

Southbridge Liquor Licensing Board  
Minutes of May 20, 2021

**Agenda item #1:** Open Meeting/Roll Call – Chairman Bruce Newlands called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm. Present were Chairman Bruce Newlands, Member Michael Daniels, Vice Chair Chad Splaine and Town Councilor David Adams. Liquor Agent Sgt. Ryan Roettger was excused

**Agenda item #2:** Chairman’s Announcements – None

**Agenda item #3:** Accept the minutes of November 5, 2020 - Mr. Daniels made a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Splaine seconded that motion. Mr. Daniels and Mr. Splaine in favor. Chairman Newlands abstained.

**Agenda item #4:** Citizens Forum – none present

**Agenda item #5:** Liquor Agent Updates – Sgt. Roettger was excused.

**Agenda item #6:** Licenses to be signed –

- SL-01 Quinebaug Valley Council for Arts and Humanities Summer Solstice outdoor music and art festival June 19, 2021. Mr. Daniels made the motion to approve. Mr. Splaine seconded that motion. All in favor.
- SL-02 LaSalle Reception Center graduation party June 19, 2021. Mr. Splaine made the motion to approve. Mr. Daniels seconded that motion. All in favor.
- SL-03 LaSalle Reception Center wedding July 10, 2021. Mr. Splaine made the motion to approve. Mr. Daniels seconded that motion. All in favor.

**Agenda item #7:** Discussion on “nips” and the public trash nuisance they are causing – Mr. Splaine stated that he has seen many social media posts regarding the littering in town. Discussed imposing a fee for each nip sold or for a fee to the licensed establishment that sell them. Discussed that there are currently bills before the House and the Senate to add nips to the bottle bill. Mr. Splaine stated that something needs to be done as they are a nuisance.

Mr. Daniels stated that the trash makes the town look like a dump. People find the nips on their lawn, in the gutters, everywhere. Mr. Daniels believe that people stop at the package store to purchase them and then open them, drink them and throw them out the window when they are done. He believes that the Liquor Board needs to make a statement and stop the trash everywhere. Mr. Daniels stated that he inquired about the street sweeper and the scheduling of it and was told that the schedule is set in stone and can’t be varied. He believes that this is not helpful for the trash situation. He stated that in 2 years he has picked up over 2000 nip bottles and picked up 109 in one day. Mr. Daniels discussed banning them effective July 1, 2021.

Mr. Splaine stated that banning the nips may not make the problem go away. People will still buy them elsewhere and throw them out in town. He stated that there should be a regular schedule for street sweeping in the main areas and not just twice a year.

Chairman Newlands stated that he has noticed a significant drop in nips on his property since the last time we had these conversations.

Mr. Splaine stated that they should think about imposing an impact fee on the establishment that sell these items.

Chairman Newlands asked that if an impact fee was established could those revenues be allocated specifically to DPW for the cleanup efforts.

Councilor Adams stated that you need to build those items into the arrangements. He continued that street sweeping has already been done twice this year in the Main Street area. He spoke to the DPW Director and they are discussing obtain a contract with a company to sweep up the Main Street area more regularly.

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Mr. Splaine stated that it appears that our current options regarding this are to wait to see what happens with the bills currently before the House and Senate or to look into a community impact fee.

Councilor Adams stated that the Board of Health banned single use plastic bags and that there has been a significant difference in the trash issue they had been creating and that the town is much cleaner now.

Chairman Newlands stated that he had a problem with banning specific products. Mr. Daniels stated that it could be viewed as discriminating against the nuisance. Council Adams stated that sometimes those decisions bring up the thoughts of what's next.

Mr. Splaine asked what happens if the town bans them and they the bills pass and they become returnable. Councilor Adams stated that you would just need to reevaluate. He stated that the same thing happened with the marijuana rules.

Mr. Daniels asked if this type of question could be placed on the ballot. Councilor Adams stated that you may be able to ask a non-binding question.

Mr. Daniels stated that there should be a public hearing on the issue. Mr. Splaine agreed but would like to know all of the available options regarding this. Chairman Newlands also agreed and stated that perhaps there could be a per establishment fee that each establishment could decide to pay the fee and sell them or not sell them and not pay the fee.

Mr. Daniels stated that maybe the establishments could raise their prices for nips and gift the sum of the additional cost to the town. Councilor Adams stated that perhaps the gift could be earmarked to DPW for the clean up efforts. He agreed that it is a nuisance within the town.

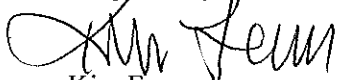
Chairman Newlands stated that it should be discussed on an upcoming agenda. He also stated that the package store owners should be invited to the meeting. It was discussed that this would be on the July agenda.

**Agenda item #8:** Board Member Discussion – Mr. Daniels discussed a sliding fee scale for license renewal that would depend upon whether the establishment had been found at fault for any incidents during the year. There was also discussion regarding establishments paying for the advertisement fee for the public hearing if they are found at fault for any incidents. This item would be discussed on a future agenda.

**Agenda item #9:** Discussion of the next meeting date – Discussion was had regarding the next two meeting dates. The June meeting will be held June 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm and the July meeting will be held July 29<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm.

**Agenda item #10:** Adjournment – A motion was made by Mr. Daniels and seconded by Mr. Splaine to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Kim Ferron  
Recording Clerk