

**ALCOHOL BEVERAGE BOARD
THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2025 @ 1:00 PM
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS CONFERENCE ROOM
CHESAPEAKE BUILDING
41770 BALDRIDGE STREET
LEONARDTOWN, MD 20650
MINUTES**

The meeting of the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County was held on Thursday, July 10, 2025, at 1:00 PM in the County Commissioners Conference Room, Chesapeake Building, Leonardtown, Maryland.

Chairman David Willenborg called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Chairman David Willenborg
Vice-Chair Richard Watts
Member Richard Shin
Member Barbara Hill
Tamara Hildebrand, Administrator
Chris Beaver, Attorney
Kevin Hall, Inspector
Dep. Steve Myers, Alcohol Enforcement Coordinator

Not Present:

Member George Anas

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Willenborg entertained a motion for approval of the agenda. Member Hill made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Vice-Chair Watts; motion carried

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – June 12, 2025

Chairman Willenborg entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the meeting of June 12, 2025. Vice-Chair Watts moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Hill; motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Extension of Conditional Approvals**

Angelikas Kitchen – Angela Funya - Requesting 90-day extension of conditional approval of license application.

Angela Funya appeared before the Board and was sworn in. Ms. Funya explained that the projected completion date for renovations is expected to be October 17th. Vice-Chair

Watts made a motion for a 90-day extension of conditional approval of license application, seconded by Member Shin; motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Violations**

The Front Porch – Licensees – Jordan N. Walker & Jeffrey P. Lewis

Sale of alcoholic beverages to a person under the age of twenty-one (21) in violation of §6-304 of the Alcoholic Beverages Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and §5.04(j) of the Rules and Regulations of the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County.

Jordan N. Walker & Jeffrey P. Lewis appeared before the Board and were sworn in. Their attorney, Dan Slade, was present. Both licensees admitted the violation did occur. Attorney Beaver read the facts into the record. Vice-Chair Watts asked what the ID policy was, and what training employees received. Ms. Walker stated the policy is 100% ID check. Upon hiring, employees sign a document stating that if they do not ID 100%, they will be fired, and they are verbally reminded daily. Mr. Watts asked if there were any changes implemented to ensure compliance. Mr. Lewis stated that every employee has been certified in alcohol awareness. He has hired We Card, a secret shopper service to test employees. He is also contemplating implementing a positive reinforcement incentive, giving a cash reward for passing a We Card test.

Mr Watts stated the concern of the Board is that the business has now been before them three times in the last three years. He asked what assurances they could give the Board, that they would not be back again. Mr. Lewis stated that because he lives out of state and could not be at the business daily, there were no assurances he could give.

Chairman Willenborg suggested that maybe if his employees could watch the video of this meeting might make them aware of the impact their actions have on the business.

Mr. Slade reiterated all that the business has done to prevent underage service and attested to their character and that they take full responsibility for the violation but ask that the Board show leniency and not revoke their license.

Vice-Chair Watts made a motion, based on the facts and testimony received, to fine the business \$2500 with one week's suspension. There being no second, the motion failed. Chairman Willenborg called for another motion, there being none, the Chair made a motion for a \$2500 fine, with \$500 held in abeyance and one day suspension; the business could pick the day of suspension and would use it for training; seconded by Member Shin. The Chair called for further discussion. Mr. Watts stated he felt the penalty was a little light, that one day would not be enough. The Chair stated that he understood, but should the business violate again, they would be done, and 30 people would be out of work. The licensees requested the day of suspension be on Sunday, July 13, 2025. The Chair called for a vote. Motion passed.

Il Piccolo Morso – Employee – Luis Ignacio Estebanes

The above individual, Luis Ignacio Estebanes, was an employee of a license holder and sold or provided alcoholic beverages to an individual under the age of twenty-one years

in violation of §6-304 of the Alcoholic Beverages Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and §5.04(j) of the Rules and Regulations of the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County

Luis Ignacio Estebanes appeared before the Board and was sworn in. Mr. Estebanes admitted the violation did occur. Attorney Beaver read the facts into the record. Mr. Estebanes stated that he asked for ID of the younger woman and when she stated she did not have the ID, he asked if she was 21. She stated she was, and he served her. Vice-Chair Watts asked if the person looked young. Mr. Estebanes stated she appeared to be between 19-21 years of age. Vice-Chair Watts made a motion for a \$150.00 fine, seconded by Member Shin; motion carried.

Il Piccolo Morso - Licensee – Silvia Canovas Chase

Sale of alcoholic beverages to a person under the age of twenty-one (21) in violation of §6-304 of the Alcoholic Beverages Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and §5.04(j) of the Rules and Regulations of the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County.

Silvia Canovas Chase appeared before the Board and was sworn in. Ms. Chase admitted the violation did occur. Attorney Beaver read the facts into the record. Vice-Chair Watts asked what her ID policy was. She replied that if the customer looks younger than 40, they are to ID. When asked what she planned to do to avoid this happening again, she said she planned to get everyone trained in RAST or Alcohol Awareness. Vice-Chair Watts made a motion for a \$1000.00 fine, \$500.00 held in abeyance and RAST training. The motion was seconded by Member Shin; motion carried.

Mac's Tap & Table - Licensees – John J. MacDonald III & Benjamin J. MacDonald

Sale of alcoholic beverages to a person under the age of twenty-one (21) in violation of §6-304 of the Alcoholic Beverages Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and §5.04(j) of the Rules and Regulations of the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County.

John J. MacDonald III & Benjamin J. MacDonald appeared before the Board and were sworn in. The licensees admitted the violation did occur. Attorney Beaver read the facts into the record. Vice-Chair Watts asked what their ID policy was. Mr. John MacDonald replied that it was 100% ID check. Vice-Chair Watts asked what type of training they gave their employees. Mr. MacDonald stated they personally train each employee; they have an ID Check Guide accessible and give daily reminders. When asked why it failed, he stated the employee got complacent. They have since posted reminders at each server station and implemented a pop-up reminder on the POS. Vice-Chair Watts made a motion for a \$1000.00 fine, \$500.00 held in abeyance and RAST training. The motion was seconded by Member Shin; motion carried.

• Applications

7th District Waterfront Bar & Grill - Application for Angela N. Hill to purchase a Class B (Restaurant) BWL license & t/a 7th District Waterfront Bar & Grill (7th District Waterfront Bar & Grill, LLC), 36786 Bushwood Wharf Rd., Bushwood, MD 20618. And permission for extension of premises for outdoor service

Angela Hill and Jerome Hill appeared before the Board and were sworn in. Vice-Chair Watts stated that as he understood, this was basically a reapplication. Mrs. Hildebrand explained to the Board that Mrs. Hill held the previous license for this business with a partner, and due to a dispute between the partners they were unable to renew. Mrs. Hill has formed a new LLC and is applying for a new license, however, the new application is for the same set up. Mrs. Hill confirmed that there would be no changes, everything would be identical. Vice-Chair Watts made a motion for a 30-day conditional approval pending Fire Marshal approval and Use and Occupancy permit, seconded by Member Hill; motion carried.

La Vida Mexican Bar & Grill - Application for Jose A. Contreras, Alex Casanova Marquez, & Giselle Ramirez-Palacios to purchase a Class B (Restaurant) BWL license & t/a La Vida Mexican Bar & Grill, (La Vida 6 Inc.), 22767 Three Notch Rd., California, MD 20619.

Jose A. Contreras, Alex Casanova Marquez, & Giselle Ramirez-Palacios appeared before the Board and were sworn in. Mrs. Hildebrand brought to the attention of the Board some discrepancies found on the application by the Chairman and herself that needed to be corrected by the applicants. Documentation was received that supported the corrections, and the applicants needed to correct and initial them on the application. Having completed, the hearing of the application resumed. Chairman Willenborg noted that the application reflected that only Mr. Contreras had any experience in selling alcohol and asked if he was going to be involved in the business. Mr. Contreras responded, not much, that Ms. Ramirez-Palacios would oversee the day-to-day operations. The Chairman asked Ms. Ramirez-Palacios why she felt she would be a good licensee without any experience so far. Ms. Ramirez-Palacios stated that she had been serving alcohol in her family's restaurants since she was 18 years old. She stated that she is very strict on herself with checking ID's and has a training program already planned for her employees to do the same.

Vice-Chair Watts asked Mr. Contreras what type of mentorship he would be giving Ms. Ramirez-Palacios to ensure she is ready for this. Mr. Contreras stated that he had worked with her before and she would do great. Mr. Watts asked Ms. Ramirez-Palacios what she would be doing. She explained she would be managing as well as serving and bartending, so she would be in view of everything going on. She also has an experienced person working with her. Mr. Watts asked Mr. Marquez what his experience was, and he responded that he had worked as a waiter for three years, serving alcohol. Ms. Ramirez-Palacios explained that they hope to be open by August and explained her training plan for new employees. Chairman Willenborg found two additional discrepancies on the application, needing Mr. Contreras attention. Mr. Contreras verified his date of birth and that he was a naturalized US citizen. He corrected those questions on the application.

Vice-Chair Watts made a motion for a 90-day conditional approval pending Trader's License, Use & Occupancy, Health Department and Fire Marshal approvals; seconded by Member Hill; motion carried.

Botanic Cafe - Application for Lia F. Horna to purchase a Class B (Restaurant) BWL license & t/a Botanic Café (Botanic, LLC), 22720 Duke St., Leonardtown, MD 20650. And permission for extension of premises for outdoor seating.

Lia F. Horna appeared before the Board and was sworn in. She explained that she had experience with serving alcohol in a restaurant she owned in Seattle, WA. She has been operating Botanic Café for a few years, and the premises has expanded, so she now has the space to serve alcohol. She explained her service plan and training policy, that would include continuous training. Chairman Willenborg asked for clarification on the outdoor premises. Attorney Beaver pointed out a discrepancy in the size of the outdoor area on her drawings. Ms. Horna confirmed which of the drawings and dimensions were correct for the record. Vice-Chair Watts made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Member Shin; motion carried.

- **Premise Changes**

Olde Town Pub - Requesting temporary extension of premises & outdoor serving counter for Christmas in July event on July 25, 2025, noon – midnight.

John MacDonald Jr. appeared before the Board and was sworn in. Due to only Mr. MacDonald being present, the Board heard the next application, giving Mr. MacDonald time to bring in the two other licensees: Joseph Drury & Jason Burroughs

Potomac Garden - Requesting an increase in outdoor extension of premises by 13,270 sq ft.

Angela Wathen appeared before the Board and was sworn in. Mrs. Wathen confirmed that the area is fenced in. Mrs. Wathen was asked if there were exits, which she confirmed but were not shown in the drawing. She amended her drawing to show four exits. Vice-Chair Watts asked how the alcohol will be controlled in this area. Mrs. Wathen stated that signs would be posted on the gates that alcohol could not go beyond that point. Member Hill asked if patrons would be allowed to sit in that area at any time or just for big events. Mrs. Wathen replied that the area is primarily for big events, but the area would be available for patrons at any time. She added they are always well staffed and have cameras to monitor the area. Vice-Chair Watts made a motion for a 30-day conditional approval pending Comptroller approval, seconded by Member Shin; motion carried.

Olde Town Pub continued

Mr. MacDonald was unable to contact Mr. Drury or Mr. Burroughs. The Board consulted with Attorney Beaver, whether they could make the approval conditional upon receipt of a notarized letter from Mr. Drury and Mr. Burroughs giving their consent to the request. He advised they could.

Mr. MacDonald, being already sworn in, explained the event and the temporary premises area and entrances. The business has had similar events in the past. Deputy Myers stated that there had never been any problems at past events. Vice-Chair Watts made a

motion for a conditional approval pending the notarized letter from Mr. Drury and Mr. Burroughs consenting to the temporary extension for the event to be presented to the Alcohol Beverage Board Office prior to the event; seconded by Member Shin; motion carried.

BOARD ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- **Proposed amendments to The Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County Rules and Regulations per 2025 Legislative Session bills signed into law:**
 - 1 **HB 486:** §6.07 – increase of maximum fine the Board may impose
 - 2 **HB 574:** §2.08 – allowing interest in more than one Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor Restaurant license

Mrs. Hildebrand presented the Board with two proposed amendments to reflect the passing of House Bill 486, which increased the maximum fine the Board could impose as a penalty for a violation. §6.07(a), changing the maximum to reflect the increase from \$1000 to \$2500. and §6.07(e), implementing that maximum into the Standard Consequence Matrix.

Mr. Beaver explained to the Board that House Bill 574, allowing interest in more than one Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor restaurant license, did present some challenges and possible conflicts. He has created good language to modify §2.08 of the Rules and Regs, however he wants to check with some resources before presenting final language to the Board, to ensure they are doing what is correct for the licensees. He stated he would have that for the Board at the next meeting.

The Chair called for a motion on the amendment to §6.07(a) of the Rules and Regulations of the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County. Member Hill made a motion to approve the amendment; seconded by Vice-Chair Watts; motion carried.

The Chair called for a motion on the amendment to §6.07(e) of the Rules and Regulations of the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County. Vice-Chair Watts made a motion to approve the amendment; seconded by Member Hill; motion carried.

- **2026 Legislative Proposals**

Mrs. Hildebrand addressed Chairman Willenborg's request to look at submitting legislation requiring an alternate Board Member to ensure a quorum. She stated she preferred the Board take their time and not rush something through. This would give her and Mr. Beaver time to gather information and present the Board with good language for submission for 2027 Legislative session.

Mrs. Hildebrand informed the Board that the person interviewed and chosen to fill the position of Administrative Coordinator has accepted the position.

Vice-Chair Watts needed to excuse himself from the meeting at 3:30 pm. A quorum was still present.

ALCOHOL ENFORCEMENT COORDINATOR REPORT

For the month of June, Deputy Myers reported:

- 18 Compliance checks – mostly Tobacco. Two violations, one of which is an alcoholic beverage license holder.
- 14 DUI's
- 11 MSP DUI'S
- 6 Alcohol Violations Summons served.
- 2 stationary surveillance - no violations
- State Park surveillance - no violations
- Sheriff's Office In-Service Training

BOARD INSPECTOR REPORT

For the Month of June, Inspector Hall reported:

- 19 inspections, 4 follow-ups
- RAST class
- Meeting with a licensed establishment with the Administrator to discuss some complaints and concerns.

ST MARY'S LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION – Guy Combs

Mr. Combs stated the Association did not have anything to report on at this time and just wanted to thank the Board for their time.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Shin made a motion to adjourn at 3:40 pm, seconded by Member Hill; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Hildebrand, Recording Secretary

David Willenborg, Chair