

## **Minutes of the Durham ABC Board's Board Meeting January 21, 2025**

The Durham County ABC Board met at the administrative office, located at 3620 Shannon Road, Suite 200, on the 17th day of December 2024.

Board Chair Daniel Edwards called the meeting to order at 5:44 p.m.

In attendance were Board Chair Daniel Edwards, Board Members Gale Adland, Frachele Scott, Ryan Urquhart and Board Attorney George Miller III. General Manager Lou Sordel, Assistant General Manager Deborah Warren, Operations Manager Michael Mitchell, Fiscal Service Director Rachel Wadsworth, and Human Resource Generalist, Tristin Coleman were also in attendance. Board Member Donald Lebkes and Paul Young from DTW Architects & Planners joined via zoom. Special Agent Delello from ABC Law Enforcement also joined us via Zoom.

### **Conflict of Interest Review and Declaration**

Chairman Edwards read the Board's Conflict of Interest Review and Declaration statement and asked Board members if they have an actual conflict or appearance of a conflict of interest with any items coming before the Board and, if so, does the Board member wish to recuse him or herself from deliberating and voting on the matter. All Board members verbalized that they have reviewed the agenda and do not have any conflicts.

### **Consent Item**

The consent item approved was December 17th, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes. Board Member, Frachele Scott moved to approve December 17, 2024, Board Meeting minutes and Board Member, Gail Adland seconded the motion. The Board approved December 17, 2024, board minutes.

### **Public Comment**

Chairman, Daniel Edwards addressed the public and asked if anyone was present and if they had any comments. No one from the public was in attendance in person or via zoom.

### **ALE Special Agent Delello presented the December ALE Report to the Board**

#### **North Carolina Alcohol Law Enforcement Summary of Activities December 2024**

Checks at ABC Stores: 22

ABC Outlet Inspections MBX: 23

ABC Outlet Inspections Other: 9

Alcohol Education: 0

ABC Violations submitted to ABCC: 5

Total Arrests: 11

Total Charges at Permitted Outlets: 28

Total Charges at Non- Permitted Outlets: 0

Total Misdemeanor Charges: 26

Total Felony Charges: 2

**On Monday, December 16, 2024,** District IV Special Agents conducted an ABC inspection at Sake Bomb located at 4215 University Dr, Durham. During the inspection Special Agents located a bottle of spirituous liquor bearing the tax stamp from Hutchins Garage.

**On December 17, 2024,** District IV Special Agents conducted at ABC inspection at Hutchins Garage, located at 402 Geer St, Durham. During the inspection the

incident at Sake Bomb was discussed with the permittee who offered no explanation for their spiritous liquor being at Sake Bomb. As a result of the investigation neither business was able to substantiate an order of or transfer approval of spirituous liquor between them. A violation report was subsequently submitted to the ABC commission for both businesses.

**On Monday, December 16, 2024,** District IV Special Agents conducted an ABC inspection at AMC Southpoint, located at 8030 Renaissance Parkway, Durham. During the inspection Special Agents located spirituous liquor bottles not bearing the tax stamp. A violation report was subsequently submitted to the ABC Commission.

**On Tuesday, December 17, 2024,** District IV Special Agents conducted an ABC inspection at Bar at DBCO, located at 506 Ramseur Street, Durham. During the inspection Special Agents located multiple bottles of spirituous liquor not bearing the tax stamps. The permittee on scene acknowledged they were aware of the violation and were subsequently charged. A violation report was submitted to the ABC Commission.

**On Tuesday, December 17, 2024,** District IV Special Agents conducted an ABC inspection at Bull City Mini Mart, located at 2929 Angier Avenue, Durham. During the inspection products used to defraud drug screening test were located for sale in the business. The manager admitted to knowing what they were used for and was subsequently charged with selling adulterants to defraud a drug screening test. A violation report was subsequently submitted to the ABC Commission.

On Wednesday, December 18, 2024, District IV Special Agents investigated a complaint from Durham ABC store number 7, located at 1517 Glen School Road suite 8, regarding the possible theft of bottles of spiritous liquor. After reviewing the security footage, the suspect was identified and found to have stolen two bottles of spiritous liquor worth approximately \$50.00. Warrants for their arrest were obtained for possession of NTPL, possess for sale, larceny, and habitual misdemeanor larceny.

**On Wednesday, December 18, 2024,** District IV Special Agents conducted ABC outlet surveillance at Fast Stop 2, located at 801 Alston Ave, I observed the

passenger of the vehicle consuming alcoholic beverages on the premises. During a traffic stop of the vehicle the driver was found to be in possession of cocaine. The driver was arrested for possession of cocaine as well as the incident taking place within 1000ft of a school. The passenger was cited for the relevant alcohol offenses.

**On Saturday, December 21, 2024,** District IV Special Agents conducted ABC surveillance at the BP located at 2406 Holloway Street, Durham. While observing the premises we found probable cause to conduct a vehicle stop. During the stop the passengers were initially found to be in possession of open containers of alcohol. Through a probable cause search of the vehicle one of the occupants was found to be in possession of a concealed firearm and cocaine. Through an additional search, the other occupant was also found to be in possession of Methamphetamine. Both suspects were charged with the applicable controlled substance, paraphernalia, CCW, and open container offenses.

**On Monday, December 30, 2024,** District IV Special Agents concluded a source investigation in Franklin County, NC after charging the suspect with selling alcohol to a person under the age of 21. The investigation was launched after being notified about a fatal motor vehicle collision occurring on December 23, 2024, in Franklin County, NC. As a result of the collision, an underage passenger in the vehicle died due to injuries received. Additionally, the driver, also underage, was transported to the hospital and remains in critical condition. Alcohol was believed to be a factor in the accident. During the investigation, agents were able to determine that the decedent purchased alcoholic beverages from Royals Mini Mart, 1907 Cheek Road, Durham just prior to the collision. In addition to the criminal charges filed, a violation report will be submitted to the NC ABC Commission.

### **Paul Young, DTW Architects & Planners**

Mr. Young updated the Board on the developments and construction of the new store 4 location. Mr. Young also updated the Board on the developments of the new Hope Valley Road location (14).

**Assistant General Manager, Deborah Warren**

Ms. Warren showed the Board pictures of the newly purchased warehouse. The current building will be removed, and a new warehouse will be constructed.

On December 18-20, 2024, we visited Nashville and Lynchburg Tennessee with our partners at RNDC. We visited Jack Daniles and Uncle Nearest Distilleries. She also showed a great video from Uncle Nearest Distillery that shows the history of that distillery.

**Fiscal service Director, Rachel Wadsworth**

Mrs. Wadsworth discussed the December retail and mixed beverage sales. The Durham County ABC sales were \$6,762,732.00 for December, which is a decrease of \$122,516 or 0.88% compared to the prior year. By business line, Retail sales decreased \$100,488 or -1.46% and MXB sales increased by \$22,028 or 2.09%. Budgeted total sales for December were \$7,067,799 so there was a negative budget variance of \$305,067 or -4.32%. December MXB sales for 2023, 2022, 2021 & 2020 were \$1,052,947; \$1,127,497; \$850,921 & \$289,143, respectively.

Mrs. Wadsworth also reviewed the comparative bottle report, and the State ABC Boards Monthly Comparison Sales Summary. Durham County was ranked 7<sup>th</sup> during December.

**MXB Operations Manager, Mike Mitchell**

Mr. Mitchell reviewed our top five mixed beverage accounts, discussed our retail sales, and mixed beverage sales. Mr. Mitchell listed our top five mixed beverage accounts by sales in this order, Sister Squared \$ 245,482.04, Mezcalito \$214,316.75, Bar \$168,089.17, Top Golf \$164,263.60, Boxcar \$121,599.30. Mr. Mitchell compared the retail and mixed beverage sales during December 2024 verses December 2023 and stated we had an increase of \$22,028.00 in Mixed Beverage sales and an decrease of \$122,516.00 in retail sales. Our wines sales were \$3,927.45, which is also a nice increase in wine sales. Mr. Mitchell also reviewed the January sales during the first two weeks of January, which are at \$2,538,959.00.

**Human Resource Generalist, Tristin Coleman**

Mrs. Coleman talked to the Board about the Wellness program for our fulltime employees. We are working with the Department of Public Health in setting up a wellness program with a holistic approach for our team. The major topics we are offering our employees in January are educational seminars and presentations, store safety and critical incident awareness. DCDH will also provide gun safety classes and safety gun locks for our employees. The ALE division will provide active shooter awareness training, ID training and alcohol awareness.

Mrs. Coleman and Lou Sordel talked about one of our new wellness programs with Cigna Insurance. Their wellness program allows us to spend up to \$10,000 dollars for good working shoes for our staff. Our staff works hard day in and day out on concrete floors. This takes a toll on their bodies. We have partnered with the Bull City Running Company to fit our full time staff with orthotic shoes. Staff at the Bull City Running Company will evaluate each employee's needs and situation and fit them with orthotic shoes.

**Visual Compliance Manager, Ikzuri Garcia-Banda**

Ms. Garcia-Banda updated the Board with information about some of our Grantee site visits. We had great visits with Student U and the Boys & Girls Club in December and Durham Proud in the beginning of January. Next week we are going to the Criminal Justice Resource Center which is always a great visit.

Lisa Gosselin is working on two events during March at the Durham Hotel. On March 1<sup>st</sup> will be holding our DCABC Annual Board meeting and on March 27<sup>th</sup> we will be holding a networking event with our Board members, Admin staff and grantee recipients from this year. When we have all of the details finalized, we will notify everyone.

We will start our Bourbon lottery calls soon and they will be ready to pick up in selected stores in February.

## Adjournment

Chairman Edwards motioned to end the meeting and go into closed session. Ryan Urquhart moved to adjourn the meeting and Frachele Scott seconded the motion. All Board members approved without objection, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:11 PM.

Approved by:  \_\_\_\_\_

Daniel Edwards, Board Chair

Ms. Garcia-Banda is also working with Ms. Warren and Mr. Chase on merchandising our February end caps.

**Lou Sordel, General Manager**

Mr. Sordel updated the Board on the inventory levels. We are managing the inventory and have started decreasing inventory levels. We are at good inventory levels now and going forward for January and February. Starting in May it will pick up again. We have also moved our MXB delivery service to store 10 and it is working out great. We've also received a lot of great comments about our new delivery driver Brayan.

Mr. Sordel met with the management committee that is coordinating the General Managers conference in Asheville NC in March. We are also getting ready for the summer conference in Greensboro. I will be meeting with the management team to help create an agenda soon.

Mr. Sordel talked about some repairs and projects coming soon. He named a few projects like Admin office needs a new roof. We requested a quote from Baker Roofing, and it came in at \$26,000. We sent it to the Summit HOA Association.

We also need to make some repairs to the roof at store 14. Mr. Sordel talked to John Boyd today to see what our alternatives are to fix the leaking roof at store #14. One alternative is to remove the brick facing on the second level and repair the drainage issues and the second alternative is to caulk the areas that are causing the leak.

We are moving along with the new store #4 on Page Road. Big shout out to Paul for moving this construction project along, he has been a huge help.

We are happy with the new security company that is monitoring our stores and creating a safer workplace and retail store. We have seen an increase in theft incidents because our stores are now being closely monitored.