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

- - - - -X

IN THE MATTER OF: :
Pub Crawl :
Applicant: Michael Bramson :
And Alex Lopez : Case #Fact Finding
Date of Event: Dec. 12, 2015 :
Neighborhood: Multiple :
Licensed Premises :
Size of Event: 2,600-2,900 :

- - - - -X

Wednesday, December 9,
2015

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.

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3 CHAIRPERSON:

4 DONOVAN ANDERSON, Presiding

5

6 BOARD MEMBERS:

7 NICK ALBERTI

8 JAMES SHORT

9 RUTHANNE MILLER

10 MIKE SILVERSTEIN

11

12 ALSO PRESENT:

13 KEVIN PUENTE,

14 On behalf of ABRA

15 SUPERVISORY INVESTIGATOR STUART

16 On Behalf of ABRA

17 PATRICK POWELL, Director of Operations,

18 On behalf of the Golden Triangle BID

19 MIKE BRAMSON,

20 On behalf of Project DC Events

21 ALEX LOPEZ,

22 On behalf of Project DC Events

1 [12:16 a.m.]

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

3 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: The next case on the
4 calendar is a fact finding for pub crawl
5 applicant, Michael Bramson and Alex Lopez. Can
6 you please approach. And write your name and
7 state your name for the record, please. Yeah.
8 Start, please.

9 MR. LOPEZ: You want us to say our names
10 again?

11 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Yeah. It's a
12 different case. So you have to state your --

13 MR. LOPEZ: Alex Lopez, Project DC
14 Events.

15 MR. BRAMSON: Mike Bramson, Project DC
16 Events.

17 INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Investigator Kevin
18 Puente.

19 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: All right. Can you
20 tell us what you have to report.

21 INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes. We have an
22 application for this Saturday for pub crawl.

1 They were estimated between 2,600 to a maximum of
2 3,500 from 2:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. I reviewed all
3 the establishments participating for this pub
4 crawl. Two of them I found that could not
5 participate according to the laws and regulations
6 of 712.9 Pub Crawl, "No establishment with more
7 than two primary tier offenses in a two-year
8 period may participate in a pub crawl."

9 There are two establishments that want to
10 participate: The Huxley, they had two primary
11 violations in 2015. Well, one in 2015 and one in
12 2013 that was adjudicated in March of this year.
13 Then the Front Page, they had two violations in
14 2014; a sale to minor and a substantial change --
15 their sidewalk cafe.

16 And one thing I noticed that, for the
17 law, they're supposed to have operational
18 security plan should include but not limit to the
19 name and number of security personnel contracted
20 for the event. I saw on their application that
21 each establishment will provide their own
22 security. So I just want to know -- how would

1 they know each establishment provided their own
2 security or added security for the event?

3 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Okay. And, during
4 your presentation, if the Board is going to
5 consider approving this for this weekend, the
6 Board would make it clear to you that the two
7 establishments that Investigator Puente --
8 Huxley's and the Front Page -- that the Board
9 would prohibit these two establishments from
10 participating. So you would have to -- if we're
11 going to consider granting this permit, that
12 these two establishments cannot participate in
13 these events. Is that clear to you?

14 MR. LOPEZ: That's fine. It's clear.
15 It's very clear.

16 MR. BRAMSON: Yeah. So the last bar
17 crawl that we had -- Huxley and Front Page --
18 were participating. They got approved. But we
19 have no problem taking them off. We didn't know
20 that they had the two violations. So, like you
21 said, in order to consider us, we would
22 definitely take those two bars off.

1 In terms of the added security, what
2 we've been doing, we've been submitting this
3 security plan since 2012. We keep the bars
4 informed of the number of participants and they
5 staff accordingly. And I don't know of any
6 instances in the last two, three years where
7 that's been an issue of security in terms of not
8 having enough bouncers or anything like that at
9 these checkpoints, or all the bars, actually.

10 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Tell me about this
11 event. Now, remember I am the newest member of
12 the Board.

13 MR. LOPEZ: Oh, sorry.

14 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: You're educating me.
15 You're trying to influence me. So I'm not going.
16 My major involvement is knowing what it is you
17 guys are talking about is based on that fact
18 finding hearing that you participated this
19 morning. So please let me know what it is that
20 you're asking us to consider.

21 MR. LOPEZ: Okay. So this is our fourth
22 annual D.C. Santa Crawl. It's a pub crawl

1 through DuPont. We team up with Toys For Tots
2 and participants bring in toys and we donate
3 those. Like I said, it's our fourth annual year.
4 We've had no prior problems with them in the
5 past. It's one of our smaller events or
6 somewhere in the middle. It's not our biggest
7 one.

8 I mean, I guess, like a few other things.
9 What Mike was saying, it's an 8-hour event when
10 it comes to drink specials. Our check-in times
11 are between 2:00 and 5:30 at the check-in places.
12 And after that, they can go to any of the
13 participating establishments.

14 Like Mike was saying, we do work with
15 Toys For Tots picking up toys and donate those.
16 And this is our fourth year throwing it. And we
17 have never had an issue with this one. I mean,
18 we are the only event on December 12 in D.C.

19 MR. BRAMSON: I'm sorry. So one thing
20 I've noticed going back to Halloween, as well, is
21 that the D.C. Santa Crawl historically has been a
22 day event. And Halloween this past year was our

1 first time ever doing it in D.C. And we know
2 some participants came later as opposed to coming
3 earlier. D.C. Santa Crawl, I guess, for the
4 theme and the way it's been going on, people come
5 right at 2:00 and we start registering.

6 What we saw from Halloween is that people
7 came at the very, very end of registration just
8 so that they could be out at night. And I think
9 that's what caused a lot of those problems as
10 well. When it's a day event, you know, people
11 are there earlier, they leave earlier, and that
12 way when the night crowd comes, it's not an
13 issue.

14 MR. LOPEZ: A reason, too, they came
15 pretty late is because they had an extra hour on
16 October 31st.

17 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Well, one of the
18 concerns that I had that I learned from the fact
19 finding was that the time that you asked us for
20 the event -- and I'm hoping I'm getting the
21 organization correct -- that on both ends, you
22 kind of -- I mean, the [indiscernible] fine print

1 you comply with the ABRA regulation. I guess, in
2 the fine print you did state that when the
3 tickets were, but it appeared that the event was
4 for hours outside of what was approved.

5 So what are the hours? I see on the
6 application it states from 2:00 to 10:00. So is
7 it 2:00 to 10:00 and the fine print says it's
8 another time? Or exactly, what are the hours
9 that we're dealing with, with this application?

10 MR. BRAMSON: From 2:00 to 10:00.
11 There's no extended hours or fast pass after that
12 time. Again, the only reason why we did it and
13 the only time we've done it in the last three
14 years is because it was Halloween night. We knew
15 the lines were going to get big. We heard about
16 the other pub crawls.

17 We just wanted our participants that even
18 after the event to be able to skip those lines
19 and get into the bars and not have to wait with
20 thousands of other people from other companies
21 waiting in line. And that was more for our
22 guests than anything else. But we felt we made it

1 very clear that at 11:00 p.m. the specials ended.

2 But yeah. For this event, in the past
3 moving forward the times, we state would be the
4 times that the drink special end and the event
5 ends.

6 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: All right. You
7 stated that you collect toys. So how many toys
8 have you guys collected in previous years and,
9 yeah, is it worth it?

10 MR. LOPEZ: So normally, in the past,
11 Marines have actually come from Toys for Tots and
12 gotten there. So they give us those big donation
13 boxes. And people, we give them a raffle if they
14 donate a toy. And with that raffle, we get bars,
15 restaurants, we buy some gifts where if they
16 enter that raffle, they can win, so, for example,
17 like an android tablet. So all they have to do
18 is bring a toy and they can enter that free
19 raffle.

20 Usually, it's about 2 or 3 of those big
21 boxes filled up, per registration bar. So I
22 don't know how many exact. We never count

1 because the Marines just take them right from
2 there.

3 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Members?

4 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Question. What's the
5 status of the event now? Are you telling
6 tickets? Have you been selling tickets?

7 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

8 MR. BRAMSON: Yeah.

9 MR. SILVERSTEIN: How many have you sold?

10 MR. LOPEZ: We have about 2,100.

11 MR. SILVERSTEIN: I'm sorry?

12 MR. LOPEZ: About 2,100.

13 MR. SILVERSTEIN: 2,100?

14 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah.

15 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Okay. That was my
16 question. Mr. Alberti?

17 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: I apologize.

18 MR. ALBERTI: No, no, no.

19 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: I was looking at your
20 applications.

21 MR. ALBERTI: Not you. I was waiting for
22 you to call me rather than --

1 [Laughter.]

2 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: All right. Go ahead
3 Mr. Alberti.

4 [Simultaneous speaking.]

5 MR. ALBERTI: I thought it was understood
6 that we have a chairman here.

7 I'm confused by your application. Says,
8 "Participants, 2,600 to 2,900." And then it
9 says, "Maximum of 3,500." What is it? And, you
10 know, look. I wasn't pleased by your
11 advertisement for Halloween. So, if I'm giving
12 you a hard time, it's because you guys have
13 earned it. So what is it? What is your max that
14 you're asking for?

15 MR. LOPEZ: 2,100 is what we have now.
16 We will not pass 3,000. That's if -- and that's
17 a good, great scenario for us.

18 MR. ALBERTI: So you'll amend your
19 application? I mean, if the Board's agreeable to
20 that, would you --

21 MR. LOPEZ: Yes --

22 MR. ALBERTI: -- amend your application

1 to 3,000 --?

2 MR. LOPEZ: Yes. Yes. Yes.

3 MR. ALBERTI: All right. It's not saying
4 I favor --

5 MR. LOPEZ: I don't know if we'll hit
6 those numbers. That's what we'll aim for. But I
7 don't know if we will with three days --

8 MR. ALBERTI: Can we have examples of
9 your advertising?

10 MR. LOPEZ: Huh?

11 MR. ALBERTI: Can we have example of your
12 advertising? I'd like to see the hours that you
13 have.

14 MR. LOPEZ: The investigator should have
15 it.

16 INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, I got a copy.

17 MR. ALBERTI: All right. Can we see a
18 copy? And while that's coming up, you just lost
19 two of your registration sites.

20 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

21 MR. ALBERTI: What are you going to do?

22 MR. LOPEZ: We are going to add one.

1 We're thinking more than likely we'll add Rumors
2 and make an amendment.

3 MR. ALBERTI: How do you do that?

4 MR. LOPEZ: Submit an amendment.

5 MR. ALBERTI: This is the 9th. The 12th
6 is in what? Two days away? Three days away?
7 How do you do that?

8 MR. LOPEZ: So we will e-mail all the
9 participants -- I mean, we have all their contact
10 information -- and let them know that these two
11 bars are no longer participating. They're no
12 longer registration. The new registration point
13 would stay with BlackFinn. But also the new one
14 would be Rumors.

15 MR. ALBERTI: Okay. You promise me that
16 there are no hidden times on any other
17 advertisement?

18 MR. ALBERTI: We promise.

19 MR. BRAMSON: We promise. There's no
20 hidden time.

21 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Yes, Mr. Short. Oh,
22 I'm sorry. Were you done?

1 MR. ALBERTI: Yeah, I think I'm done.

2 MR. SHORT: I have several, several
3 concerns. We have the BID here from DuPont
4 Circle. We heard the citizens complaining
5 before. So what you're saying about there have
6 never been any problems. There have been
7 problems. They just didn't surface like this
8 particular time.

9 And is it a practice of yours -- at least
10 here in Washington D.C. -- well, let me ask you
11 this: Do you sell tickets in Alexandria,
12 Virginia before you get an approval from this
13 temporary license from this Board? Do you sell
14 tickets before you get approved in Alexandria?

15 MR. LOPEZ: Well, we don't do -- but for
16 Virginia, yes, we do.

17 MR. SHORT: You do sell tickets before
18 you get approved.

19 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

20 MR. SHORT: So I mean, I'm confused. So,
21 if you've got a temporary driver's license but
22 they haven't approved it yet, you can go out and

1 drive a car in Washington, right? I mean, does
2 approval mean anything to you? I'm not
3 convinced, like some of the other Board Members,
4 that we should allow DuPont Circle to be the same
5 people who participated in trashing that
6 community to give you a sign-off.

7 So I'm just going to go right out on a
8 limb. At least this is one vote you don't get.
9 And I want the BID and everybody to know and
10 DuPont to know that I don't think this is a
11 wonderful thing to give a reward to people who
12 have trashed our community and sell tickets
13 before they get approvals.

14 What's the difference between you and the
15 guy here from New York who came down here and
16 didn't even get a license and was selling tickets
17 online? So I guess he's got a fine example. He
18 says the guys who do business down here on a
19 regular basis, they sell tickets before they get
20 approvals, so we're going to sell tickets before
21 we get approvals.

22 Everybody in Washington is watching pub

1 crawls now because of what you guys did down
2 there on Halloween.

3 And I'm just going to go on the record
4 and say I respect these investigators for doing a
5 fine job, the BID for doing a fine job. You said
6 you were going to give some money to the BID for
7 the trash. Have you done that for Halloween?

8 MR. BRAMSON: We don't even know what the
9 bill was? I mean, if the BID asked us to
10 contribute with the other pub crawls, we have no
11 problem doing that.

12 MR. LOPEZ: And to answer your question
13 about Arlington, I mean, we usually have a
14 meeting with the Arlington County Police
15 Department and the county, I would say, anywhere
16 from 3 to 4 weeks prior to our event. And they
17 allocate a day just to have a meeting with all
18 the events that are going to be held in
19 Arlington.

20 So myself and Mike go to the meeting,
21 talk to the county, talk to the police
22 department, and stuff like that. So that meeting

1 usually takes place anywhere between, like, 3 to
2 4 weeks prior to the event.

3 But they know that we start selling
4 tickets anywhere from 5 to 6 weeks prior, because
5 that's how we build momentum and we have tiers
6 for tickets and all that stuff in our marketing
7 and whatnot. So they know ahead of time that we
8 start selling and promoting the event prior to us
9 getting approved and having that meeting with the
10 county.

11 MR. SHORT: Good. Why don't you do the
12 same thing in Washington D.C., please.

13 MR. BRAMSON: And it's different
14 regulations. I mean, there's no -- besides
15 having a Board, there's no meeting with -- we
16 actually meet with the trash removal services.
17 We meet with the park services. We meet with --

18 MR. LOPEZ: With the metro --

19 MR. BRAMSON: -- the metro police. But
20 it's a requirement. We actually are the ones
21 that helped develop that. I'm sure you've all
22 heard what happened in Arlington. And we were

1 the ones that they called in to help make those
2 regulations with them.

3 MR. SHORT: Do you have to have county
4 police officers there when you have your event?

5 MR. BRAMSON: Yes, we do.

6 MR. SHORT: You have. So why not have
7 RDO when you have it here in Washington D.C.?

8 MR. BRAMSON: I think we should.

9 MR. SHORT: You think -- oh, we're on the
10 same page with that.

11 And I'll just say this: I'm just finding
12 it very strange that across the river in
13 Alexandria, you do things so greatly. Now, and
14 you talk with the police before you have an
15 event. How many times you talk with the police
16 before you have an event?

17 MR. LOPEZ: All the time. I mean, and
18 honestly, it's so different in Arlington and D.C.
19 Like, back when Commander Reese was in charge,
20 our whole conversation with MPD just resulted in
21 me picking up the phone and calling Commander
22 Reese and having a conversation and telling him

1 this is the day. This is how many people we
2 expect. And all he would tell me is just please
3 follow up with an e-mail and just tell me
4 whatever you said. And that was Commander Reese.

5 Once Captain Jones took over, we just
6 started e-mailing. And I would update Captain
7 Jones on numbers and bars.

8 MR. SHORT: Who?

9 MR. LOPEZ: So that was Pamela Jones.

10 MR. SHORT: So you went from talking to
11 the commander, to talking to a lieutenant -- I
12 mean --

13 MR. LOPEZ: Commander Reese retired.

14 MR. SHORT: Yeah. I understand. But you
15 went from talking to a commander who could get
16 resources, to talking to a lieutenant who just
17 might have a beat or PSA.

18 MR. LOPEZ: Captain Pamela Jones was the
19 one that reached out to our company to pretty
20 much be updated on events that we throw.

21 MR. SHORT: Okay. Well, I'm just going
22 on the record and say I'm not impressed. I'm

1 still upset about Halloween. And I want to say
2 to the BID and say to DuPont Circle, I don't
3 think it's a good idea to reward you guys with
4 another event so close to the one you just blew.

5 And also, I'd like to go on record that I
6 think that you need to reach out to the police a
7 lot sooner when you plan this and put application
8 in. You need to get something signed off from
9 the police department. And I'm going to make a
10 recommendation to this Board that we do that.
11 Because, if you have police when you have a pub
12 crawl in Virginia, why not have police when you
13 have it here? And that's just not a strong
14 suggestion I'm making. I'm going to actually put
15 that in writing to the Board.

16 MR. BRAMSON: That's a great idea.

17 MR. LOPEZ: That's a really great idea.

18 MR. SHORT: I just think you guys are bad
19 actors. I think that you've flown under the
20 radar for a long time and you had the event. You
21 knew two other people were selling tickets. You
22 knew that going in, didn't you? Before

1 Halloween, did you not know there were going to
2 be other bar crawls in the area?

3 MR. BRAMSON: We knew of Lindy. The
4 other one we didn't know until a couple days
5 before.

6 MR. SHORT: But you knew before.

7 MR. BRAMSON: Yeah. A couple days, yes.

8 MR. SHORT: And what'd you do about it?

9 MR. LOPEZ: I personally e-mailed Captain
10 Jones and updated our own, Lindy having their
11 event the same day as ours.

12 MR. SHORT: Well, not Lindy. I'm talking
13 about the person who came from New York who was
14 selling tickets and you knew that two days before
15 the event; what did you do about that?

16 MR. BRAMSON: They weren't part of our --
17 we actually followed up with the bar to make sure
18 that Lindy nor Pubcrawls.com would be
19 participating at our bars.

20 MR. SHORT: Okay. Another issue: You
21 sold 77 tickets over.

22 MR. BRAMSON: Uh-huh.

1 MR. SHORT: Are we doing to be sure that
2 you don't sell tickets over this time if other
3 Board members decide to let you have this? How
4 can we be assured you're not going to do that
5 again?

6 MR. BRAMSON: I mean, we just cut off the
7 registration completely. I mean, that's just --
8 I mean, we can stop online, just add that this is
9 the max amount of tickets that are sold. We
10 honestly didn't know that it was going to go over
11 77.

12 MR. SHORT: You didn't know.

13 MR. BRAMSON: But, at the same time -- I
14 mean, it's a big night -- but at the same time,
15 we don't think that 3,577 people actually showed
16 up that day.

17 MR. SHORT: You don't think. Well,
18 listen at this.

19 [Simultaneous speaking.]

20 MR. SHORT: Well, 16,000 people were
21 there and you --

22 MR. BRAMSON: That's from other --

1 MR. SHORT: I understand. But you knew
2 somebody from New York City was selling tickets
3 two days before the event. You didn't notify
4 ABRA. You didn't notify the police. It was
5 [indiscernible] --

6 MR. BRAMSON: I honestly didn't know it
7 was our responsibility. I thought that they
8 would notify ABRA or Lindy. I mean, I don't know
9 if pub crawls --

10 MR. SHORT: I found an answer.
11 Irresponsible. That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

12 MR. BRAMSON: Can I say --?

13 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Go ahead, sir.

14 MR. BRAMSON: Also, so I'm not sure if
15 you all are aware that we had a pub crawl the
16 same day in Arlington. And we had the same
17 amount of people, maybe a little bit less, and
18 there was no issues with trash. Our participants
19 didn't, you know --

20 MR. SHORT: Never is in Arlington.

21 MR. BRAMSON: Huh?

22 MR. SHORT: Never is in Arlington.

1 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Let him finish.

2 MR. BRAMSON: No. So what I'm saying is
3 that it's hard for us to -- especially since
4 we've never had issues before -- to believe that
5 our guests, who've never done this before, all of
6 a sudden on Halloween decide to trash the
7 streets. I mean, there was two other crawls.

8 And then Halloween night, you know, that,
9 we believe, caused that as opposed to saying,
10 "Okay. Well, Project DC's participants are the
11 ones that trashed the streets" when those same
12 people were across the river and they didn't
13 trash anything. And normally, Arlington's the
14 more rowdy crowd as opposed to D.C.

15 MR. SHORT: Oh, that's refreshing.

16 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: All right. I think
17 Mr. Silverstein had a question. Please, just one
18 question.

19 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Okay. I've got a
20 couple things here real quick. First, you
21 applied for this on October 28th. So it's not
22 that this thing was, you know -- that you have

1 been delaying; is that correct? I mean, I see
2 the date of the 28th of October on here. I'd
3 like to ask Mr. Powell if he has anything to add.

4 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Hold on. I'm going
5 to call --

6 MR. SILVERSTEIN: I want to know if
7 there'd been any problems. You guys have had
8 these how many years in a row?

9 MR. BRAMSON: Four.

10 MR. LOPEZ: This is our fourth time doing
11 it.

12 MR. SILVERSTEIN: And we're 3 days ahead
13 of this thing or 4 days ahead of it and now we're
14 thinking about doing this. And yet there was
15 some serious problems with Halloween. We're all
16 in a bit of a bind here. But I would just like
17 to know -- and when we have an opportunity --
18 what your past record has been on these
19 particular events being that it's this close to
20 and that you guys have applied that far out.

21 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: I just want, for the
22 record, to just clarify the record that I know

1 that this is just 3 days before the event and
2 that the applicant -- that it's my understanding
3 that the applicant is not at fault that 3 days
4 before the event that we're having this hearing.
5 And so it's unfortunate that we're having this
6 hearing 3 days before the event. But I just want
7 the record to be clear that, at least I was told
8 by ABRA, that the applicant is not at fault. I
9 just want to let the record reflect that.

10 And I also want to bring to your
11 attention we approved a pub crawl earlier -- I'm
12 not sure how long I've been here -- but I guess
13 since I've been on this Board, we did approve a
14 pub crawl for a Snow Day Crawl. We did inform
15 that promoter that there was an illegal pub
16 crawl. And I don't remember when it was. But
17 there was an illegal -- also on Halloween, there
18 was illegal.

19 And the Mad Hatter and Buffalo Billiards
20 participated in that pub crawl. And we informed
21 the Snow Day Crawl that those two establishments
22 could not participate in their pub crawl. So, to

1 be consistent with what we've done previously, if
2 we decide -- and clearly you've heard some
3 members have stated their position. And I'm
4 still waiting to make a decision. I'm not closed
5 to the issue. But, to be consistent with the
6 other promoter, you also cannot have the Mad
7 Hatter and Buffalo Billiards participate in the
8 pub crawl if the Board -- and I don't know where
9 the Board is going -- you will get a decision
10 today. But not from the dais, but you will get a
11 decision today. But I don't know. But just to
12 be sure that those two establishments cannot, to
13 be consistent with the other promoters, okay?

14 MR. LOPEZ: Okay. It's no problem.

15 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Mr. Alberti.

16 MR. ALBERTI: I just want to add one
17 thing. You guys have been sort of impressive
18 with your rhetoric about things that you'll do.
19 I mean, you sound great. I mean, a great idea
20 was constructed and I bought it. I'm kind of
21 still buying it. I mean, I think some of your --
22 I think you are -- have the right intentions most

1 of the time, all right?

2 But, you know, I asked a question for a
3 purpose earlier in the fact finding. I said,
4 "What are you going to do with these people who
5 said they wouldn't participate in another pub
6 crawl but they did on Halloween?" I said, "What
7 are you guys going to do?" Well, you know, we'll
8 get them to sign a contract. And we might
9 enforce our contract.

10 And, you know, everybody was kind of sort
11 of halfhearted about how they were going to
12 enforce their requirement that those
13 establishments participate in only one pub crawl.
14 Many of these establishments -- I don't know, you
15 can correct me if I'm wrong -- but many of these
16 establishments participated in more than one pub
17 crawl on Halloween. They probably were your --
18 I'd have to go check -- but I suspect that they
19 were on your list and participated in another pub
20 crawl. And yet you got them as clients in this
21 pub crawl. Am I wrong?

22 MR. BRAMSON: We actually still don't

1 know which ones participated in both besides -- I
2 mean, today we're hearing that Front Page
3 participated in both. But I do know that Front
4 Page did not allow Pubcrawls.com participants
5 inside their establishment. Like, they did not
6 register them.

7 And I know because we were registering
8 and two of their bouncers said the same thing.
9 Apparently -- you know, I don't want to speak on
10 behalf of them -- but apparently, Front Page
11 manager -- one of the managers signed off on pub
12 crawls and didn't inform anybody else.

13 MR. LOPEZ: The reason being, too, is Pub
14 Crawls is, I believe, if not the only one,
15 they're a company that have 3-day bar crawls.
16 They do Monday, Saturday, and I believe they have
17 another day that they actually use. So,
18 according to Front Page, they signed an agreement
19 to be a participant bar for 2 out of those days,
20 but not Saturday. And I know for a fact that
21 those participants were not let in.

22 MR. ALBERTI: Are you interested in

1 knowing?

2 MR. LOPEZ: Yes. I'm very interested in
3 knowing.

4 MR. ALBERTI: Because --

5 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah, that's fine.

6 MR. ALBERTI: -- you never asked.

7 MR. LOPEZ: That was my next question.

8 MR. ALBERTI: And, you know --

9 MR. LOPEZ: And Mr. Alberti, too.

10 MR. ALBERTI: I know that Mr. Puente
11 would more than be happy to tell you, though,
12 that information, he gave it to me. I'm sure he
13 could give it to you.

14 MR. LOPEZ: To address your question,
15 too, I mean, there's definitely been accounts in
16 the city that we've parted ways with that we just
17 don't use anymore just because of this exact same
18 issue and other issues. But, as you can see, I
19 would say the last -- this year alone -- we
20 haven't used, like, Dirty Martini. We haven't
21 used Dirty Bar.

22 MR. BRAMSON: Midtown.

1 MR. LOPEZ: We haven't used Midtown,
2 obviously. We haven't used Rosebar. I mean,
3 there is accounts that we parted ways with just
4 because of the way they do business.

5 MR. BRAMSON: And, to me, the worst
6 punishment you can do to a bar is take them off
7 the bar crawl as opposed to a fine. And, even if
8 you fine them a little bit, A, will they actually
9 pay? Who knows? Probably not. And, even if you
10 did, it won't affect them because they probably
11 made that money anyways.

12 Like Alex said, we have banned places
13 before. We put others. But we didn't use them
14 for an event and then brought them back for
15 another one because they said they would change
16 their ways. But some of those, like Dirty Bar
17 and them, never changed their ways. And that's
18 the reason why we've taken them off.

19 MR. ALBERTI: So, as I said earlier,
20 hindsight's wonderful. We also recognize our
21 mistakes. Hopefully, you guys have recognized
22 where you could have done better Halloween. As I

1 said, with this Board, I share some of that for
2 even approving it probably. But it is -- I think
3 one of the other members said it -- for me, it's
4 just -- this one's too soon after Halloween to
5 approve it. I think there should be some cost in
6 mistakes that were made on Halloween. So that's
7 going to be my vote is not to approve this one.

8 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Do you have something
9 to say?

10 MS. MILLER: Can I ask a question?

11 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: I think Mr. Puente
12 has something he wanted to ask.

13 MS. MILLER: Oh, okay.

14 INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes. I was
15 standing outside the Front Page for a little
16 while. And their security were -- anyone that
17 had a wristband, they let in. Anyone that had
18 alcohol was leaving until we mentioned it to the
19 ABC Manager. He finally positioned another
20 security guard at the door. He stopped. Drinks
21 were leaving. Same with the other two
22 establishments in that area. Essentially, you

1 guys hire security for Halloween for any of the
2 establishments?

3 MR. BRAMSON: No. The establishments
4 hire extra security. So that's a burden that we
5 -- well, that's something that is in our
6 agreements with them.

7 INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Okay. Because I
8 was at Rumors, too, that night. And, like I
9 said, they had a line going two blocks that me
10 and my investigator observed. Between 6 and 10
11 people jump at their sidewalk cafe fence. And we
12 had to tell the manager staff you got people
13 jumping your fence. Then he's like, "Oh, I'll
14 position our security guard on the fence area."

15 So I guess my question is: Are you going
16 to provide security for any of the
17 establishments? Because, for the law, you're
18 supposed to have contracted security personnel.
19 And, knowing these establishments, they're not
20 going to hire extra security if they don't need
21 to.

22 MR. BRAMSON: I mean, if you walk into

1 Rumors or Front Page on a typical Friday or
2 Saturday night on bar crawls, because we bring in
3 more people -- like, if you walk into Front Page
4 at 5:00 p.m. on a Saturday nonbar crawl, they're
5 going to have, you know, 1 or 2 security. If you
6 walk during a bar crawl during registration,
7 they're going to have, you know, double that.

8 MR. LOPEZ: That's what we've been told.

9 MR. BRAMSON: I mean, I see that first
10 hand at the registration bars. And the other
11 bars, we have people walking around. There's
12 always extra security as compared to during the
13 day. I don't know if there's a way for us to,
14 you know -- if there's, you know, for this X
15 amount of people we have to say this is the
16 amount of people you have to have. But they
17 staff according to their capacity.

18 INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Would you guys
19 provide assistance to them providing security?

20 MR. BRAMSON: We could, yeah.

21 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Yes. Go ahead.

22 INVESTIGATOR STUART: I'm Supervising

1 Investigator Craig Stuart. I have a question
2 also. As part of D.C. regulations, it says, "The
3 operation of the security plan shall include but
4 not... limited to the name and number of security
5 personnel contracted for the event." Have you
6 provided that? Because we haven't found that
7 information.

8 MR. BRAMSON: What's the question again?

9 INVESTIGATOR STUART: So it says, "The
10 operation of the security plan shall include but
11 not be limited to the name and number of security
12 personnel contracted for the event. A plan of
13 control under-age drinking the method used for
14 checking participant identifications." So is
15 there an operation of a security plan and the
16 name and number of the security personnel that
17 are going to be contracted? Do you have that
18 information --?

19 MR. BRAMSON: So all the security in each
20 bar have our number that day. And they can reach
21 us. In the past when we've applied, we've been
22 the ones that are directly in contact. So, if

1 for example, Front Page has an issue and says,
2 "Well, I don't want this person going to" -- I
3 don't know, say, Mad Hatter -- then they'd reach
4 out to us. Or they'd call them directly if they
5 have their numbers.

6 So there's not a head of security aside
7 from us coordinating. Each bar has their own
8 head of security. And they don't like to work
9 with outside security people. But, if the bars,
10 for example, don't want to pay for an extra
11 bouncer, we have no problem paying for that.
12 It's just they've never asked us and they've
13 always been fully staffed from what we've seen on
14 a bar crawl. And, again, we haven't had -- if we
15 know we have never been told any issues that any
16 of the bars have had.

17 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: All right. Are you
18 done?

19 INVESTIGATOR STUART: I'm done. Yes,
20 sir.

21 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Let Ms. Miller ask
22 and then you go.

1 MS. MILLER: Okay. Thank you. I want to
2 ask you do you have security enroute, like in the
3 streets?

4 MR. BRAMSON: No, we don't.

5 MS. MILLER: Have you ever?

6 MR. BRAMSON: We have never.

7 MS. MILLER: Have you had problems --

8 MR. BRAMSON: Not that we're aware of.

9 We've never had any issues. And I think -- yeah.
10 I mean, we never had any issues with -- we have
11 our staff roaming, but we're not security.
12 That's just informing people, like bars, that --
13 kind of checking up, seeing if they have, you
14 know, the right security, whether they're letting
15 people in, like stuff like that.

16 Our staff is more roaming making sure the
17 guests are okay. And then that's pretty sure it.
18 But we don't want our staff getting involved with
19 removal of people or anything like that.

20 MS. MILLER: Have you had any situations
21 where your guests have seen problems and then
22 they come in --?

1 MR. BRAMSON: Yes. And they've informed.

2 --

3 MS. MILLER: -- and they call you?

4 MR. BRAMSON: Yes. They have. And
5 they've actually informed bouncers before. So,
6 like, our staff, you know, one person came to
7 registration had been drinking before the event
8 started. And we told the security, the bouncer,
9 like, don't let them in. I mean, that's --

10 MR. LOPEZ: We actually do have a
11 hotline, too, that we promote that, I mean,
12 people, if we have any issues or something
13 happens, someone gets sick or something like
14 that, they can call.

15 But, like Mike said, we've never had an
16 issue. Per event, we have about 40 or 50 staff
17 that handle customer service, that handle, you
18 know, questions or stuff like that at bars, but
19 we've never --

20 MS. MILLER: Some of them are roaming?

21 MR. BRAMSON: And they're roaming.

22 Correct.

1 MS. MILLER: Okay. Okay.

2 MR. BRAMSON: And they have, like, big
3 staff shirts that say, "Project DC Staff" on the
4 back.

5 MS. MILLER: Okay. So about the
6 exceeding the number the last time: How do you
7 know the number of people who actually showed up?
8 Do you know that, or you're just estimating?

9 MR. BRAMSON: It's an estimation. But
10 the way we base in and the reason why I know that
11 15 percent, roughly, don't show up is because we
12 order the amount of mugs for the amount of people
13 we're going to have. So, for example, let's say
14 we have 3,000 mugs and then we only give away
15 2,300 we know 700 people didn't show up. Now, a
16 few people don't take the mugs; we account for
17 that. But that's how we normally do it. We've
18 never not had -- or, you know, run out of mugs
19 completely.

20 MS. MILLER: So is it your opinion that
21 you didn't exceed the number of patrons that you
22 said you were going to have for Halloween?

1 MR. BRAMSON: Correct. In my opinion, I
2 don't think we exceeded our participants we had
3 that registered for our bar crawl.

4 MS. MILLER: Okay. And but in the
5 future, you're going to just make sure you don't
6 register --

7 MR. BRAMSON: We just cut off the
8 registration at that -- we actually didn't think
9 we'd go over. In the morning we woke up. It was
10 over. And that's when we did cut off
11 registration. But we can pre-set it to that.

12 MS. MILLER: Okay. So, based on the
13 Halloween testimony that we just heard, we heard
14 a very low number from Commander Gresham; you
15 know, 250 people for a pub crawl. And your pub
16 crawl is what -- is 2,000 something or 3,000.
17 Can you address that?

18 MR. BRAMSON: Yeah. I mean, our pub
19 crawl number is the same as the following week.
20 And they've been approved. Also, a little
21 backend on that. We actually coordinate with
22 Snow Day and Kevin. So they always do the week

1 after us.

2 MR. POWELL: We would notify them that
3 there's a pub crawl in the area just to -- as
4 soon as we see the information, my specialist
5 will let me know and we'll e-mail that, but --

6 MR. SILVERSTEIN: My concern is have you
7 ever had any problems with them?

8 MR. POWELL: Not that I can recall
9 directly. It's kind of tough for us to connect
10 sometimes those issues we see on the street
11 directly.

12 MR. SILVERSTEIN: If we were to approve
13 this -- and by no means am I speaking for anyone
14 here and I'm just asking -- what would you
15 need/want to make life better for you?

16 MR. POWELL: I think, for our purposes,
17 to insure that the public space is left as it
18 was. I mean, we submitted those pictures of
19 before. And we -- any pub crawl henceforth, I'm
20 going to have my folks out taking pictures of all
21 the public space elements. Because that's our
22 responsibility on behalf of the city to keep

1 those up. So that is our major concern.

2 Obviously, the public safety is our
3 concern, but we kind of cede a little bit of that
4 to MPD.

5 On behalf of our organization as far as -
6 - I know it doesn't necessarily relate to this
7 but -- on a New Year's pub crawl, our folks don't
8 work New Year's Day. If someone's going to clean
9 up after it, it's going to have to be DPW. We're
10 not able to do any of that.

11 [Simultaneous speaking.]

12 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: -- heard today, we
13 haven't approved the New Year's Day pub crawl.

14 MR. POWELL: Yes, sir. I appreciate
15 that.

16 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: -- so that should not
17 be an issue. Go ahead.

18 MR. SILVERSTEIN: If we were to say no
19 here, we have at least 2,100 people who have
20 applied for -- who have paid for tickets to this,
21 some of whom would come down here. What are your
22 concerns there if this thing were cancelled on

1 such short notice? Do you have any concerns
2 there?

3 MR. POWELL: You know, our bars and
4 restaurants are our members as well. We're
5 concerned that they do well, but do well
6 responsibly. We've been champions and advocates
7 for them and try to bring them to the table to
8 address issues and it's been difficult. It's
9 been challenging for us.

10 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Tell me about that,
11 that something.

12 MR. POWELL: You know, I think as I said
13 in my testimony, a lot of our smaller buildings
14 and nightclubs contribute to a lot of trash
15 issues and safety issues. And, you know, I've
16 done studies as far as when the peak of violence
17 in the neighborhood occurs. And it's always at
18 3:00 in the morning when everybody lets out.

19 We've had MPD started as a -- their club
20 action team with four individuals. Now they're
21 up to 15. We've had all of 2D down to deal with
22 issues related to night life. But we don't

1 believe that we as a neighborhood would want to
2 have no night life. That wouldn't be
3 advantageous for us either. It's just that it's
4 responsibly regulated and controlled.

5 MR. SILVERSTEIN: They have 2,100 tickets
6 sold. Can you handle 2,100 people you think?
7 Did you want to cut it at that or cut it at 2,500
8 or do you have a problem --?

9 MR. POWELL: I would feel very
10 uncomfortable commenting directly on --

11 MR. SILVERSTEIN: I appreciate that.

12 MR. POWELL: -- the total amount --

13 MR. SILVERSTEIN: -- fully understand
14 that. Anything else that you want to add?

15 MR. BRAMSON: No, sir. Thank you very
16 much.

17 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Thanks for coming back.
18 Thank you very much.

19 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Yes, Mr. Short.

20 MR. SHORT: Mr. Powell, again, thank you
21 for taking the time out to come down today and
22 testify. You heard, also, testimony this morning

1 while you were here about the mayor's special
2 event task force where they have DPW, where they
3 have police, where they have all the city
4 agencies. Do you think it would be a good idea
5 for pub crawls to have to go through that same
6 process for special events?

7 MR. POWELL: Mr. Short, when I wrote my
8 testimony, I wanted to, obviously, make that
9 suggestion. But I also wanted to make that
10 suggestion not in the -- I didn't want the ABC
11 Board to feel like I'm saying you guys are not
12 capable or competent of legislating or regulating
13 this.

14 I feel like special events -- any special
15 event in the city should be going through the
16 special events task force. It is a multiagency
17 regulatory body that has DPW. It has Department
18 of Health. It has fire and rescue, Metropolitan
19 Police, HSEMA -- all of those issues that can
20 take kind of that broad holistic view of a
21 special event.

22 A good example is we were going to have a

1 small art event on 18th Street. And we looked at
2 -- we hadn't thought of many of the issues that
3 the special events task force has thought of.
4 And I think that's a good place for particularly
5 the larger pub crawl events to go through.

6 MR. SHORT: Just last comment. I think
7 that that would take care of your trash problem.
8 Because what DPW says to anybody having a special
9 event, "You will clean up after or you will not
10 get your permit." This body doesn't have that
11 power. And the citizens have taken the brunt of
12 it. And I don't think that's fair.

13 MR. POWELL: Yes, sir.

14 MR. SHORT: That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

15 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Thank you. All
16 right. Thank you. You will get a decision
17 unless you have something.

18 MR. BRAMSON: Yeah. I just want to say
19 one last thing. I mean, I just want to say to
20 the Board that, you know, we don't have any prior
21 violations, especially for this event. It's been
22 going on for 4 years. It's for a good cause.

1 You know, the Halloween was the perfect
2 storm. But we don't believe we went over the
3 3,500 -- 3,577 people. You know, we did end the
4 drink specials at 11:00, although the marketing
5 was off. You know, but we are disappointed that
6 we let the Board down.

7 And really, you've trusted us for the
8 last 3 years, and I feel like we've lost that.
9 And, you know, we'll do our best to gain that
10 back. And, you know, even for this event, if you
11 approve it -- and it seems like a big "if" -- you
12 know, we can cut the number off at 2,500, you
13 know, sell through, you know, just make sure it's
14 cut off then or even right now just so we can
15 make sure that we don't have to re -- you know,
16 e-mail everyone, say the event's not happening,
17 and then some people may not get the e-mail and
18 then their confused and show up to the
19 establishments.

20 You know, we will not use the bars that,
21 you know, like the Huxley, the Front Page,
22 Buffalo Billiards, anyone that does break a

1 regulation, you know, or we find out that people
2 were jumping the fence or don't have a security,
3 we have no problem banning them from future bar
4 crawls.

5 And, you know, we can touch base with the
6 other bar crawls, as well, make that -- like the
7 one happening on December 19th -- and see if, you
8 know, they have any issues. And we actually
9 talked outside. And we want to make that we
10 pretty much have the same bars. So, if someone
11 doesn't have security, we can let them know and
12 vice versa. You know, just coordinate that we
13 make sure that the bars are on board for every
14 bar crawl participating does follow the rules and
15 does have enough security and is checking IDs and
16 not letting people out with drinks and things
17 like that. And we'll do our best to earn your
18 trust back.

19 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: All right. Yes. Go
20 ahead [indiscernible].

21 MR. ALBERTI: Who me?

22 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Yes.

1 MR. ALBERTI: No, I didn't.

2 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Oh, I'm sorry. I
3 thought you had a question.

4 MR. ALBERTI: No, I did not. I did not.

5 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: All right.

6 MR. ALBERTI: Sorry to confuse you.

7 CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Okay. Well, thank
8 you very much for your presentation. And you
9 will get a response today. Okay? Thank you.

10 MR. BRAMSON: Thank you.

11 [Whereupon, at 1:03 p.m., the above-
12 entitled matter was concluded.)