**Commission on Nightlife and Culture Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, January 26, 2021**

This Commission on Nightlife and Culture meeting was joined along with The Recovery Weekly Check-in with the Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). All the Commissioners were invited to join this meeting via cell phone or tune in on Mayor Bowser’s social media.

The updates and guests’ speakers are below.

**Featuring updates from:**

* John Falcicchio, Deputy Mayor, DMPED
	+ Deputy Mayor Falcicchio introduced all of the guests and provided a brief introduction of the topic that would be discussed.
* Kristi Whitefield, Director, Department of Small and Local Business Development​
	+ First steps that businesses should take to apply for a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP):
		- Don’t wait to get my paperwork in order!
		- Did I apply for PPP last year? If so, look at that paperwork and see what needs to be updated
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	+ Resources
		- The DLSBD team is ready and available to provide technical support and assistance to District businesses applying for PPP funds:​
			* email: dslbd.ptac@dc.gov ​
			* Phone: (202) 727-3900 (select option #7) ​
	+ Additional resources:
		- District Chamber of Commerce​
		- DC Main Streets​
		- Business Improvement Districts​
		- Greater Washington Black​
		- Chamber of Commerce​
		- Your current lender​
		- Small Business Development Centers​
		- Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce​
* Shawn Townsend, Director, Mayor’s Office of Nightlife and Culture, MONC
	+ Director Townsend provided the following updates:
		- Restaurant Week began yesterday January 25, 2021 and it will run until February 7, 2021!​
		- To see the list of participating restaurants, visit ramw.org/restaurantweek.​
		- We want to remind Carry-out and delivery services to turn off their cars and take their keys when delivering and pick up food around the District.
		- The Office of Planning (OP) wants to hear from patrons and business owners about their experience with outdoor dining. To learn more and fill out the brief survey, visit  <https://publicinput.com/W4624>.  ​
		- We want to emphasize that during a Snow Emergency, streateries and parklets are not to be used.
* Vinoda Basnayake, Chairman/Nightclub Owner, Commission on Nightlife and Culture
	+ - Vinoda who is the owner of three nightlife establishments in the District shares that he has had a rough time with his nightclub because of the business nature, he had to shut down. However, he’s had a good experience in applying and receiving PPP loans and grant relief programs from the DC government.
		- Vinoda added that he has found the Mayor’s Office of Nightlife and Culture and the Commission to be valuable during the pandemic where as a nightlife operator you’re able to get your questions answered.

**Special Guests:**

* Fred Moosally, Director, Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, ABRA
	+ Director Moosally provided the following update regarding the Reopen Washington DC ABRA Amendment Act of 2021
		- The bill proposes several innovative approaches to help rebuild DC’s economy, provides businesses and patrons with expanded opportunities, and maintains the city’s reputation as a top destination to live, work, and dine out.
		- Proposed provisions include:
			* extending programs introduced on an emergency basis
			* establishing new license categories
			* amending several licensing operational requirements.
		- Create a commercial lifestyle license
			* Creates a new alcohol license that allows patrons to walk around and consume alcohol purchased from on-premises establishments within predefined boundaries.
			* License would be limited to mixed-use commercial developments located on private property that are pedestrian friendly and governed by a commercial owners’ association.
			* Security and signage posted at areas of ingress and egress would re-enforce public consumption laws.
		- Extends the Streatery Program
			* In 2021, alcohol establishments may operate their registered streateries throughout the calendar year at no cost.
			* In 2022 and 2023, alcohol establishments may operate their registered streateries between May 1-October 25 during both years for a one-time registration fee of $100.
		- Allow new taverns in Georgetown
			* Eliminates current cap of six (6) taverns in the Georgetown historic district instituted by the DC Council in 1994.
			* Maintains prohibition on nightclubs. Currently there are zero (0).
		- Create A third party alcohol license
			* Creates a new license to regulate the delivery of alcohol by delivery companies on behalf of on-premises retailers and manufacturers. ​
		- Permits doggie bags of spirits
			* Allows restaurants and hotels to permit dining patrons to leave with partially consumed bottles of spirits. Current District law only allows patrons to leave with partially consumed bottles of wine.​
		- Eliminate application hurdles
			* Permits applicants to self-certify alcohol applications and use electronic signatures. ​
			* Eliminates requirement for nightclubs to resubmit their security plan with their renewal application. ​
		- Attract new full-service grocery stores to wards 7 & 8
			* Create a new 25 percent full-service grocery store Class A alcohol license to allow license holders to sell beer, wine, and spirits for off-premises consumption. ​
			* Requires applicants interested in opening a Class A grocery store in Wards 1-6, to first open and operate a Class A grocery store in Wards 7 or 8 for a minimum of six (6) months.​
			* Allows these stores to sell individual containers of beer, malt liquor, or ale where their sale is now prohibited. ​
* Anna Valero, Owner, Hook Hall
	+ Anna discussed the Restaurant Worker Relief fund:
		- From the start of the pandemic, those hit hardest and fastest by the COVID-19 shutdowns and restrictions are workers in the hospitality industry. That’s why we rolled out HOOK HALL HELPS.
		- Formed the Workers Relief Fund in partnership with RAMW to take tax deductible donations
		- Through Hook Hall Helps, area hospitality workers receive meals and supplies provided through the generous support of the greater Washington, DC community.
		- To support local restaurants, we compensate kitchens for providing the meals, and a way for all in the industry to stay connected and give back during these difficult times.
		- Meet needs of workers in the industry where they are
			* Provide meals and supplies with dignity
			* For the industry, by the industry
			* Online / In person trainings
			* Originally around unemployment support and safety net services
			* Evolved to education and training
			* Create a sense of connection between workers, operators, vendors and the greater community
		- Continue to meet workers where they are and provide leadership training for those to return stronger than before
			* First meet basic needs
			* Second meet connection needs
			* Third provide education/training
* Ris Lacoste, Chef/Restaurantuer, and Owner of Ris Restaurant
	+ Ris shared her experience managing her restaurant during the pandemic and applying for federal and local finds.
	+ In the beginning of the pandemic, Ris pivoted to take out delivery. Throughout the pandemic, Ris grew her operations and has been able to sustain her business.
	+ Ris has applied for PPP and local funds and her experience has been positive.
	+ Ris expressed that she would like for the city to help operators inform them of their rights when it comes to negotiating with landlords.