



Liquor Board Licensing Fees and Structure Task Force

Aug 2, 2024

8:30am - 10:30am

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Members: Amy Gowan(Chair), Delegate Nic Kipke, Senator Dawn Gile, Judy Hagner, Julie Hummer, Julianne Sullivan, Kim Lawson, Jayleen Fonseca, Anthony Clark, Alexis Jenkins, Amy Crone, Kyle Madden

Also in attendance were Christina Holliday and Edward Aronson

Called to Order

Minutes for the Liquor Board Licensing Fees and Structure Task Force meeting held on August 2, 2024 at 8:30am, virtually by Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 8:30am by Amy Gowan.

Introduction

All attendees introduced themselves

Scope of responsibilities of the task force, Amy Gowan

This work group is to discuss licensing fees, modernizing the statutes, enforcement technology and training updates that may be needed for efficiencies, and overall efficiencies in operations. This group was formed as a venue to further discuss the Liquor Board operations and the current fee structure, and then ultimately to make recommendations for any changes that may be warranted ahead of the next legislative session.

Liquor Board presentation, Judy Hagner

- licensing fees have not increased in 15 years - liquor board funds come from licensing fees
- Would like classes to inform new applicants of liquor laws and a portal to go on and review records.
- Liquor Board budget is controlled by state controller
- at 8:43am Edward Aronson explains the database being outdated and having to update the technology
- Tasked with upholding the laws for the State of Maryland to deal with Anne Arundel County. They go by the annotated code of Maryland and their own rules and regulations.
- To obtain a liquor license, the team processes the application and ensures compliance with state regulations, followed by a hearing date in front of the Commissioners.

Identify meeting schedule and future topics

Schedule:

- Meetings will be held on the First Friday of every month through December at 8:30am

Topics:

- Friday September 6th Meeting: Senate Bill 1046
 - fees and legislation - (why are increases needed if money being returned)
 - differentiating fees
 - Would like a representative from ATCC to join meeting
- Friday October 4th meeting will cover enforcement

Comments and Questions

- At 9:01am Delegate Kipke brought up the following points from the Alcohol Subcommittee:
 - Enforcement issues:
 - We heard from some licensees frustrated that the board was stepping beyond their scope in two ways:
 - Enforcement of other zoning issues beyond alcohol laws.
 - Angst over building drawings being required. There's the obvious cost involved to create the drawings that is a hardship. Places being asked to provide this that are complaining are not new, they're longtime licensed places, even VFWs.
 - Can these two issues stop? If not, why is it necessary?
 - Financial explanation re proposed increases:
 - Break down the new money that is being asked for as to how it will be spent, specifically.
 - If money is being turned back to the county annually, why is an increase needed?
 - If an increase is really needed, can we hold the line for nonprofits?
 - How can we be more efficient related to licenses:
 - Auto renewal or longer term permits for things like outdoor dining? Music, etc? Can we reduce the administrative burden for the licensees and the board?
 - Hiring - posting positions for competitive applications? Lots of discussion related to promotions and new hires being done in a way that's not transparent.
 - One day Events- 10 days HARD requirement? Can there be more flexibility? Online is great but for repeat organizations, can the 10 day requirement be reduced? Human error happens and this can cause big problems.
- At 9:19am Anthony Clark brought up the following points
 - How does the Liquor Board see itself responsible for assisting licensees in operating and getting the business serving alcohol?

- What does the Liquor Board need to do to achieve that goal?

Adjournment

Amy Gowan moved to adjourn the meeting. Julianne Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:22AM.