



ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ADVISORY BOARD

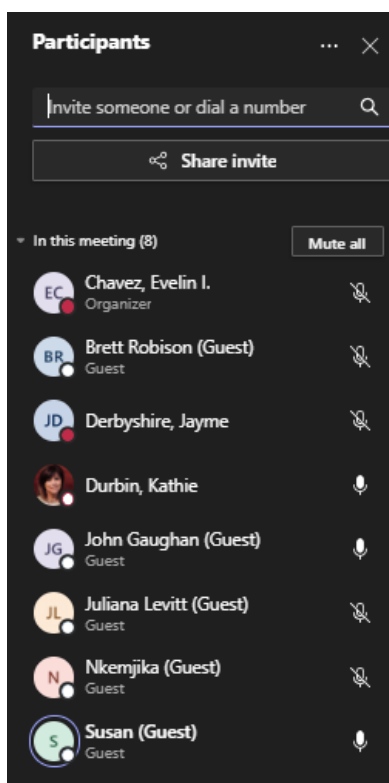
Marc Elrich
County Executive

Meeting
Tuesday, July 13, 2021
Alcohol Beverage Services
201 Edison Park Drive, 1st Floor, Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Minutes

Members and Staff Present (virtually through Microsoft Teams): John Gaughan, Chair; Brett Robinson, ABAB Member; Juliana Levitt, ABAB Member; Dr. Nkemjika Ofodile, ABAB Member; Susan Heltemes, BLC; Jayme Derbyshire, MCPD; Evelin Chavez, ABS; and Kathie Durbin, ABS Director.

Absent: Jason Hubbarth, ABAB Member
Lt. Michael Ruane, Montgomery County Police Department



John Gaughan called the meeting to order at 9:06 am. A motion was made to approve the May meeting minutes by Ms. Heltemes, seconded by Mr. Gaughan, and unanimously approved by the members present.

General Discussion:

The members asked Officer Derbyshire if she believes the number of DUI cases is a structural shift. She said many things could contribute to the number of cases – politics, police support, etc. Traffic enforcement is a proactive thing but when a lot of support things are removed, officers become leery as to what situations they are going to put themselves in.

There was general discussion between all members on the possibility of community programming, awareness campaign, or something that can be created in the areas where there are more DUI cases. Officer Derbyshire informed the board members that there are a lot of officers who are retiring so there are less officers overall. And with establishments opening again Montgomery County Police will likely see an increase in DUIs.

Board members discussed possible action items and what the board can do to move forward with the actions. The team brainstormed a few ideas; however, the members are unclear what can be done to turn these ideas into actionable things.

It was suggested that ABS offer more ALERT Trainings. It would be useful to amp up ALERT and maybe offer it more times a month. Establishments that push ALERT tend to have less violations. Since this training is free, it shouldn't be a financial problem for businesses. Perhaps offering incentives, or something that will benefit the licensee. Officer Derbyshire suggested looking at grants. The instantaneous reward will likely go a long way.

Ms. Levitt believes that management has been changing a lot and that not being properly trained is another problem. She believes that individuals are more concerned with passing the course, and that it is important for training to be more focused on serving underage like the ALERT training ABS offers.

Mr. Gaughan read the ABAB duties and responsibilities to the members and explained how the board reports the ideas, suggestions, and/or recommendations to the County Executive's Office. It would be a good idea to submit a quarterly report. He also suggested talking to ABS Director Ms. Durbin to discuss how the Board can submit a quarterly report. Mr. Gaughan reminded Mr. Robinson that we are an advisory Board and that members should not set high expectations. Not disagreeing with Mr. Robinson, but just reminding him of what the Board's responsibilities are. We can not make policy, but certainly make recommendations.

Evelin Chavez, ABAB Update:

Ms. Chavez did not have any updates.

John Gaughan, ABAB Member:

Mr. Gaughan asked when ABAB meetings would be held in-person and Ms. Durbin explained that until further notice, boards, committees and commissions will meet virtually using Microsoft Teams Meetings or another online platform. Perhaps the board can have a hybrid model to offer virtual and in-person meetings, but that wouldn't happen until later this year.

Mr. Gaughan expressed interest in having in-person meetings and looks forward to meeting all the new members in person. He suggested having the new board members take a tour of the department to understand how the department operates.

Kathie Durbin, ABS Update:

Ms. Durbin explained ABS has a lot going on and looking forward to the department's future. ABS has been working on revisiting the strategic plan, staff positions and excited to announce ABS will be opening the new Cabin John store in early Fall (September). We are hoping we can present ABS' new brand, Oak, Barrel & Vine.

Ms. Durbin also informed the board members that ABS will doing some makeovers in five (5) of the retail stores and plans to roll out the new brand in these stores. ABS has been working with procurement to bring more consistency to in all the retail stores. This includes things like music and comcast. The Chief Administrative Officer, Rich Madaleno has assisted ABS in making connections.

The warehouse is working on proof of delivery printouts. This allows delivery drivers access to onsite printers that can print receipts for orders upon delivery. The department is also working on some lease issues, but very close in signing a lease agreement in the Wheaton area.

The State of Emergency ended July 1st, and businesses could no longer sell alcohol off premise. Earlier this month the Montgomery County Board of License Commissioners extended the change that took place in March 2020 allowing restaurants to sell beer and wine for off-premise consumption. ABS is working with the businesses to that want to continue the outdoor dining and selling alcohol to go. The extension to the carryout drinks doesn't seem to be as important to licensees as the outdoor dining extension.

Prior to COVID-19, ABS created a marketplace license. The license authorizes the license holder to allow the consumption of beer, wine, and liquor in a designated outdoor area located within the commercial shopping center if the beer, wine, or liquor is purchased at an establishment

Montgomery Parks, part of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, has stopped allowing visitors to drink alcohol without a permit in 13 local parks. The Picnic in the Park program started last fall to help local restaurants struggling during the coronavirus pandemic.

ABS is marking its 70th anniversary with the release of three limited edition products that will be available in limited quantities in most of its 26 retail stores starting. Having a Maryland brewery and a distillery create the products for the celebration continues one of the department's constant missions to serve customers, with focus on innovation.

To mark the anniversary, Silver Branch Brewing of Silver Spring created a custom beer for ABS named "Together We Can—70th Anniversary Cold IPA." Together We Can highlights the expansion of breweries supported by ABS in the County over the past decade.

Old Line Spirits in Baltimore created two custom whiskeys specially for the ABS anniversary. The whiskeys are the "Pat's Pick, American Single Malt Whiskey Cask Strength Private Barrel" and the "Perennial Pick, American Single Malt Whiskey Cask Strength Private Barrel."

In 1933, at the end of Prohibition, the Montgomery County Liquor Board was formed to uphold alcohol laws. On July 1, 1951, the County Department of Liquor Control was created. In 2019, the department officially changed its name to Alcohol Beverage Services to showcase its commitment to customer service and highlight the full breath of products it offers.

Susan Heltemes, BLC Update:

Ms. Heltemes informed the members that ABS is about 20 short on business licenses than before. She explained that renewal season is the year when businesses make decisions on whether or not they will continue to sell alcohol. Ms. Heltemes stated that this year ABS is about 20 licensees short in comparison to 2019.

Restaurant and bar owners in Montgomery County and other parts of Maryland can serve alcoholic drinks to go, due to the state of emergency. Larry Hogan signed into law.

The Montgomery County Board of License Commissioners decided to 'opt in' to SB 205 a statewide Bill permitting locals boards to continue the sale of "drinks to go" until 2023. s to sell beer and wine for off-premise consumption. The one thing all members of the board agreed on was the amount of alcohol that the to-go sales should have. They believe there should be no more than 2 oz per drink and sales cannot go beyond 11 pm.

The change came after Hogan's executive order that closed bars and restaurants for on-site dining due to the COVID-19 pandemic expired.

Ms. Heltemes suggests that new members attend the ABS ALERT Training, so they become more familiar with the alcohol regulation expectations.

Jamie Derbyshire, MCPD:

Officer Derbyshire stated that the number of DUI cases in the County are still pretty low. Cases are at about 50% from where they were pre COVID-19. The number of cases is likely increasing as a result of people returning to normal activities. Underage DUI arrests are staying about the same. The park program is not under the County because the parks have their own police.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the ABAB is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment:

There being no other business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.