

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD
+ + + + +
MEETING

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IN THE MATTER OF: :
 :
Pub Crawl :
Date of Event:December 14, 2013: Fact-
Applicant: Michael Bramson & : Finding
Alex Lopez : Hearing
Event Name: DC Santa Crawl 2013:
Neighborhood: 1620 I Street, NW:
& 1333 New Hampshire Ave., NW :
Size of Event: 2000-2500 :
attendees :
 :
(The names of the :
Establishments Participating :
in the Pub Crawl are :
Available Upon Request) :

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November 13, 2013

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board met in the Alcoholic Beverage Control Hearing Room, Reeves Building, 2000 14th Street, N.W., Suite 400S, Washington, D.C. 20009, Chairperson Ruthanne Miller, presiding.

PRESENT:

- RUTHANNE MILLER, Chairperson
- NICK ALBERTI, Member
- DONALD BROOKS, Member
- MIKE SILVERSTEIN, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

- KOFI APRAKU, ABRA Investigator

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

(9:53 a.m.)

CHAIRPERSON MILLER: How about DC
Santa Crawl? You are here? Is that you?

MR. BRAMSON: Yes.

MEMBER ALBERTI: DC Santa Crawl?

CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Hello. Okay.
Okay. Good morning.

MR. BRAMSON: Good morning.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Do you want
to identify yourself for the record?

MR. BRAMSON: Michael Bramson.

MR. LOPEZ: Alex Lopez, Project DC
Events.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. We are
just waiting. We are expecting an
Investigator on this as well, I believe. No,
we're not? Okay. Okay. Good morning.

INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Good
morning.

CHAIRPERSON MILLER: So everyone
is just introducing themselves.

1 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay. I'm
2 Investigator Kofi Apraku. The last name is A-
3 P-R-A-K-U for ABRA.

4 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Thank
5 you. So I think this is going to be, you
6 know, a fairly quick, straightforward hearing.
7 We just want to make sure that everything is
8 in order pretty much.

9 From what I see, your event is
10 December 14th from 1:00 to 9:00? Okay. In
11 Dupont Circle. And the size, my notes say the
12 size of the event is 2,000 to 2,500. Is that
13 correct?

14 MR. BRAMSON: Correct.

15 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: And that you
16 had this last year?

17 MR. BRAMSON: Yes, I did.

18 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: How is it the
19 same or different from last year?

20 MR. BRAMSON: I think it's going
21 to be the same as last year. I know last year
22 we anticipated a little bit less. About I

1 think we said 1,500 last year. So the only
2 change is the amount of people. That's how
3 many people ended up coming to the event, so
4 that why we estimated the same amount this
5 year.

6 There is one change in what you
7 said though.

8 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

9 MR. BRAMSON: We actually changed
10 the event from 1:00 to 10:00 p.m.

11 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

12 MR. BRAMSON: And the reason why
13 we changed that is for the registration
14 process. We noticed that when it's earlier
15 and we end at 9:00, everyone seems to come
16 earlier around 1:00 or 2:00 which makes these
17 huge lines. We are thinking that if we make
18 it -- push it one hour later, that it will
19 balance out the registration process.

20 So some people will come from 4:00
21 to 5:00, some will come 3:00 to 4:00 and then
22 people will come 1:00 to 2:00. But normally

1 what happens is when we end it at 9:00, we
2 have seen everyone comes in the beginning and
3 it's just a long line and we block the
4 sidewalk.

5 So we are hoping that by adding
6 that extra hour, it will balance out the
7 registration.

8 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: All right.
9 I'm going to change it on your application
10 then.

11 MR. BRAMSON: Okay.

12 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: It does say
13 9:00 and you can initial it afterwards.

14 MR. BRAMSON: Okay. Sure.

15 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Just
16 so I remember or don't forget. The same
17 establishments involved?

18 MR. BRAMSON: Same.

19 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Same. Okay.
20 And you have cleared them all with ABRA to
21 make sure they can participate?

22 MR. BRAMSON: (No audible answer.)

1 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: And how are
2 you doing the IDing for the --

3 MR. BRAMSON: Well, one thing with
4 the establishments, The Gryphon, it doesn't
5 seem like they are going to participate this
6 year. They weren't there last year, but they
7 would be one of the new bars we added, but it
8 looks like they are not going to open in time
9 anyways. So I just wanted to note that.

10 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. So can
11 you just review quickly like what happens to
12 register and then IDing the individuals?

13 MR. BRAMSON: Yes. So I mean, the
14 participants bring their event tickets. They
15 pick up their wristband, their mugs and they
16 get IDed by the bouncers. We noted to every
17 single bar that although a participant has a
18 wristband does not gain them any access to the
19 event. They have to be checked and rechecked
20 at every single bar.

21 And a lot of bars have -- I mean,
22 they have taken away people that try to sneak

1 in in wristbands and things like that,
2 especially Mighty Pint. They are very good
3 about, you know, just double checking and
4 making sure that those participants, I mean,
5 aren't slipping into another purse or anything
6 like that.

7 So we have seen that process has
8 worked really well.

9 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: And what did
10 you say about a mug?

11 MR. BRAMSON: We have a mug for
12 you guys this time. May I bring it up?

13 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: I can see it from
15 there. I'm okay.

16 MR. BRAMSON: This is just a
17 standard 14 ounce mug. I remember you guys
18 showed us ones that --

19 MEMBER ALBERTI: Can you put that
20 over there?

21 MR. BRAMSON: Huh?

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: Put your hand or

1 finger inside.

2 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yes.

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: Just let me see,
4 can I see through it?

5 MR. BRAMSON: Yeah, pretty good.

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

8 MR. BRAMSON: I remember you guys
9 -- you guys gave us an example of, I think it
10 was or I believe it was, the Snow Day Bar
11 Crawl mug and there was like liquid actually
12 inside the mugs. It made it confusing for the
13 bouncers to see if there was like any alcohol
14 inside there and stuff.

15 MEMBER ALBERTI: Right.

16 MR. BRAMSON: So we just wanted to
17 show you guys our mug. It's very simple, 14
18 ounces. It's transparent, too.

19 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: So do they
20 get it rinsed out at each place before they go
21 to the next one or how does that work? Do
22 they get served in that?

1 MR. LOPEZ: Honestly, it's up to
2 them.

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: What?

4 MR. LOPEZ: Honestly, it's up to
5 the participant, but every bouncer just makes
6 sure that the mug is empty before they leave--

7 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Empty before
8 they leave.

9 MR. LOPEZ: -- the establishment.
10 Yeah.

11 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Right. Okay.
12 Have you checked with MPD on this?

13 MR. BRAMSON: Yeah. We always hit
14 up Commander Reese, so we are probably going
15 to do that as soon as we leave this meeting,
16 just to make sure MPD is on the same page, as
17 far as the date and the times and the
18 participating establishments.

19 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. So I
20 think I'm going to let others ask any
21 questions, but I have one more. It just
22 sounds like a lot of people to me. And so can

1 you explain how all those people -- it isn't
2 really that much, but because of the time or
3 how, you know, all those people on the street,
4 it sounds like a lot.

5 MR. BRAMSON: It's spread out. So
6 because of the time, people can register from
7 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. And people on average -- I
8 mean I don't know exactly how long, but it
9 seems like people stay for about three to four
10 hours. So by extending it, we are thinking,
11 you know, some will come at 1:00 and leave at
12 4:00 or 5:00. It never seems, at least from
13 all our previous events, that it is that
14 crowded at one time.

15 And plus that the bars are spread
16 out, it's never really congested in one area.

17 MR. LOPEZ: So for DC Santa Crawl,
18 we are going to have two registration points
19 on different sides of Dupont. So we are going
20 to have BlackFinn as the main registration bar
21 and we are also having Front Page. So the
22 cool think about these two places, they are

1 right by the Metro, too, and they are on
2 opposite ends.

3 So pretty much we spread out the
4 crowd so that there is no long lines or
5 anything like that at participating bars. Not
6 to mention every establishment that we have
7 worked with doubles the staff for the event.

8 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: So I mean,
9 you are having more than last year, but last
10 year they didn't have to turn people away,
11 because they were too crowded already? No,
12 that didn't happen. And do you have a cap on
13 the number of participants you will allow?

14 MR. LOPEZ: I think our cap -- we
15 have enough party favors and mugs to
16 accommodate 3,000 people. So I think that
17 would be our cap for DC Santa Crawl. I know
18 one of the things that we are facing
19 especially for this one is there is a lot of
20 competition just the whole month of December
21 as far as similar events.

22 So I think for us like a

1 comfortable number to cap this event, that
2 would be about 3,000 since that's -- since we
3 have enough party favors for 3,000 people.

4 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: And what's
5 the ticket price?

6 MR. LOPEZ: We -- right now, our
7 early bird is \$10 and it moves up to \$15 for
8 regular price and it's \$20 at the door.

9 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. All
10 right. Well, I'm going to let others. Any
11 other questions? Yeah, Mr. Alberti?

12 MEMBER ALBERTI: First of all, I
13 want to thank you for responding to our
14 concerns about the cup. We very much
15 appreciate it. Thank you for that.

16 Investigator Apraku, did you look
17 at the list of licensees?

18 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: The licensed
19 establishments, yes.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: And it's okay?

21 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Yeah, they
22 are okay.

1 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. Great. I
2 have no further questions.

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Others? Mr.
4 Apraku, do you have questions?

5 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Yes, I have
6 one or two.

7 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

8 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Just due to
9 the -- after I read it and I also saw that --
10 the number of participants, due to the nature
11 of how many people will be attending, you
12 stated in the security plan that there would
13 be additional on-call security. Who is going
14 to be responsible for making sure that there
15 is on-call responsible security? Would that
16 be you guys or would that be the
17 establishment?

18 MR. BRAMSON: So we keep the
19 establishments updated on the numbers weekly.

20 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

21 MR. BRAMSON: So basically, if we
22 are approaching the 2,000 mark with a week to

1 go, they will definitely double, you know, up
2 on the security.

3 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

4 MR. BRAMSON: Especially the
5 registration bars.

6 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay. And
7 the other question that I have is is so you
8 have this mug. Each place that you go you get
9 a 14 ounce beer? Is that what it --

10 MR. LOPEZ: So pretty much. Front
11 Page and BlackFinn where you register, you're
12 going to get handed a mug, a route map and a
13 wristband.

14 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

15 MR. LOPEZ: So pretty much
16 participants take the mug from bar to bar.

17 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

18 MR. LOPEZ: And the bartenders
19 may, you know, pour the drink specials inside
20 the mug.

21 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

22 MR. BRAMSON: And a lot of

1 participants don't even choose to use the mug.
2 It's simply up to them.

3 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

4 MR. BRAMSON: But they -- the
5 bouncers, they are aware that it is a 14 ounce
6 mug.

7 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

8 MR. BRAMSON: A lot of the bars
9 only serve the 14 ounce, so --

10 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay. Okay.
11 And the last thing. Do you have a tally for
12 the number of people already -- who have
13 already purchased tickets already?

14 MR. LOPEZ: Actually, we started
15 ticket sales yesterday.

16 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay.

17 MR. LOPEZ: So that's -- I mean,
18 we can definitely email you guys as far as
19 like how many we sold in one day. I can
20 check, but, I mean, ticket sales started just
21 yesterday.

22 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Okay. All

1 right. I don't have any other questions.

2 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: I just want
3 to follow-up on the number and the security.
4 I mean, what's the number of security you are
5 going to have?

6 MR. BRAMSON: Well, each bar
7 whatever their normal security is for a night,
8 they are going to double up on that.

9 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

10 MR. BRAMSON: Obviously, if we are
11 less than 2,000 or only 1,000 ticket sales,
12 they will keep what they normally have. But
13 if we are reaching what we expect, you know,
14 in our contract with them, you know, they are
15 supposed to double up on security. And we
16 always follow-up weekly and especially the
17 last week.

18 We send them a follow-up email
19 asking them for security and every -- since we
20 have dealt with all these bars before, we know
21 that they are on point with the security,
22 especially the registration bars.

1 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yeah.

2 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: If I may ask
3 one more question? Are there any food
4 specials that come with, you know,
5 participation in the pub crawl?

6 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, sir. Every
7 participating bar has food guilds just for the
8 event. So, I mean, that's one of the things
9 that we are very hands-on about. Just making
10 sure that participants are feeding themselves
11 while they are participating.

12 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: All right.
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Mr. Apraku, I
15 just want to ask your opinion about the
16 number, because there is a range here.

17 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: So the
19 application says 2,000 to 2,500.

20 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: But now they
22 are talking about a 3,000 cap and last year

1 they had about 1,500 participants.

2 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: Um-hum.

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: So I'm
4 wondering if you have any concerns about that
5 3,000 number, whether -- I just wonder if
6 that's too high?

7 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: I can't
8 necessarily say whether it's too high or not,
9 but it is --

10 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

11 INVESTIGATOR APRAKU: -- a large
12 amount of people, especially if they do reach
13 that 3,000 number. I would be more so
14 concerned about the security within the
15 establishments as to whether they are going to
16 actually bring additional security members in
17 or just brush it off. That would be more so
18 the concern that I would have, because, again,
19 these places get packed and there is a lot of
20 people drinking, it can easily become a
21 hazard.

22 So that would be my main concern

1 as to the ratio of participants to the ratio
2 of security personnel available and that could
3 present problems. But -- and I mean, I don't
4 know how the actual event went on previous --
5 in the previous year in regards to how packed
6 it was and in regards to the participating
7 establishments, but 3,000 does seem like a lot
8 of people, especially in those centralized
9 areas.

10 MR. LOPEZ: And that's one of the
11 things that every bar, even before they are
12 notified, I mean, they just have to make sure
13 the security is there. You have to make sure
14 that you have enough servers to accommodate
15 our crowd and they need to have enough
16 bartenders as well.

17 But one of the things that we
18 really stressed out -- on is making sure that
19 security is always there, that security is
20 doubled just for the day of the event. And
21 one of the things that we do, too, is we make
22 sure that our volunteers -- we get enough

1 volunteers to accommodate the number of people
2 that we have also.

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yes. Mr.
4 Alberti?

5 MEMBER ALBERTI: Yes. Mr. Lopez,
6 just in regards to that, so you have pre-
7 registration. Is that correct for this or is
8 it just day of?

9 MR. LOPEZ: Day of, yeah.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: It's all day of
11 registration. So --

12 MR. LOPEZ: Well, I mean, you can
13 get a ticket ahead of time, but the
14 registration is just the day of.

15 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. Do most
16 people get tickets day of?

17 MR. LOPEZ: No. Most people get
18 tickets ahead of time.

19 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So when
20 will you know, approximately, what the size of
21 the crowd will be?

22 MR. LOPEZ: I mean, ticket sales

1 go up until -- if we don't -- if it doesn't
2 sell out, then we keep it probably open until
3 the week of.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. All right.
5 That's fine. So you are, my point is, able to
6 tell the establishments --

7 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- give the
9 establishments an idea of the size of the
10 crowd?

11 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, exactly.

12 MEMBER ALBERTI: So they can
13 prepare and bring on appropriate staff.
14 That's my concern.

15 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah, so, I mean, we
16 send them weeks prior, but really it's the
17 last week that makes the biggest difference.
18 So we always send them out an email that
19 Monday morning saying this is our number right
20 now. And then we notify them again later in
21 the week whether that is Wednesday or
22 Thursday. And then we tell them this is the

1 final count.

2 But we give them warning ahead of
3 time, so they can start at least talking to
4 people and getting -- the last thing we want
5 is them to say oh, we didn't get enough notice
6 and now we can't staff it. We can't get
7 enough employees.

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: Then last year,
9 what was the percentage of participants who
10 bought tickets on the day of the event? Do
11 you know?

12 MR. LOPEZ: I would have to go
13 back. I think actually for all the crawls, I
14 think it was the least amount that bought the
15 day of, just because it's colder. Usually in
16 the summer people, if it's nice out, they will
17 just come and buy a ticket.

18 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay.

19 MR. LOPEZ: If it's colder,
20 especially with the holiday season, they have
21 holiday parties.

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: Any guesses as to

1 what that is? 50 percent? 30?

2 MR. LOPEZ: I would say close to
3 like maybe like 100.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: 100 people?

5 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, 100 people.

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: All right.

7 MR. LOPEZ: Or so.

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: Oh, okay.

9 MR. LOPEZ: Like 10 percent maybe.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: So it's a very
11 small percentage?

12 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. Very good.
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Any
16 other questions?

17 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: No questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: All right.
19 So I mean I'm fine with signing off on this,
20 except for the 3,000 sounds a little bit high
21 to me. I mean, I don't know how others feel
22 about maybe dropping it back to 2,500. Is

1 there any big downside for you all, I mean?

2 MR. LOPEZ: I mean, all these bars
3 are definitely establishments that we have
4 worked with, like, you know, maybe four or
5 five times already, so, I mean, they are
6 definitely establishments that we trust with
7 definitely, you know, double security if the
8 numbers are there. So there is, I mean, no
9 doubt that I have that -- I mean, security
10 wouldn't be an issue for DC Santa Crawl.

11 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Well, okay.
12 Let me ask you one more thing. I don't want
13 to prolong this too much, but, I mean, you put
14 2,000 to 2,500 in your application, so why do
15 you ask now for 3,000?

16 MR. LOPEZ: I mean, this is our
17 very -- this is our first repeat event in
18 Washington, D.C., so I mean we believe that,
19 I mean, it's going to be higher numbers than
20 last year just because (A) our listserv is
21 growing and (B) I mean, we -- every event that
22 we put together we go above and beyond to show

1 our guests a really good time, a good
2 experience. So we think it is going to be a
3 little bit higher numbers than last year.

4 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: And last
5 year's was 1,500? Okay. How do others feel?

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm willing to
7 allow them to change it to a cap of 3,000, but
8 I would ask that, since it's a large event,
9 you maybe two or three days before the event
10 speak with maybe Investigator Apraku or
11 whoever is assigned to this and just let them
12 know what your expected number is.

13 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: How many tickets
15 you sold, so that they know exactly and I'm
16 trusting that you are going to notify the
17 establishments of the size of the crowd, so
18 they can prepare.

19 MR. LOPEZ: And we will notify
20 Commander Reese as well just to make sure MPD
21 is on board.

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: Right, right.

1 And with that, I'm willing to allow the larger
2 cap.

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Mr. Brooks?

4 MEMBER BROOKS: I'm okay.

5 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. All
6 right. So I'll sign that.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: So gentlemen,
8 here is your application. Can you make the
9 two changes?

10 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: I already
11 changed the 10:00.

12 MEMBER ALBERTI: The Chair made
13 the one change with the hours.

14 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yeah.

15 MEMBER ALBERTI: If you could make
16 the change on the number of participants,
17 initial it and then we will sign off on it.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. BRAMSON: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Thank
21 you.

22 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you very much.

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CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Have a good event.

(Whereupon, the Fact-Finding Hearing in the above-entitled matter was concluded at 10:12 a.m.)

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