

**Item 24-0848: Class "B" Beer and Reserve "Class B" Liquor License application for Jechu LLC d/b/a Mr. Frogs**  
Safety and Licensing Committee

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 5:30PM

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 35:45**

24-0848 is a Class B beer and reserve Class B liquor license application for—hopefully I get this right—Jechu LLC doing business as Mr. Frogs, Julia Nino Gomez agent located at 409 West College Avenue contingent on approval upon approval from all departments. Is there a motion?

**Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 36:07**

So, move.

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 36:08**

Second.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 36:08**

What is the motion?

**Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 36:12**

To approve contingent on all....

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 36:15**

Okay. Did you reference the attachments? There was a denial letter.

**Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 36:21**

Okay. I'm sorry.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 36:23**

I'm sorry. I just want clarity on the motion.

**Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 36:25**

Yes. That—then my motion would be to deny.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 36:31**

Okay. Is there a second?

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 36:34**

Second.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 36:35**

Okay, motion and a second to deny. Okay. Ms. Gomez, are you here tonight? Okay. Would you like to say something in regards to this, please? approach the podium, use the microphone. If you could give me your name and address for the record.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 36:50**

Julia Nino Gomez. Okay. I would like to know why my liquor license was denied because I apply like six months ago. Okay. I don't know the reason why the deny because I have another business, Lil Taco, okay, for like 10 years. And what's the good reason they want to deny that liquor license?

**Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 37:29**

Okay. I'm sorry, I can't get the denial letter to open. Would someone from staff like to summarize? Attorney's office or police department?

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 37:41**

I can reference it. Lieutenant Goodin from the police department submitted a memorandum on behalf of the police department recommending denial. It largely summarizes facts set forth in the memorandum that I drafted, but it references the family involved in the involvement in some illicit drug dealing activity, noting that the applicants themselves were not charged or arrested or convicted of anything. I'll be absolutely clear about that. But I think in pertinent part, without going into the facts in great detail, Lieutenant Goodin says at the end "given the facts of this case and Julia's knowledge and complicity in the drug dealing operation, the Appleton Police Department has concerns that the drug dealing activity will occur 409 West College Avenue (Mr. Frog's) if Miss Gomez is granted an original Alcohol Beverage license for the business. It is recommended by the Appleton police department to deny Julia Gomez's original Alcohol Beverage license application."

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 38:49**

I wasn't involved in that case. Okay? It's not my—it wasn't my fault. My son, he's still paying for his mistakes. I don't have—I don't know why I had to pay for his mistakes. My record is clean, and I not do anything bad. Okay? So, what is the difference? I can sell it food, but I can't sell alcohol? What's the difference?

**Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 39:20**

Okay, is there anything else you'd like to add?

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 39:26**

My English is not very good. [She turned and spoke in Spanish to someone sitting in the audience.]

**Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 39:30**

Yes, you can speak. You just need to give your name and address for the record.

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 39:33**

My address is [XX]—

**Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 39:40**

Please use the microphone.

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 39:41**

[XXXXXX] in Appleton.

**Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 39:45**

Could you restate your name please.

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 39:46**

Sandra.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 39:47  
Okay.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 39:50  
[Speaks in Spanish]

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 39:51  
Go ahead.

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 39:52  
Basically, she's saying that why she has to pay for the mistakes her son did? What's the difference of her selling food and selling alcohol? If she will do something wrong, she will do it out of a food business if she really wanted to. So, she's being judged for something her son did.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 40:12  
[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 40:14  
She wasn't involved in that problem. She was detained. She was detained but let go the same moment because she had nothing to do with it.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 40:24  
[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 40:26  
So, after four years, they want to bring that case back.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 40:34  
[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 40:37  
If he has already been charged for what he did.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 40:40  
[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 40:43  
She has never had any problems with the police. Her record is cleaned.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 40:48  
[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 40:51  
She was leasing Mr. Frogs to James and Jimmy Jackson.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 40:55  
[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 40:58**

But she heard that she would—they were doing illegal stuff.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 41:02**

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 41:04**

She decided to end it to end their lease.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 41:08**

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 41:10**

And hoping for her to open it back up under her name.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 41:15**

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 41:17**

And she feels like there's no right reason for her to get a liquor license denied when she has other businesses. She has complied with—

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 41:28**

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 41:29**

—and with all the inspections. Everything has been approved by the Health Department.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 41:36**

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 41:39**

All she's waiting for is for the liquor license, and it's been half a year now—

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs) 41:45**

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 41:48**

—when it usually takes about 30 days.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 41:51**

Okay. Thank you. Anything from the attorney's office?

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 41:55**

Yes, I can address a few of those things. One, I'll address the timeframe. Obviously, this is unusual set of circumstances. The background check required getting a whole lot of information from federal authorities. Lake Winnebago Metro enforcement group was rather forthcoming in terms of being willing and able to provide

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documentations with significant redactions. Federal authorities were not at all forthcoming with the things that were exclusively under their purview so there's still a hole in the information there.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 42:28**

One thing I want to make clear is this is not a real litigation of any of the criminal case at all. This is a separate issue. And I will note that in terms of addressing the question of what's the difference between selling food and selling alcohol, the answer is: a lot. One requires a pretty substantial license. The other one is not nearly so highly regulated. And the fact that there's a lack of recognition of the difference is a little bit concerning.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 42:53**

In the memorandum I set forth, (I recognize it is pretty lengthy, but) that condenses well over 200 pages worth of redacted documents from the MEG unit and federal authorities. But to summarize it, the Mr. Taco, Lil Taco business in Kimberly, run by the same people, there were numerous federal indictments and convictions for cocaine trafficking through that business. Pretty much everybody involved in that operation was related to or employed by the business or both. The individual was Miss Gomez's son. Another individual who was charged and convicted was a daughter who served her time and I believe is on federal probation at this point. And throughout the investigation, there were numerous references to the other son, Mr. Morales, Alejandro Morales, one of the listed potential agents having his own cocaine dealing operation. So, three different individuals are alleged—two convicted, another one alleged—to be trafficking cocaine.

**[Julia says something in Spanish to Sandra]**

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 44:16**

The other thing, and this is the last thing that I'll highlight because I don't want to just essentially re hash my entire memorandum unless of course committee wants me to, but one of the things that we don't have is the interview of Sandra Morales [note: he meant to say "Sandra Munoz"] with federal authorities. But one thing we do know from other reports is that based on something that was said during that particular meeting, a search was conducted of a property jointly owned or jointly titled to Miss Gomez and her, I believe, former daughter in law, and at that location approximately 77 pounds of marijuana was located and federal authorities have been searching for that marijuana since it was known to have existed, and that was located in the area under the control of, among other people, admittedly, Miss Gomez.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 45:16**

So, what I want to circle back to is the legal standard here. There is nothing about any of the facts that are here that requires the committee or the Council to reach a specific conclusion. The committee is able to use its discretion as it sees fit as long as whatever decision is made is based on the proper principles. So, I think I put this forth here. The best way to explain it is this needs to be an exercise in judgment, not an exercise in predetermined will. So, the committee can take that information, and I would urge the committee not to draw conclusions from information, we don't have, information that I referenced as being redacted. I certainly don't want there to be unfair conclusions based on that. It could be better; it could be worse. We don't know. But nothing about that requires the committee to approve or deny. This is a question of the committee's judgment, and within the confines of what's set forth in here in terms of the proper considerations which impact upon traffic, peace, quiet, cleanliness of the area, public health, safety, peace, comfort, happiness of society, those are the concerns that we need to be looking towards. And as long as the committee bases its decision rationally on those considerations and the facts that we have, the committee can make whatever decision it sees fit.

**Alderman Chris Croatt (District 14)** 46:44

Okay. Thank you for all those clarifications. For a lot of those reasons, I'm going to vote to deny this application. Is there anything from other committee members or alders present? Committee members first? Okay, Alder Van Zeeland, go ahead.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 47:05

So, like what does—

**Alderman Chris Croatt (District 14)** 47:06

Oh, no, hang on. You don't have the floor. Alder Van Zeeland has the floor.

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5)** 47:10

Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to ask the attorney; he referenced something in the memo. Was that 4—the information on 4/12/21, I think that you used a different last name for Sandra, and I just want to clarify. I'm seeing here this is from Lieutenant Goodin that I'm looking at. There's a different last name and the name that was used by the attorney.

**Alderman Chris Croatt (District 14)** 47:44

That would be on the back page or the second page.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney)** 47:47

Regarding Sandra Munoz?

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5)** 47:49

Yes, I think you said "Morales." I just wanted to make sure that that was—

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney)** 47:53

It's entirely possible I misspoke.

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5)** 47:55

Okay, but that's what you're referring to.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney)** 47:57

I believe the name should be correct—

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5)** 48:00

Okay.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney)** 48:01

—as noted in writing,

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5)** 48:02

Okay. Great. Thank you.

**Alderman Chris Croatt (District 14)** 48:04

Okay. Thanks for the clarification. Alder Schultz.

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 48:10**

Thank you, Chair. I'm inclined to support your recommendation. I don't know if I want to speak in much detail, but it does feel like, in answer to your question, you you're a mother figure and you have lots of family members, including children that are involved in illegal activity. Yes, they've been—some of them have served time. Some of them, I think are—sounds like they're still under investigation, and there's active—there are things that are happening with your family members, both your immediate family and extended family, that give us I think, as a committee, cause for concern, particularly with the cocaine dealing and trafficking out of those locations. So, for those reasons, I would also support this recommendation to deny.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 49:02**

Okay.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 49:03**

May I clarify something?

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 49:04**

Go ahead.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney) 49:04**

If I had indicated that I'm aware of any type of ongoing investigation, I'm not aware of any ongoing investigation. I believe some sentences—I believe there may be ongoing supervision through federal probation and at least a few people still serving time.

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9) 49:19**

Okay. Thank you for that clarification.

**Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 49:21**

No.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 49:21**

Thank you. Alder Siebers, anything?

**Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 49:24**

I think she had something to say.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 49:24**

Okay.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 49:26**

Did you want to make one final comment? And the committee is going to take a vote.

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez) 49:32**

Yes, she's saying that she doesn't think it's fair that she has to pay for the mistakes of her family.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 49:39**

I think we heard her say that once or twice.

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 49:44

She has something to do with it, she would have gotten arrested too.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 49:47

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 49:56

And when she said the difference between selling food and alcohol is—what she's trying to say is that if she wanted to do [il]legal activity, she would do it out of a restaurant. She wouldn't have to open up a bar to do something like that.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 50:12

Okay, some of that's been previously stated. So, is there anything new or additional you'd like to add?

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 50:18

[Speaks in Spanish]

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 50:20

And all the employees that were there have been fired. The people that were working there before, everything is new.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 50:31

Okay. All right. We're gonna wrap this up.

**Aldersperson William Siebers (District 1)** 50:35

Chair, could you just share the process now? This goes before—

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 50:39

Yeah, just so you understand the process, the committee is going to take a vote, and it'll go as a recommendation to the full City Council. And that meeting will be on July 17, when we would take that up. So, you're welcome to come to that meeting and speak. There will be a sign-up sheet in the back of the room. Come about 6:45 and sign up, and then you could speak to the full City Council on anything on the agenda. So, your item would be on the agenda. Okay, is that clear?

**Sandra Munoz (Translator For Julia Gomez)** 51:06

Yes.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 51:07

Okay. Attorney Buruin.

**Zak Buruin (Assistant City Attorney)** 51:09

Last thing before we vote, I just want to make sure we get clarified so we can get it in writing for the full notice. The vote to deny at this point, would it be based on the criteria set forth essentially in the legal standard section of my memorandum and then some of the other things that were said here today in terms of concerns about how some of this history affects the those particular considerations?

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 51:42

Alder Siebers is that—



**Alderson William Siebers (District 1)** 51:44

Yes.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 51:45

—the direction of your motion to deny? Alder Schultz, is that your second?

**Alderson Alex Schultz (District 9)** 51:48

Yes.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 51:48

Okay. All right. Okay, for those reasons, we have a motion and a second to deny. All those in favor of denial signify by saying aye. Aye. All opposed? Three, zero. It will go to the full city Council as a recommendation to deny. So, again, you're welcome to attend on the 17th. All right, we'll move on.

**Julia Nino Gomez (Mr. Frogs)** 52:10

Thank you.

**Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14)** 52:11

Thanks for coming.