

MINUTES
BUSINESS LICENSE COMMISSION
MEETING

February 4, 1991

I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the West Hollywood Business License Commission held on the above date in the City Council Chambers in the Werle Building, 626 N. Robertson Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA, was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairperson Scott Forbes.

A. Pledge of Allegiance led by Comm. Elliott

B. Roll Call: Present - Comm. Elliott,
Comm. Maggio. Comm. Sonnenburg
Comm. Ellis, Chairperson Forbes

Absent - None.

C. Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve carries with all ayes from BLC.

D. Approval of Minutes - November 5, 1992

Motion to approve Minutes as drafted.

Motion - Comm. Maggio
Second - Comm. Elliott

Motion to approve carries with all ayes from BLC.

II. ITEMS FROM CITIZENS

None.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Request to obtain a Dance business license.

Business Name: dba Opera Cabaret
Location: 8531 Santa Monica Blvd.
Applicant: Alan Gunn/Sally Gilson

Recommendation: To approve Dance business license with certain conditions and to require a 6 to 12 month review by the Business License Commission.

A staff report was presented by John Jakupcak.

APPLICANT COMMENTS

Mr. Alan Gunn (co-owner of Opera Cabaret) - spoke on behalf of application for a Dance business license at 8531 Santa Monica Blvd. Presented numerous hard-copy documentation to BLC (re: soundproofing, ABC license information, club standards 'good neighbor' agreement, etc.). Applicant stated that many conditions would be adhered to in order to alleviate any potential problems with residential neighborhood.

Sally Gilson (co-owner of Opera Cabaret) - spoke on behalf of Dance business license. Stated that she owns the property (8531 Santa Monica Bl.) and was aware of many problems that were caused by former tenant (The Speakeasy). Ms. Gilson asked BLC to grant Dance business license for the Opera Cabaret, indicating that she would now own and manage the entire business operation with her two sons (Alan Gunn/Michael Gilson).

Michael Gilson (operating floor manager for Opera Cabaret) - spoke on behalf of Dance business license. Indicated that a landscape plan would be presented to City for approval by appropriate division(s). Stated the intent of all persons involved in Opera Cabaret are willing to actively work with the City and neighboring residents to alleviate any potential problems as a result of the business' daily operations.

Daniel Zeev (V.P., Z Valet & Shuttle Service, Hollywood) spoke on behalf of granting Dance business license for Opera Cabaret. Indicated that three (3) parking lots would be available for parkings of patron vehicles. Mr. Zeev stated that his company has been in business for the past ten (10) years working throughout the Los Angeles area (including West Hollywood).

George Siafaris (promotional consultant for Opera Cabaret) - spoke on behalf of granting Dance business license for Opera Cabaret. Indicated that both he and his wife would be involved in consultation with the management/owners of the business.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ali Baza (W. Hollywood) - spoke in support of Dance license.

Barry Bogart (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

Karen Sanborn (W. Hollywood) - spoke in favor of granting Dance license with specific conditions and a review by the BLC.

Christine Lazar (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

Dick Rosengarden (W. Hollywood) - spoke in favor of granting Dance license with specific conditions as outlined in staff report.

Sarah Pae (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

Dorothy Martel (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

Jeffrey McFarland (W. Hollywood) - spoke on behalf of granting Dance license.

Joyce Heftel (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

Adella Jacques (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

James Dorrington (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

Melba Englander (W. Hollywood) - spoke on behalf of granting Dance license.

Linda Russ (W. Hollywood) - spoke against granting of Dance license.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Chairperson Forbes asked applicants to address questions of occupancy load, hours of operation, entry/exit personnel, valet parkers (how many), club experience (ownership/management), etc.

Applicant (Mr. Gunn) responded to questions by Chairperson Forbes.

Commissioner Maggio asked about types of entertainment that would be offered to patrons of business.

Commissioner Ellis questioned applicant as to the number of spaces provided to business.

Commissioner Elliott asked staff if parking for the business met with standards established by the Dept. of Community Development.

Staff indicated that parking for site meets with the approval of the Dept. of Community Development.

Mr. Gunn and Mr. Zeev spoke regarding the physical layout of club (parking lots, interior layout of business, how valet parking will work at location, etc.).

Commissioner Sonnenburg asked if valet parking fee could be reduced to encourage patrons to utilize the valet parking.

Commissioner Maggio asked whether exterior maintenance of building had been done (re: landscaping, etc.).

APPLICANT REBUTTAL

Mr. Gunn responded to comments given by BLC and public. Stated that he wished to attract an "upscale" clientele for the restaurant/nightclub.

Michael Gilson (son of Ms. Gilson) stated that the new business would be a significant improvement over the old nightclub (The Speakeasy).

Commissioner Maggio asked Ms. Gilson if landscaping had been planted on east side of property (8531 Santa Monica Blvd.).

Ms. Gilson responded stating that planting had been done on the east side of the property and that she had a voucher (receipts) to provide BLC as proof. She also indicated that parking lot at property site would be re-surfaced and re-stripped after completion of tenant improvements.

Chairperson Forbes requested that the public hearing be closed.

Motion to close public hearing was made by:

Motion: Comm. Sonnenburg
Second: Comm. Elliott

Motion to close public hearing passes with all eyes from the BLC.

Staff (A. Browning) indicated that findings/conditions would have to be made by BLC based on Resolution and public testimony.

Comm. Elliott asked about the type of license issued from the ABC.

Staff (A. Browning) indicated license as a type "47".

Commissioners discussed conditions of approval for Dance business license. Neighborhood concerns were

outlined and suggestions were provided to staff. BLC asked for a 4 month review of Dance license using the "Nightclub Standards" matrix as a reference.

A motion was made to approve Dance business license with additional conditions as provided to staff by BLC members, with a 4 month review to be conducted by the BLC:

Motion: Comm. Maggio
Second: Comm. Ellis

Motion to approve passes with all ayes from BLC.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Code Enforcement Report on Nightclubs

Staff report was presented by Thomas Hamlet (CEO).

Comm. Ellis asked about the status of the Troubadour (re: occupancy load rating).

Staff (A. Browning) indicated that the Fire Dept. would be responsible for enforcement of occupancy loads at nightclubs. Indicated that a "Nightclub Council" was meeting on a regular basis to discuss issues relating business operations of clubs in the City.

Commissioners asked additional questions of staff in regards to how the "Nightclub Matrix" would actually work in practice (i.e. enforcement capabilities, etc.).

Chairperson Forbes asked about a report that was prepared by staff for the BLC in regards to extension of nightclub operating hours (from 2 AM to 4 AM). He indicated that West Hollywood clubs were losing business to L.A. (City) clubs because of the additional hours allowed in Los Angeles.

VI. COMMISSION CHAIR'S REPORT

None.

VII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Maggio formally thanked the West Hollywood Post writer (Bruce Stinsoff) for his work with the City of West Hollywood and for his accurate reporting of information that was provided by the Post.

Commissioner Ellis mentioned that the Planning Commission Chair wanted feedback from the BLC in regards to zoning standards for new nightclubs (i.e. proximity/distance requirements).

Staff (A. Browning) gave a brief response to BLC concerns (re: nightclub operations).

VIII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

None.

IX. ITEMS FROM CITIZENS

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn to next regularly scheduled of March 3, 1992:

Motion: Comm. Sonnenburg
Second: Comm. Maggio

Motion passed with all ayes from the BLC.

Chairperson

Staff Liaison to BLC