

LIQUOR LICENSING & REVIEW COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF OAK LAWN
VILLAGE HALL AUDITORIUM
9446 RAYMOND AVENUE OAK LAWN IL 60453
Meeting Minutes #2021-02 (02-03-21)

I. ROLL CALL: Meeting called to order at 5:03 p.m.

Chairperson: Mayor Sandra Bury

Members: Cheryl Daly Jack Hopkins
Larry Daly (*ABS*) Chuck Miller
Tom Dematteo Terry O'Reilly
Jan Goetz (*ABS*)

Staff: Deanne Adasiak, Recording Secretary
Tom Nelligan, Village Attorney

Also present: Trustee Terry Vorderer, 4th District

II. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:

A motion was made by Member Miller to approve the prior Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2021 #2021-1 and was seconded by Member Daly.

Roll call: O'Reilly, yes; Miller, yes; Hopkins, abstain; Dematteo, yes; Daly, C., yes.

Motion to approve passes: 4-0-1.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Bury.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Liquor License Request for Rosati's Pizza (Class FV and Class N)

Mr. Fareed Khowaja, 1804 Potter Road, Glenview, Illinois.

Mr. Fayaz Khowaja, 1804 Potter Road, Glenview, Illinois

Mr. John Cieben, Training & Operations Mgr., Rosati's, 6230 W. 95th St., Oak Lawn, Illinois.

Mayor Bury expressed to the petitioner that liquor licenses are taken very seriously in Oak Lawn. She explained the reason for this meeting was to regroup in order to review and discuss the change in request of a Class FV and Class N liquor license. Mayor Bury explained to the petitioner that the Village Board of Trustees typically do not give liquor licenses to fast food restaurants. She explained that most of the gaming licenses are for larger dining food establishments.

Mayor Bury expressed to the petitioner that she appreciates the floor plan that the petitioner submitted for review. She commented on the change of location of the gaming terminals from the east to the west wall. She said the petitioner mentioned at the last meeting that the terminals would be on the east side of the establishment and would be blocked off by a wall. Mayor Bury expressed concerns of the change to the west wall especially with the terminals separated only by stanchions. She remarked that her concern is for the school children and families that visit the establishment. She said she feels they will be subjected to a casino environment.

Fayaz explained that the initial plan included terminals on the west wall but after discussion with their architect they decided to move the gaming to the east end. He said there will be a 6' wall and the games will be obscured. Mayor Bury commented that the wall is not shown on the rendering. She pointed out last week's request to have a floor plan and now she is hearing that the submitted floor plan is incorrect. Fayaz responded that they were unable to connect with their architect to get an updated floor plan. Mayor Bury said that she feels the meeting should have been postponed until the petitioner could provide the final and correct plan. Mayor Bury reiterated her concerns of gaming. She asked if there will be a window in the wall. Fayaz responded yes and said that the wall will either be a fogged glass or a wall with a window.

Mayor Bury asked what will be on the east wall. The petitioner responded that the east wall will be an open area with seating. Mayor Bury said it appears there will be less seating than what is shown on the rendering. Feraz replied that it is the same number of seats. Member Hopkins asked for clarification of the rendering. He asked if the machines will be at the right of the entrance. The petitioner responded yes.

Member Daly asked about the distance between the gaming terminals to the front door. Fayaz responded six feet (6') to seven feet (7"). Mayor Bury asked the width of the frontage on 95th Street. Mr. Cieben responded 30 feet (30').

Mayor Bury asked the "partners" present for the meeting if they are affiliated with a gaming company. The partners responded no.

Member O'Reilly asked about the number of tables. The petitioner responded that there will be seating for 24-30 people.

Mayor Bury mentioned the self-serve soda area that Blaze Pizza had and asked if Rosati's will have the same type of service area in the same location. Fareez responded that they will have the soda service area but their machine will be smaller.

Member Miller pointed out the petitioner's comments at the last meeting that included that 80% of the pizza sales will be carryout. He said if the percentage of people dining in is only 20% he asked the petitioner why he needs a liquor license. The petitioner responded that the franchiser felt that they have potential for a lot of walk-in traffic and believe that having a liquor license would attract more customers. Member Miller said he researched the Rosati chains but not many of the other stores sell liquor. The petitioner replied that Rosati's is trying to rebrand themselves to be a sports bar with liquor. Member Miller expressed that he feels the petitioner only wants liquor so he can have gaming. Member Miller expressed concerns of the established businesses that this Board has rejected for gaming licenses. The petitioner reiterated that the franchise wants liquor. Member Miller said he would like to see the business established for a year before requesting a gaming license. The petitioner said he would be okay with having a liquor license without gaming. Fayaz commented that he would prefer to wait 6-8 months rather than 1 year as he feels that gaming will help sustain the business. Member Miller expressed that he does not support gaming at this location. The petitioner reiterated the franchiser's intention to rebrand. Member Miller responded that it does not make sense if there is not going to be a lot of dining.

Mayor Bury commented that she thought the Rosati's menu looked nice and asked the petitioner if he will have that same full menu. The petitioner responded yes. Mayor Bury asked the petitioner how he intends to make his business inviting for the customers. She asked if he wants to keep a fast food feel. The petitioner responded that he will be adding a television for people to eat pizza and watch sports/games. Mayor Bury asked the location of the television. The petitioner responded that he will be adding multiple televisions. Member O'Reilly asked about the outdoor patio. The petitioner said he plans to keep the patio very nice.

Mayor Bury mentioned to the petitioner that her optometry business is across the street. She expressed that she is very familiar with the property and she knows it is a dynamite location and a great opportunity. She expressed that she is hesitant about the gaming. She said she was excited about the initial application and thought it would be a family-oriented type of establishment. Mayor Bury asked about the lighting and décor. Fayaz responded that the décor will be different than what Blaze Pizza looked like; he said they will have a Chicago flag trademark on one wall and a picture of the Rosati family on the other wall. He said it will be colorful and it will have a nice ambiance.

Trustee Vorderer expressed concerns of granting a liquor license. He said the liquor license will allow the petitioner to obtain gaming. Mayor Bury explained the different liquor classifications and said that the petitioner could not obtain a gaming license without the "V" classification. Trustee Vorderer said after the liquor license is issued he believes the State could grant gaming. Village Counsel said if the Village grants a Class F license and not a Class FV, the petitioner cannot obtain gaming.

Trustee Vorderer mentioned that he visited the property and asked the petitioner when the decision was made to switch the gaming to the west wall. Fareez responded that they decided to make the restaurant more family friendly. He said the gaming terminals at the east wall would be visible from the windows. Mayor Bury explained to the petitioner the importance in the set-up of the gaming terminals. She stated that the terminals should be separate from dining as much as possible so that children are not exposed to the machines. Mayor Bury expressed that we all understand the economics of gaming but we need to keep to core values in our community. She said gaming is a double edged sword. She commented that once the gaming licenses were approved many businesses began hanging signs and banners relative to gaming without much maintenance and she does not want the casino atmosphere in our community. The petitioner explained that there will not be any of those of issues with Rosati's. He expressed that he will follow all franchise guidelines as well as the municipality's policies and codes. The petitioner expressed that they wanted gaming in order to compete with the other local restaurants.

Member O'Reilly asked the petitioner about his other franchise and if he is a resident. The petitioner responded that he lives in Glenview. He expressed that a family member will manage Rosati's but that he plans to have a presence there as well.

Trustee Vorderer asked the petitioner if he will have wait staff. The petitioner responded no. Trustee Vorderer asked the Mayor if there are any other fast food establishments in Oak Lawn that have gaming. The Mayor responded only Frankie's. She added that Frankie's does have staff that brings the food to the tables. The petitioner replied that they will do the same.

Mayor Bury told the petitioner that she always tells people to invest in our community and the importance of our establishments having a family focus. Mayor Bury said it is also important to have a business viable on its own without video gaming. She mentioned to the petitioner that the Village Board is generally negative on gaming terminals in fast food establishments. The petitioner said he would consider a waiting period.

Village Counsel said this Board could recommend approval of the original classification and the petitioner can reapply for gaming once they are established. The petitioner said that is doable. The petitioner said he signed a 5 year lease with a 10 year clause and he feels that the video gaming would sustain their business. He added that his lease allows liquor and video gaming terminals.

A motion was made by Member Hopkins to advance the request for a Class F and Class N Liquor License for Rosati's Pizza at 6230 West 95th Street. The motion includes the following

comment: the petitioner could reapply for the gaming component after a period of time when the business proves viable. The motion was seconded by Member Daly.

Roll call: Daly, yes; Dematteo, yes; Hopkins, yes; Miller, yes; O'Reilly, yes.

Motion to recommend approval (Class F & N) passes: 5-0-0.

V. Reports

None.

VI. Public Comments

None.

VII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Member Miller and seconded by Member Hopkins.

Voice Vote: All in favor, aye. All opposed, none.

Motion to adjourn passes.

The meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.