

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE AND CANNABIS BOARD
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MEETING

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IN THE MATTER OF: :
 :
ClearSight Labs, LLC :
t/a ClearSight Labs :
317 Pennsylvania Ave SE : Fact Finding
Retailer MC - ANC 6B : Hearing
License No. 127126 :
 :
(Review of Standard :
Application for New :
Testing Laboratory :
License) :
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Wednesday
May 22, 2024

The Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Board met via WebEx videoconference, Chairperson Donovan W. Anderson presiding.

PRESENT:

DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
SILAS GRANT, JR., Member
JAMES SHORT, JR., Member

ALSO PRESENT:

JOSE ORELLANA, DC ABCA Staff
MICHAEL CORRADO, Licensee
JASON PERU, Investigator

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 11:03 a.m.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The next case
4 on our calendar is a fact finding hearing for
5 ClearSight Labs, License No. 127126.

6 Good morning, Mr. Orellana. Can you
7 please elevate the rights of the licensee and the
8 witnesses they might have and the board
9 witnesses, Supervisory Investigator Peru.

10 MR. ORELLANA: Sure. Michael Corrado,
11 your access has been elevated.

12 Jason Peru -- Supervisory Investigator
13 Jason Peru, your access has been elevated. That
14 is all, Chairman.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you.
16 Good morning, everyone, Mr. Peru, Mr. Corrado.
17 Let me have you, Mr. Peru, please, spell and
18 state your name for the record.

19 You're on mute, Mr. Peru.

20 MR. PERU: Jason Peru, J-A-S-O-N, last
21 name, P-E-R-U.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And what is
23 your role with the agency, sir?

24 MR. PERU: Supervisory Investigator in
25 Enforcements.

1 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning,
2 sir.

3 Mr. Corrado, can you please spell and
4 state your name for the record?

5 MR. CORRADO: Absolutely, sir. Thank
6 you. My name is Michael Corrado, M-I-C-H-A-E-L
7 C-O-R-R-A-D-O.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning,
9 sir.

10 MR. CORRADO: Good morning.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And what's your
12 role in this case, sir?

13 MR. CORRADO: I'm the President of
14 ClearSight Labs.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So
16 one of the things, this is the first testing lab
17 application in D.C. The board requested this
18 fact finding hearing, basically, we want to get
19 some clarification regarding ownership of this
20 establishment. And the board also wants to get
21 from the licensee a time line for it to be fully
22 operational, the level of testing expertise, and
23 the history of testing, so those are some of the
24 questions that the board would expect from the
25 licensee to provide us.

1 So I'm going to start off though with
2 Mr. Peru.

3 So Mr. Peru, could you give us some
4 background, I mean who you are, what role you
5 play in the agency, and are you familiar with
6 this establishment, and how is it that you are
7 familiar with this establishment?

8 MR. PERU: Yes, sir. Good morning.
9 Supervisory Investigator Jason Peru with
10 Enforcement. I'm responsible for dealing with
11 enforcement in all alcohol and also with cannabis
12 and that's how any new licensees that are coming
13 on board, at certain times I'm asked to visit the
14 location prior to licensure to do a walk-through
15 and see what the space looks like and meet with
16 ownership to kind of see what their plans are.

17 So I was asked to do this in this in
18 this particular case with ClearSight Labs into
19 which I scheduled an appointment and I met with
20 Mr. Corrado at the location and did a walk-
21 through with him.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, so
23 tell me where is this located, what is it that
24 you -- just give your -- tell me what it is that
25 you were able to find? When did you do a walk-

1 through and what were you able to identify and
2 establish?

3 MR. PERU: Sure, so I did a walk-
4 through with him either last week or the week
5 prior. I've got to look at the exact dates to be
6 honest with, but everything is blurring up for
7 me. But I visited the location. I met with him.
8 It is located at 317 Pennsylvania Avenue,
9 Southeast. And he kind of walked me through the
10 space and gave me what his plans were for the
11 location.

12 Initially, when I did a walk-through,
13 just for clarity for the record, I was not made
14 aware of the fact finding where I was going to be
15 a part of the fact finding. This was done
16 separately from this, so I did already take some
17 pictures if you want me to share. I can give you
18 a couple of photos of what I did take to see the
19 space. I can show my screen, if that's what you
20 want, Mr. Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes. That's
22 fine because this is the first testing lab. If
23 this is approved, this is going to be the first
24 testing lab that the agency will approve.

25 So yes, Mr. Orellana, can you please

1 allow Mr. Peru to share his screen so you can
2 share some information with us, sir. Go ahead,
3 sir. Thank you.

4 MR. PERU: Is it working?

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, sir.

6 MR. PERU: Okay, so this is the front
7 door of the business when you come in off the
8 street.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I see a whole
10 bunch of pictures, so you need to highlight.

11 MR. PERU: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Can
12 you see this?

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: It's a blank
14 screen right now, sir. Maybe if you could share
15 another one.

16 MR. ORELLANA: Have you tried sharing
17 the screen?

18 MR. PERU: I have it on share screen,
19 but it's telling me because I have the file -- do
20 you guys see the folder there, right?

21 MR. ORELLANA: Yes.

22 MR. PERU: But if I open it up, you
23 can't see when I open it like this, you're not
24 seeing it?

25 MR. ORELLANA: You're sharing

1 applications specifically.

2 MR. PERU: Oh, oh, okay. So let me
3 cancel. Sorry. Let me stop sharing.

4 MR. ORELLANA: Share screen.

5 MR. PERU: There we go. Screen 1, is
6 that what I want to do, Jose?

7 MR. ORELLANA: Yes.

8 MR. PERU: All right, now let's try
9 this. Now you can see this?

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, sir, go
11 ahead.

12 MR. PERU: All right, sir. So this is
13 me standing on the sidewalk looking at the front
14 door of 317. It's a pretty large building, like
15 I said. I didn't take extensive, final
16 inspection-type pictures because I wasn't
17 planning on this. So this is when you walk in
18 the front door, this is the lobby, so it's kind
19 of narrowed in, because this door to the right
20 actually goes to an unlicensed dispensary, Taste
21 Budz. And that's why I took this picture.

22 So this is like a vestibule. When you
23 come in that front door I just showed, this is a
24 vestibule. To the right is the door that goes up
25 to Taste Budz. To the left, this door here that

1 you see is the door that goes downstairs to where
2 the proposed testing lab location is.

3 Sorry, it jumps around. This is the
4 back door, back door exit, alley way exit for
5 them. Another picture of the back door alley way
6 for them. And I took this picture because you
7 can just see where these stairs here, where this
8 lattice is, that's the stairs that goes down to
9 the testing lab. The landing I'm standing on is
10 actually the unlicensed dispensary's rear exit
11 stairs. And that's why I took this photo just to
12 show where the two different stairwells are, one
13 going down to the basement of the lab which I
14 discussed with the owner.

15 And then -- so this is another kind of
16 odd picture, but if you're looking up, now in
17 this picture, I'm standing in the lab. I'm in
18 the lab in their basement looking straight up.
19 This elevator shaft that's in their plan that
20 they submitted to us, but this elevator shaft is
21 actually an ADA-compliant elevator for wheelchair
22 access. However, it goes between all three
23 floors.

24 And if you look up here to the right,
25 that is actually the unlicensed dispensary, up

1 here, in that top corner where you see kind of
2 that window at.

3 So what I told the licensee for the
4 lab is is that you we need to -- there needs to
5 be some kind of a wall or a ceiling put in there
6 that -- so that a separation of the space is
7 completely to where there's no access, visibly or
8 physically through the space. So he's aware of
9 that.

10 But this elevator we talked about
11 doing some kind of controlled access on it, key
12 fob or what not because it can't be for the
13 tenant on the second floor which is the
14 unlicensed location. They would need access to
15 that, right, possibility would be for ADA
16 patients and then he would need access to the
17 elevator to bring in equipment because there's no
18 other way for him to do that. So that's why I
19 kind of -- so you can see. This is it up close,
20 how it looks like on his ground level, the
21 elevator.

22 So this is looking, so when I came
23 down, this is a different angle. So this
24 vestibule I showed you in the earlier picture is
25 this space here and when you look straight up is

1 where you see the dispensary and the glass and
2 then the front door vestibule, but this is his
3 lower-level corner. So I had suggested, if
4 you're looking at my mouse, my arrow here, is
5 that this pillar here, from this line, ceiling
6 line continues all the way across, that now
7 defines this space and no more access from above
8 to physically get into the space through breakage
9 or what not as a security standpoint. And this
10 is, once again, the elevator. You can see that
11 that exists in this level.

12 So this shot is me looking down the
13 hallway. This room here is what he described to
14 me as the main testing room where his equipment
15 will then be placed. It's kind of just
16 coincidentally. This is the way it existed so
17 you have these viewing windows that are here
18 along that wall. Like I said, that's just
19 coincidentally that that's the way the space was
20 prior. So he didn't do any work in this space as
21 of yet.

22 This is another room that's on his
23 layout as well on his floor plan that he's going
24 to be using for processing or what not. And
25 possibly, one of these rooms, because there's a

1 window existing, there's a window existing to the
2 right of this door, blocking the window out to
3 make it his safe room and storage room.

4 But that's the only photos I took.
5 Like I said, I apologize because it wasn't a
6 detailed, but if I can open up the application
7 here and I scroll down to his submittal to us,
8 you can see here right on this layout, so this is
9 that room I showed you, the long room with the
10 windows, right?

11 This is the -- I'm sorry, hold on.
12 Let me zoom in some. Sorry, it's been flipped
13 around. So this is the long room here with the
14 windows where he's going to have primarily his
15 main lab. These are the two front rooms that I
16 showed. I suggested this one to be the safe room
17 because this room has a weird, under the ground
18 access that I suggested has to be blocked off.
19 And we will hit the door here because it's for
20 fire.

21 It's the fire panel and it needs to be
22 addressed. But that essentially gives you --
23 this is the elevator bank that I showed you.
24 This is the vestibule that looks straight up,
25 that blank space that I said that a ceiling was

1 recommended to put in, but that's kind of the
2 whole layout of the lab. And the back of the
3 house was an employee break room, a bathroom, and
4 then exiting out the rear of the business.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay.

6 MR. PERU: That's all I have
7 referenced to the location.

8 Do you want me to continue on or let
9 me stop here.

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, you can go
11 ahead, whatever else you have that you want to
12 add and then I'll have some questions I will ask
13 you. Go ahead.

14 MR. PERU: Okay, so at the time I met
15 with the owner, I did not have -- I did not fully
16 review the application. And a couple things came
17 up when I looked at it and I reviewed it again
18 last night and I made some highlights here.

19 And I thought it was worth pointing
20 out to the board is that the lease I'm looking at
21 is actually a sublease that's actually signed
22 here by Amelius Enterprises which is Taste Budz
23 which is the unlicensed retailer that's above
24 him. So I'm assuming without any further
25 investigation that the Taste Budz leases the

1 whole building and is now subletting to him in
2 the basement which I wasn't exactly aware of.
3 And I looked at -- I highlighted Section C
4 because Section C refers to the actual owners,
5 Ann Schuman and Betty Liu which is the actual who
6 Taste Budz apparently is leasing from and then
7 subletting to, in fact, Michael.

8 And I highlighted those items because
9 obviously, it's an unlicensed retailer who has,
10 to my knowledge submitted applications, but
11 nothing has been processed as of yet. And then
12 when I go back up to the required documents of
13 his application, the landlord affidavit is
14 signed, is from Taste Budz, right? So
15 essentially allowing an affidavit here which is a
16 required submittal for any new cannabis licensee,
17 whether it's retail or lab or cultivation center,
18 everyone has to get this approval from the
19 landlord. In this case, the landlord's signature
20 comes from Taste Budz, not directly from the
21 actual owner of the building.

22 Now once again, whether that's allowed
23 or not, I'm not 100 percent certain. I thought
24 it was worth mentioning because this does not
25 tell me that the actual owner of the building is

1 aware of either the sublease or that there's
2 going to be a cannabis lab and also a
3 potentially, if we allow it, a cannabis retailer
4 on that second floor. And I just wanted to point
5 out those things to the board as we're here to
6 discuss this.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Let me ask a
8 question.

9 MR. PERU: Yes, sir.

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Let me ask a
11 question. You have the sublease, so what does
12 the sublease state? What's the purpose of the
13 lease? What does the lease say about what the
14 property will be utilized for?

15 MR. PERU: The sublease is between
16 Taste Budz and ClearSight Labs saying that Taste
17 Budz, the unlicensed establishment is subletting
18 the ground floor to ClearSight Labs. That's what
19 this is stating.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Right. I'm
21 going to come to you, sir. Don't worry about. We
22 will have plenty of questions for you.

23 MR. CORRADO: I understand. I
24 understand.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So based on an

1 inspection during the walk-through, it doesn't
2 appear to be two separate establishments -- from
3 you, it doesn't appear that this lab is
4 affiliated with -- I mean I know that there's a
5 legal relationship based on the lease itself.
6 but what does it appear to be the relationship to
7 the lab and this currently illegal cannabis
8 business?

9 MR. PERU: Well, I have no evidence to
10 show that there is a relationship next to the
11 signed lease that he's paying him rent, that he's
12 paying the \$4,000 rent that it's in this lease to
13 him, to Taste Budz. He's his landlord. That's
14 the only -- that's a pretty direct financial tie
15 there.

16 Beyond involvement from the lab, I
17 wouldn't be able to -- there's no evidence of
18 that. As I'm scrolling, I'm only -- I forgot to
19 point out this other thing referenced to the
20 building. I don't want to jump too much, but in
21 the security plan he submitted - and Michael, I
22 didn't see this when we first met, but it talks
23 about security personnel. It says there will be
24 a security guard station in the front door lobby
25 area of the facility.

1 Now mind you, this is not a
2 requirement to have physical security, but it is
3 in the plan, so I was just - was that a mistake
4 or is it going to be physical security in the
5 building? I would want to ask him at some point
6 if that was the case.

7 MR. CORRADO: There will be. There
8 will be physical security on site. Yes, sir.

9 MR. PERU: That's all I really have
10 for now, unless you want to jump back at me.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. You
12 can close here, your screen, sir.

13 MR. PERU: Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on. Do any
15 board members have any questions for Supervisory
16 Investigator Peru?

17 MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Chair, I have
18 questions.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
20 Short.

21 MEMBER SHORT: Thank you.
22 Investigator Peru, looking at the diagrams that
23 you presented in your report, it seems as though
24 it will be a very responsible thing for you to
25 get in contact with Fire and with the Department

1 of Buildings and to make sure because the
2 elevator shaft going upstairs with the pictures
3 you were showing would not be permitted. There
4 would have to be proper separation.

5 So I would just like to say before I
6 would vote on this or feel comfortable voting
7 about this or recommending to the board, that we
8 have the Fire Marshal's Office and the Department
9 of Buildings, Department of Health, come in and
10 take a look at the building, look at the plans,
11 look at where everything is laid out and make
12 sure that between the two businesses, there is
13 appropriate separate separation.

14 The illegal business now, as a
15 retailer or applying to be a retailer, and the
16 lab should be completely separated by at least
17 two walls and the building inspector or the Fire
18 Marshal's Office would then have to sign off on
19 that. That is my professional opinion as aboard
20 member and that's what I would recommend to the
21 board.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Short, of
23 course, I appreciate what your status is, but as
24 I said we are -- in order for them to open, we
25 have to have a Certificate of Occupancy, and so

1 the proper permits. If we're going to issue a
2 license, the proper permits have to be provided
3 to the agency and to the board. So expect us --
4 that is some things that will be done, but I
5 don't -- hold on.

6 MR. PERU: Mr. Short, I have a copy of
7 the CO if that was something you wanted to look
8 at or address.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, still the
10 building inspector and the Fire Marshal's Office
11 will have to sign off because if it's going to be
12 a laboratory and they're going to be using open
13 flame, as most laboratories do -- you're not
14 going to use open flame?

15 MR. CORRADO: No, sir.

16 MEMBER SHORT: But anyway, we'd like
17 the Fire Marshal to determine that. Let me just
18 say and I have to just be very plain and as you
19 know, I have a background in building and fire,
20 so I would recommend the most safe thing for this
21 board to do would be to get someone else involved
22 before we make the decisions about something that
23 may come back that we should have done due
24 diligence.

25 Thank you for your excellent report.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair, for allowing me to speak.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, Mr.
3 short, the board is not making any
4 recommendations. It's just a fact finding
5 hearing to find out information about his
6 business plan and his business. But before, of
7 course, I ask for all licenses, before the
8 license is issued. As long as the board has the
9 proper permits from the proper agencies, then the
10 board will act. The board and the agency will
11 move forward in issuing an license, once they've
12 had all the proper sign offs from all the
13 appropriate agencies. Okay.

14 Any other questions by any other board
15 members of Mr. Peru?

16 All right, Mr. Corrado --

17 MR. CORRADO: Yes, sir.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning,
19 sir. Tell me a little bit about your business
20 plan, what it is set -- tell me a little bit
21 about your business plan, sir.

22 MR. CORRADO: Absolutely. So
23 ClearSight Labs would be an independent testing
24 laboratory, analytical laboratory. So just to
25 really quickly Mr. Short's concern which is a

1 very valid concern, in most laboratories,
2 especially production laboratories, there is an
3 element of heating, open flame, or gas being
4 used.

5 In an analytical laboratory, we're
6 working with instrumentation that is very small
7 scale. So we are looking at nanograms and
8 micrograms, milligrams. We are not producing
9 products. We are only doing analysis on products.
10 So the analytical equipment is what will be doing
11 the lab work.

12 So in that capacity, we work with
13 solvents. We work with some chemicals. And I
14 have plans in place here for proper storage and
15 handling of those chemicals and proper detection
16 of any chemical leaks or spills. So that is the
17 extent of what we're working with. It is not a
18 production laboratory. So I just want to make
19 that clear on the record here that the conditions
20 that most laboratories are subject to will not
21 necessarily be consistent for an analytical
22 laboratory of this nature.

23 Now to get into the business plan
24 itself, we want to get up and running time line-
25 wise between 10 and 12 weeks. We have the

1 equipment all lined up. Quotes have been
2 submitted. It's ready to ship, essentially
3 waiting on the outcome of this hearing and
4 further action provided by action by the board.
5 We can immediately place orders for the
6 equipment and have that on site within a
7 reasonable amount of time.

8 So the business plan initially is to
9 start by introducing an initial panel of testing
10 to the market. So as you're all aware right now,
11 there is no third-party laboratory. There is no
12 testing.

13 So by the way, I want to open with --
14 or matter testing, water activity, moisture
15 content, potency, terpenes, microbials, and
16 residual solvents. That will be the first full
17 panel, the initial phase of testing that hits the
18 market. And in doing so, we'll be able to
19 provide (a) prioritize patient safety and (b)
20 provide consumers and patients in Washington,
21 D.C. with the information that they need to make
22 educated and informed decisions with their
23 medication. That's my number one priority.

24 And then following that initial panel
25 rollout, a subsequent panel including heavy

1 metals testing, pesticides, and microtoxin
2 testing will then be implemented, once the
3 initial phase of rollout is complete and once the
4 market is ready for the secondary panel.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now you said
6 we, so tell me about -- okay, what is your role
7 -- tell me the structure of this business and
8 what is your role? What's the business? I mean
9 what is it's -- ClearSight Labs, what is this?
10 LLC, what is it? Tell us --

11 MR. CORRADO: It's an LLC. I am the
12 President and full owner of the business. So
13 I've been working with some consultants to help
14 establish -- to work on the application, help
15 establish the business as it is today, but
16 currently, I'm the full owner of the business.

17 Now that said, we're in the process of
18 finalizing our financial agreements and once
19 those are finalized, you will be getting a full
20 disclosure of all involved parties and any
21 operating agreements way ahead of time. So we
22 will approach you all with that immediately upon
23 signing and you'll get these disclosures
24 forthright.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So you're not

1 in a position to tell us who are the other
2 individuals currently?

3 MR. CORRADO: Currently, no. I prefer
4 to remain them private until the final agreements
5 are signed. Right now, what's essentially the
6 hold up is, we're working on finalizing terms.
7 And then again, pending the progress of today and
8 in light of this hearing, we'll be signing these
9 agreements and fully moving forward. And again,
10 you'll get all disclosure of any involved party,
11 just to ensure that there are no conflicts of
12 interest.

13 I know that's something that
14 especially coming from an analytical laboratory
15 and the first one to open in the District of
16 Columbia, it's incredibly important that there
17 are no conflicts of interest with this operation
18 in any of the manufacturers or cultivators.

19 So we will take the lead and disclose
20 everyone involved and the level of their of their
21 involvement.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now I guess what
23 steps are being taken to ensure arm's-length
24 dealing with the industry because in this
25 particular case, as stated by the investigator,

1 Supervisory Investigator Peru, is that your
2 landlord is an industry member, is into industry,
3 whether or not they are --

4 MR. CORRADO: Yes, sir.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- legal or
6 illegal, but they are in the -- that is your
7 landlord.

8 How is it that you can -- you're going
9 to prove independence?

10 MR. CORRADO: Well, a couple of
11 things. First of all, so we've had full
12 conversations with obviously, Amelius Enterprises
13 and with the building owners and the reason why
14 this sublease agreement is the way it is is that
15 instead of having to redo the lease agreement
16 with Amelius Enterprises, the owner prefer we
17 just access that sublease to Amelius Enterprises.
18 So the owners are fully aware of everything,
19 they're completely on board and if they need to
20 sign an attestation or an affidavit stating their
21 level of awareness, we'd be more than happy to
22 make that happen.

23 Now one thing I do want to address is
24 that Amelius Enterprise is an, as you mentioned,
25 currently illegal dispensary, there is no overlap

1 between an analytical testing laboratory and the
2 retail side of the industry. That is one thing I
3 do want to make clear and dispel any
4 misunderstandings is we have no contract, we have
5 no involvement with them.

6 Our only imperative is to collect
7 samples, rather, from cultivators and from
8 manufacturers, analyze those samples, and report
9 those results through metric seed sale tracking
10 system back to the cultivators and manufacturers.
11 It is a very direct pipeline between
12 cultivator/manufacturer and independent
13 laboratory.

14 And then in order to actually be able
15 to then move those products to dispensary, that
16 is when the cultivator/manufacturer steps in,
17 gets their clear test results and then is able to
18 continue on their business. So I just want to
19 establish that, that there is no payment, there
20 is no overlap. The only interaction is between
21 the laboratory and the cultivators/manufacturers.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now this -- all
23 right, because right now you're saying your
24 interaction is just with the manufacturer and the
25 cultivator?

1 MR. CORRADO: Yes, sir.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And this is a
3 retailer. Now do you know whether or not this
4 retailer has applied for a cultivation license or
5 a manufacturer license?

6 MR. CORRADO: I cannot attest to that.
7 I don't have a close relationship with this
8 retailer and they don't discuss their business
9 with me whatsoever. So personally, I don't feel
10 comfortable making any statements to that end.
11 But I'm sure we could establish that.

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: That's fine
13 because as you're saying it, if the retailer is
14 your landlord, you're subleasing from the
15 retailer, and if there's no direct, as a tester,
16 there is no direct relationship, your
17 relationship is with the cultivators and the
18 manufacturers and not the retailer, per se, then
19 okay, then -- but if at some point your landlord
20 becomes a cultivator or a manufacturer then at
21 least to me that is a conflict there and that's
22 something --

23 MR. CORRADO: I would agree.

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.

25 MR. CORRADO: Absolutely. If they

1 were to apply for cultivator/manufacturer, I
2 would not feel comfortable subleasing from them
3 at which point I would then approach the owners
4 and have them rewrite the leases, so then keep us
5 completely separate and negate the sublease. I
6 do agree. That would then, in fact, be a
7 conflict of interest and I certainly would not be
8 comfortable with that.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Now
10 do you or currently, do you hold any interest in
11 any of the cannabis business, any other cannabis
12 licenses in the District of Columbia?

13 MR. CORRADO: No, sir. I do not.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What about do
15 you own any cannabis licenses or businesses in
16 any other jurisdictions?

17 MR. CORRADO: No, sir.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So tell me
19 about yourself, your educational background, your
20 business acumen, your experience in business
21 testing. Go ahead.

22 MR. CORRADO: Absolutely, thank you,
23 sir. So I've been a D.C. resident since 2014. I
24 moved here to pursue my bachelor's degree in
25 chemistry at American University and I moved on

1 to get my master's in biochemistry and molecular
2 biology from Georgetown. So I've been a D.C.
3 resident for now almost, almost ten years.

4 And my experience started, I was a
5 scientist, a researcher in drug synthesis,
6 purification, and analysis for four years at
7 American University, at Georgetown, and at the
8 NIH, National Institutes of Health. And in that
9 capacity, I did a lot of analysis of small
10 molecules, particles, compounds, and that led me
11 to my career in cannabis where I served as a
12 scientist in the cannabis industry for over five
13 years now.

14 And in that capacity, I've been a
15 scientist at an analytical testing laboratory. So
16 the exact responsibilities and the exact same
17 business that ClearSight Labs will carry out is
18 something that I'm very familiar with and
19 something that I've conducted myself personally.
20 And then furthermore, I've also operated on the
21 other side of the cannabis science industry which
22 is the manufacturing and production side.

23 So part of the reason why I'm so
24 confident and excited for this opportunity for us
25 is that I have the perspective of both sides of

1 this industry. I know what it is to produce and
2 to manufacture cannabis products. I also know
3 what it is to test and being an analytical
4 scientist in that capacity. So when it comes to
5 sampling, when it comes to the way the two parts
6 of the industry interact with each other, I am
7 extremely confident in my abilities to navigate
8 that. So all together, I have about nine years
9 as a scientist, nine years of experience and five
10 of those, over five of those now, would be in the
11 cannabis industry.

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Let me ask you
13 this, have you worked in D.C. at any cannabis
14 cultivators.

15 MR. CORRADO: I have.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Where do you
17 work?

18 MR. CORRADO: I was the laboratory
19 manager at Fido Cultivation for two years,
20 between 2020 and 2022.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The reason why
22 I ask is because I've done -- the board actually
23 went and did a tour and you look very familiar.
24 That's why I asked and this just actually came in
25 my head that I remember that we went to do a tour

1 at some of the cultivators.

2 MR. CORRADO: Absolutely.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And I did see
4 someone looking like you.

5 MR. CORRADO: That would be me.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And so I'll say
7 that I think at some point the board actually
8 went out to tour the existing cultivation centers
9 here in D.C. and I think the board, myself, we
10 were introduced to you and I commented how --
11 that you are young.

12 MR. CORRADO: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And I think I
14 commented -- and nothing is wrong with that, but
15 -- I'm hoping I'm not being inappropriate, but I
16 was just saying I did remember seeing you working
17 in a lab in my official capacities as chair of
18 the board when the board went to just to do a
19 tour of some of the cultivators, cultivation
20 centers out there. So it's good that -- yes, I
21 just want to put that on the record. Okay.
22 That's fine.

23 So just tell me again, tell us again,
24 what type of testing will you be able to do
25 immediately?

1 MR. CORRADO: Yes, yes, so
2 immediately, I'd be able to get started with the
3 four matter inspection, the water activity
4 testing, moisture content, potency, level of
5 cannabinoids in different products, terpene level
6 testing, microbials and residual solvents. That
7 would be the initial panel that starts right
8 away.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So what other
10 testing would be required to do the full testing
11 and when would you be able to do that?

12 MR. CORRADO: Yes, sir. So it really
13 depends on the sphere which we're able to fully
14 establish the first panel, but I'm expecting that
15 would be pretty efficient. And then after that,
16 probably -- it's difficult to make an exact
17 determination but my goal is within a year after
18 that we'll get the heavy metals, pesticides, and
19 microtoxin testing online, so round out the full
20 required panel.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. I'm
22 going to give you an opportunity to ask Mr. Peru,
23 but let me ask the board members if they have any
24 questions. No?

25 Mr. Grant? Mr. Peru, any questions?

1 MR. PERU: No. I just want to -- kind
2 of in a question form, but Michael, we met, we
3 kind of talked, and I was really candid with you
4 about my walk-through and what's going on. I
5 think you're an intelligent young man who has
6 some good ambitions to get this done. I think
7 you have the ability and skills to do it. I
8 think the biggest concern that I have and flag is
9 back to the financials, right?

10 You submitted an application, and then
11 you guys then changed the application to remove
12 individuals where conflicts may have been shown,
13 right?

14 I know individuals that you have
15 worked with or even consultants that you're
16 working with in the cannabis industry, multiple
17 tiers, multiple hands on it. So because this is
18 -- you're going to be in the spotlight here,
19 there's a lot of -- this is new and a first for
20 the city, so as from an investigation standpoint,
21 obviously, I would have concerns about that type
22 of financing and who's involved with that
23 financing and who's getting paid by the business,
24 right? Who's benefitting from your business,
25 your business income and those individuals that

1 are involved.

2 And like you stated to me, I think
3 you're almost at a million dollars for equipment
4 when I asked you that number, right? I know you
5 stated that you had stuff on orders. So that's a
6 big jump for money.

7 It's going to be my job, obviously, if
8 the board approves this and we move forward that
9 I will have to keep a watch of what's what. I
10 just want to make sure that you understand that.
11 I know you're talking transparency, however,
12 you're at this point in time you don't want to
13 mention anybody's names that you're involved with
14 which is fine if you don't have things finalized.
15 But I have a different view on some things when
16 I'm looking at a perspective of questions on
17 who's involved and what that looks like.

18 No, I guess with that being said, Mr.
19 Chair, I appreciate it. That's all I really have
20 to add to this.

21 MR. CORRADO: Mr. Peru, thank you,
22 again, for your time and coming out last week. I
23 think we're in the process right now of taking
24 all those steps that you recommended and we want
25 to seal off that area in the vestibule to move

1 the door for the fire, install the gate, and take
2 out that window of the safe room, the vault. And
3 I totally understand your concern and it's
4 definitely something that it's an added concern
5 to me as well.

6 So one thing I've done is I've taken
7 the liberty of submitting a notarized attestation
8 to my lack of conflict of interest. And moving
9 forward, again, transparency is extremely
10 critical for me.

11 Any one, any operating agreement that
12 I enter into, anyone involved in the laboratory
13 from an investment or an equity perspective will
14 have a full financial disclosure made and they
15 will also submit notarized attestations to
16 testify to their (a) various questions that Mr.
17 Anderson asked me. So no involvement in any
18 license, interest in any license in D.C. and the
19 extent of their involvement in any other
20 operations. So they will be subject to the exact
21 same rigorous due diligence that I am right now.
22 And I have no problem, once final agreements are
23 signed, of disclosing absolutely everything. In
24 fact, we'll be the ones to bring it forward
25 immediately.

1 I want to put everyone at ease about
2 that because I do understand the critical and the
3 important role this laboratory will play in the
4 D.C. cannabis market and I want to be ahead of
5 that and to ensure everybody that we are being as
6 transparent as humanly possible and disclosing
7 everything possible about the team and the
8 financials and the investment. So I do appreciate
9 that concern, absolutely.

10 MR. PERU: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right,
12 thank you. Thank you for that presentation, sir.
13 any final comments you want to make before we
14 move on from this hearing?

15 MR. CORRADO: No, sir. No, sir. I
16 really appreciate everyone's time and I'm
17 definitely looking forward to continuing with
18 this process, absolutely.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: As I said, this
20 is a fact finding hearing. The board is very
21 excited that if this is approved, that we will
22 have our first testing lab in the District of
23 Columbia. However, we need to make sure that
24 there are no conflicts between your -- the work
25 that you're going to do and industry.

1 MR. CORRADO: Absolutely.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Therefore, we
3 need to make sure that there are in the sense
4 that you provide us whatever agreements that you
5 sign, so we can vet them to ensure that there are
6 no conflicts. If this is the first, we need to
7 make sure that the work that you do is not
8 criticized, is not compromised. And we, as a
9 board and agency, do not sign off on obvious
10 conflicts and compromises and I think one of the
11 things that as Mr. Peru has stated to you,
12 partly, there has to be separation, I guess
13 physical separation between your business and
14 this potential licensee.

15 MR. CORRADO: Yes, sir.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But that is a
17 first I have to do. The landlord issue, that's a
18 different situation. I'm -- going to assume that
19 there's a lease, but there has to be physical
20 separation between your business and their
21 business, so there is no conflict. So these are
22 things -- so I would hope that the recommendation
23 that was provided to you by Mr. Peru are taken to
24 heart.

25 If this is approved and he goes out

1 for another inspection that it is clear to him
2 that it's a separate business, of course, one can
3 share an elevator because if you're in a
4 building, there's an elevator, but in our
5 building, there's one elevator that supplies,
6 supports the businesses within the building. So I
7 don't have a problem with the elevator, but as I
8 stated before, there has to be walls, there has
9 to be clear demarcation where your business ends
10 and the other potential licensees start. Okay?

11 MR. CORRADO: Yes, sir.

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The board will
13 make a final decision regarding -- as stated
14 before, we're just trying to gather some
15 information.

16 MR. CORRADO: Of course.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And the board
18 will provide you with our decision moving
19 forward. Thank you for being here today and have
20 a great day, sir.

21 MR. CORRADO: Thank you. I appreciate
22 it.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right,
24 thank you, Mr. Peru. Thank you for the work you
25 always do and continue to do. Thank you, sir.

1 Have a great day.

2 MR. PERU: Thank you, sir. Good
3 seeing you guys. Thank you, board.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, good
5 bye. Appreciate.

6 We're at the end of our morning --

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
8 went off the record at 11:46 a.m. and resumed at
9 1:31 p.m.)

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good afternoon,
11 and welcome to the afternoon session of the ABC
12 Board. My name is Donovan Anderson, chairperson
13 of the board. Joining me this afternoon are two
14 other board members, Mr. James Short and Mr.
15 Silas Grant. The board has three members in
16 attendance today and that constitutes a quorum.

17 This afternoon we have four cases,
18 actually, on our calendar this afternoon and so
19 let me go through the calendar, but before I go
20 through the calendar, let me speak about -- we
21 had a fact finding in this hearing on ClearSight
22 Labs, License No. 127126, which is the first
23 testing labs that the board is in the process of
24 granting a license. So this morning conducted a
25 fact finding hearing on an application for

1 medical cannabis licensed testing laboratory,
2 ClearSight Labs, located at 317 Pennsylvania
3 Avenue, Southeast.

4 The board received extensive testimony
5 from the applicant. The board also heard from
6 Supervisory Investigator Jason Peru, who
7 conducted a site visit at the location after
8 receiving representations from the applicant that
9 he is the sole owner of the testing lab and that
10 there are no conflicts of interest or None
11 disclosed interest by others. The board is
12 satisfied and authorizes ABCA's Licensing
13 Division to proceed with finalizing the
14 processing of this application, so thank you.

15 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
16 went off the record at 1:33 p.m.)
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