So that's not for me to ask and I'm not going to say whether we're -- I don't know whether or not a permit is required if you have a summer garden and it's outside. I do not know whether or not you can have hookah on an open summer garden. I do not know the answer. But that's something that you,
sir, if the establishment is going to utilize --

wants to do hookah, I would hope that you are up

with the different regulations.

MR. IBRAHIM: I am.

(simultaneous speaking)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- that as you
go through this process, you speak to Mr. Gordy.

We offer a significant amount of training to new

owners. And I will ask that you find out when we

have the different trainings --

MR. IBRAHIM: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- that you

make yourself --

(simultaneous speaking)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- since this

is a new venture for you. If this license is

granted, the Board of course would want you to

be successful. And if this license is -- if the

license is granted, the Board doesn't look

forward to seeing you again. And one of the ways

that you can ensure that the Board does not see

you again if this license was granted is that if

you utilize the training that the agency offers

to new owners.

MR. JARROUJE: I will. Thank you.
Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

Well thank you for your presentation today. The Board will take this matter under advisement and we'll decide whether or not we will allow -- the purpose of this hearing was just to get some information about your request for this license and your relationship to the previous individual who had requested a license for this location.

And so we will take this matter under advisement and make a determination whether or not we're going to say no, we're not going to grant a license or we will allow the process to move forward under licensing. Okay? That's the next step. The Board will make the decision to say probably no, we're not going to grant this license or we're going to ask you to do a different type of hearing or we will allow the process to work itself out to see what happens. Okay?

MR. IBRAHIM: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

Thank you very much. Have a great day.

MR. IBRAHIM: Thank you.
MR. JARROUJE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, bye.

We're going to go off the record until 4 o'clock.
And I will ask all board members to return to
executive section. But we'll -- we will come
back to our public session at 4 o'clock.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
went off the record at 3:48 p.m.)
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In the matter of: Beirut Nights

Before: DCABRA

Date: 02-16-22

Place: teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

[Signature]
Court Reporter