

FREEPORT LIQUOR COMMISSION
OPEN MEETING
OCTOBER 3, 2017

A town hall-style meeting of the Freeport Liquor Commission was held at 5:06 p.m. on October 3, 2017, in Conference Room 1-A at City Hall, 314 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, Illinois.

Present were Commissioners: Mayor and Liquor Commissioner Jodi Miller, Commissioner Jeff Davis.

Also present for the City of Freeport: City Clerk Dovie Anderson and City Legal Counsel Steve Cox, Esq.

Minutes

Attorney Cox distributed (1) City of Freeport Liquor Codes 608 and 806, (2) a listing of existing License Classifications and Summary and (2) a list of possible discussion topics: Possible Additions to Classifications, "V" License Restrictions and Transferability, Tastings, Parklet/Sidewalk Café/Zoning/Outdoor Sales, BYOB Establishments, BASSET, Temporary Licenses, Hours of Operation, Required Documentation, and Keg Reg.

Attorney Cox began the discussion with liquor tastings, which are currently available to B-1 and B-2. Mayor Miller stated that the tastings originated when Cub Foods (B-2 License) wanted to implement them. Attorney Cox stated that Brewfest and Winefest, which are currently permitted as a Special Event, may need a specific provision. He is recommending provisions for tastings at festivals as well as sale of packaged goods at Special Events and the consideration of consumption on- or off-premises. He recommends describing when these are allowed to help avoid issuing Temporary licenses for each specific event under the parameters of the license classifications. He believes these can be set out best in the definitions section of the Code.

City Manager Lowell Crow joined the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

Attorney Cox stated that the Parklet/Sidewalk Café/Zoning Ordinances need to be meshed more cohesively. He believes the Code can be written to accommodate outdoor sales of food without Liquor. He raised the question from the last Open Meeting on September 20, 2017, regarding allowing parklets outside of the downtown business district at establishments that either (1) own their own property or (2) have the permission of the landlord. He will discuss zoning requirements with Community and Economic Development Director Nancy McDonald. It may just need to be run through the Zoning Board and then Council. Manager Crow stated that the intent of the Parklet Ordinance was that it did not need to go before the Zoning Board and the approving authority for the parklet would be the City Manager. Discussion ensued that perhaps any establishment licensed AR could apply for a parklet. The parklet option may change the outdoor liquor sales requirement of a five foot (5') fence citywide. Parklets only require a "definable barrier". Attorney Cox mentioned that Police Chief Barkalow did not have concerns regarding removing the five foot (5') fencing requirement.

Rooftop sales were also discussed. Attorney Cox stated that a rooftop would be defined as an expansion of premises, which also has consideration from an insurance standpoint.

Bring Your Own Beer (BYOB) was discussed. Attorney Cox pointed out that State statute does not address this issue. Currently, Freeport's Ordinances only address the "sale" of alcohol. Corking licenses were briefly discussed, but with no real push to add them to the Ordinances.

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BASSET training (Beverage Alcohol Sellers and Servers Education and Training) was discussed. Specifically regarding whether the City needs to keep track of which servers have the training or if that will be a requirement of the establishment. Commissioner Davis pointed out that BASSET certificates of completion can be accessed online. Manager Crow stated that he has seen where proof of BASSET training is required after multiple violations.

The question arose of banquet hall renters bringing in their own keg. Attorney Cox stated that if the banquet hall has an AR license, then they will charge for the keg. He added that there are certain locations that the City doesn't regulate, such as a wedding reception in a barn. This led to the question of keeping the Keg Reg as part of the Codes. Mayor Miller suggested striking the language if there is no benefit to the City or Licensee.

Temporary Liquor Licenses were discussed. Attorney Cox stated that we need fewer of them and we currently use them as "band aids". He feels we need to get back to their original intent, such as Music on Chicago. Attorney Cox recommended removing the section relating to Tutty Baker Days. This led to discussion regarding events by any non-profit such as Brewfest or Farmers Markets. The importance of balancing Temporary Liquor License Holders with brick-n-mortar Licensees was stressed. Attorney Cox suggested possibly offering more Temporary Liquor Licenses to non-profits which are partially funded by the City. There was also discussion of the possibility of expanding the T-3 Temporary Liquor License to accommodate more non-profits.

Manager Crow left the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Attorney Cox pointed out Section 608.06(b)(1) regarding special hours of operation. General consensus was that they should stand. There was discussion regarding if Special Events should be allowed extended hours.

Attorney Cox stated that he had covered his list regarding possible discussion items and that the last of the open meetings on October 19, 2017, would be a review of the first two meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dovie L. Anderson
City Clerk