

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: :
 :
Pub Crawl :
Applicant: Alex Lopez :
Date: October 28, 2023 : Fact Finding
Event: DC Halloween : Hearing
Crawl 2023 :
(Project DC Events) :
Neighborhood: Multiple :
Licensed Premises :
Size of Event: 2500-3500 :
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Wednesday
September 14, 2023

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

PRESENT:

DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
BOBBY CATO, JR., Member
EDWARD S. GRANDIS, Member
JENI HANSEN, Member
JAMES SHORT, JR., Member

ALSO PRESENT:

JOSE ORELLANA, DC ABCA Staff
ALEX LOPEZ, Applicant
INVESTIGATOR MIKEA NELSON, DC ABCA

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

2 (2:04 p.m.)

3 CHAIR ANDERSON: The next case in our
4 calendar, we have a fact-finding here is the pub
5 crawl regarding -- The Applicant is Alex Lopez
6 and it's the D.C. Halloween Crawl 2023 Project
7 D.C. Events for October 28th, 2023.

8 Good afternoon. Mr. Orellana, can you
9 please elevate the rights of -- actually there's
10 an investigator, Mr. Alex Lopez.

11 MR. ORELLANA: Alex Lopez, your access
12 has been elevated.

13 CHAIR ANDERSON: And I'm not sure if
14 Mr. Lopez -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

15 MR. ORELLANA: Investigator Mikea
16 Nelson, your access has been elevated. And I'm
17 going to elevate another Alex just in case.

18 MR. LOPEZ: I'm here. Can you guys
19 hear me okay?

20 CHAIR ANDERSON: I can hear you, sir.
21 I would love to see you though. Who is with you
22 -- Who -- Okay, fine. Who's this other Alex? Is
23 this someone who's on your team?

24 MR. LOPEZ: I am not sure to be honest
25 with you. I was having some issues and I tried

1 to download the app on my phone, so I am --
2 perhaps it's -- you can take off the other Alex
3 just in case it's my phone.

4 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right.

5 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

6 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right. Good
7 afternoon, everyone. So I would like everyone to
8 introduce themselves for the record. Let's start
9 with you, Mr. Lopez.

10 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. My name is Alex
11 Lopez and I'm with Project D.C. Events.

12 CHAIR ANDERSON: Ms. Nelson, can you
13 identify yourself for the record please?

14 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: I'm ABCA
15 Investigator Mikea Nelson.

16 CHAIR ANDERSON: Good afternoon, Ms.
17 Nelson. All right. So Mr. Lopez -- and it's my
18 understanding -- Well, you did apply for a pub
19 crawl -- to have a pub crawl on October 28th from
20 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and this is on October
21 28th. And it's -- I guess it's called the D.C.
22 Halloween Crawl 2023. Halloween is a sore spot
23 with this Board, so the Board normally does not
24 grant pub crawls for Halloween. But this is the
25 -- It's my understanding it's the 28th and

1 Halloween is the 31st, which is a Tuesday after
2 this Saturday. So just tell us -- And one of the
3 reasons why we're having this public hearing is
4 because it is around Halloween. And so I just
5 want you to tell us what is your business model,
6 what is it that you're requesting? Where is it
7 that this pub crawl would -- if it was approved,
8 what neighborhood? And approximately how many
9 people are you requesting permission for the
10 Board to grant?

11 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So this would be an
12 event that we are in the process of planning. If
13 everything gets approved, it's on the 28th. The
14 application currently states 2:00 p.m. to 10:00
15 p.m. I know the Board, you know, made a change
16 last year and changed the hours and amended the
17 hours, not just for us, but the other two
18 companies that were approved in D.C. for 1:00
19 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Not sure if the Board's going
20 to do that again. We've applied for an expected
21 number of 2,500 participants to 3,000. So for
22 us, this is going to be, I believe the twelfth
23 annual one -- Halloween crawl that we have --
24 we've put together. Other than that, I'm open to
25 answer any questions the Board has.

1 CHAIR ANDERSON: Tell me, describe the
2 event for us.

3 MR. LOPEZ: Sorry, Mr. Anderson. You
4 got cut off. What was your question?

5 CHAIR ANDERSON: Yeah. Describe the
6 event.

7 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So we have check-in
8 hours. Usually it's the first four to five
9 hours, depending on what time the event starts.
10 That's when participants come to the check-in
11 locations, pick up their wrist band. We have a
12 party souvenir. That's when they get their wrist
13 band, they get a route map, and they're free to
14 visit the participating venues.

15 For this event actually, we've been in
16 the process of talking with the Nightlife Task
17 Force because I know the Board wanted us to
18 communicate with them for this event. So
19 obviously we're trying to finalize our approval
20 for this event before finalizing a potential time
21 with them. Our form of contact there has been
22 Chief Morgan and Brendan Smith. So we've been in
23 communication with the Nightlife Task Force just
24 to make sure that there is extra personnel in
25 Dupont Circle.

1 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right. So let's
2 answer the question. So you plan to have this
3 event in Dupont Circle. So specifically where in
4 Dupont Circle?

5 MR. LOPEZ: Around M Street and
6 Connecticut, that's -- Those are usually the
7 venues we work with.

8 CHAIR ANDERSON: And how many
9 establishments do you -- Approximately how many
10 establishments do you anticipate would
11 participate in this pub crawl?

12 MR. LOPEZ: We normally have anywhere
13 from 15 to 18 venues that participate for
14 Halloween.

15 CHAIR ANDERSON: Tell us about the
16 security plan that you have in place if this pub
17 crawl would be approved by the Board.

18 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So depending on the
19 capacity that we are approved for, that's
20 essentially how we pick how many check-in
21 locations we have. We usually pick the larger
22 venues to be check-in locations. And per our
23 application, that check-in process would begin at
24 2:00 p.m. That's essentially when everybody
25 comes in and we scan their tickets and they get a

1 wrist band and a party favor. We usually have
2 anywhere from eight to 12 staff members for
3 check-in location. And our check-in closes
4 usually around 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. and you know,
5 our staff goes around to make sure everything's
6 going smoothly.

7 CHAIR ANDERSON: Let me ask one
8 question. What are the numbers again that you're
9 asking for?

10 MR. LOPEZ: 2,500.

11 CHAIR ANDERSON: And tell us about
12 what plans you have in place to prevent underage
13 drinking and to control excessive drinking.

14 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So for this event,
15 we -- I mean every venue that's participating in
16 the bar crawl knows that they have to staff very,
17 very heavily in terms of security. Every venue
18 has a waste bucket outside to prevent alcohol
19 from going in and out. No matter if a
20 participant has a wrist band, every venue needs
21 to recheck IDs for participants to go inside. So
22 a wrist band is not a guarantee that they cannot
23 show an ID at the entrance. So as far as that, I
24 mean yeah, every venue is staffed to the "T",
25 plenty of security, plenty of staff. And

1 obviously after our check-in, we make our rounds
2 ourselves.

3 CHAIR ANDERSON: Tell me about how
4 you intend to coordinate with the security of
5 each establishment.

6 MR. LOPEZ: Sorry. What's the
7 question, Mr. Anderson?

8 CHAIR ANDERSON: I have no idea why
9 I'm having problems with my laptop. Tell me how
10 is that you intend to coordinate with the
11 security of each -- Be specific, how do you
12 intend to coordinate with the security of each
13 establishment?

14 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So we have -- I
15 have constant communication with all the -- all
16 the venue managers. Everything that's via phone,
17 everything that's on via text message. They
18 handle and manage all the security teams. But in
19 terms of communication, I personally -- I am in
20 charge of dealing and communicating with all the
21 general managers/ownership of each venue.

22 CHAIR ANDERSON: Perfect. Any
23 questions of Mr. Lopez? Yes, Mr. Short.

24 MEMBER SHORT: I have some questions,
25 Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Mr. Lopez.

1 MR. LOPEZ: Good afternoon, Mr. Short.
2 How are you?

3 MEMBER SHORT: We've seen each other
4 over the years, haven't we?

5 MR. LOPEZ: Almost a decade, yeah.

6 MEMBER SHORT: Over a decade, okay.
7 Well, just for the public record -- This is on
8 the public record.

9 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

10 MEMBER SHORT: And it would -- I'm
11 going to base my view on your information that
12 you give us today. And I know you're always very
13 truthful with us and thank you for that. But Mr.
14 Lopez, is this the first time you've ever had a
15 Halloween pub crawl?

16 MR. LOPEZ: No, sir. We've --

17 MEMBER SHORT: How many have you had?
18 How many have you had, Mr. Lopez?

19 MR. LOPEZ: I would say 11 or 12.

20 MEMBER SHORT: Eleven or twelve.

21 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah. Well, over ten.

22 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Well, when you
23 first got started, we didn't have any regulations
24 on pub crawls. Did we?

25 MR. LOPEZ: No, sir.

1 MEMBER SHORT: And what is the reason
2 why we do have pub crawl regulations now?

3 MR. LOPEZ: I would say perhaps eight
4 years ago was the perfect storm where Halloween
5 was on a Saturday and there were multiple
6 companies that were approved for the same
7 neighborhood. And it just -- It was very, very
8 busy. I know that the --

9 MEMBER SHORT: I'm going to stop you
10 right -- I'm going to stop you right there.
11 Approximately how many people were -- with all of
12 those different persons who had functions, when
13 we had our fact-finding regarding that, how many
14 persons did we come up with approximately there
15 to cause a perfect storm?

16 MR. LOPEZ: I'm not sure. I mean this
17 was so long ago.

18 MEMBER SHORT: Was it about 20,000?
19 Would you say 20,000?

20 MR. LOPEZ: I'm not -- I could not
21 give you an answer, Mr. Short. I know --

22 MEMBER SHORT: I'll help you a little
23 bit.

24 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, sir.

25 MEMBER SHORT: It was upwards of

1 20,000 because someone oversold what they were
2 allowed to sell. Correct? Some people did. I'm
3 not saying you.

4 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

5 MEMBER SHORT: But that created the
6 perfect storm.

7 MR. LOPEZ: Correct. But I think it
8 was also a combination of just people coming to
9 the neighborhood outside of the event.

10 MEMBER SHORT: I understand. So since
11 you mentioned that --

12 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

13 MEMBER SHORT: -- did you sell the
14 appropriate number you were supposed to have
15 sold?

16 MR. LOPEZ: Mr. Short, this was eight
17 years ago.

18 MEMBER SHORT: I understand. But let
19 me freshen your --

20 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

21 MEMBER SHORT: -- your memory a little
22 bit because I still have all my records from that
23 day. And my records reflect that there was a
24 person that came from New York City selling
25 tickets here. There was a person from the D.C.

1 area who was selling tickets here without any
2 permission or anything. And that some people --
3 I'm not mentioning any names -- oversold because
4 they made mistakes on how they counted their
5 tickets. So we came up with 20,000 people and
6 the perfect storm shut down that portion of
7 Northwest Washington D.C. And it was the
8 testimony of the Metropolitan Police that they
9 had to call every available officer from all the
10 other wards to get control of Connecticut Avenue
11 again. Do you recollect any of that?

12 MR. LOPEZ: I do recollect that now
13 that you bring it up --

14 MEMBER SHORT: Okay.

15 MR. LOPEZ: -- because this was part
16 of -- this was part of our -- of the fact-finding
17 hearing that we had post event where there were a
18 couple of companies from outside of D.C. that
19 promoted Halloween in our city.

20 MEMBER SHORT: Well, that's fair
21 because that's part of what I was asking. And I
22 don't want to hold up all of your time --

23 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

24 MEMBER SHORT: As a result of that, we
25 kind of got things under control again, didn't

1 we? MR. LOPEZ: We did.

2 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. And we decided
3 that we were going to allow up to a certain
4 number because the BID from Dupont Circle came in
5 and testified that they couldn't handle what
6 happened. They couldn't clean up all the trash.
7 MPD came in and said what happened. So we got
8 regulations. And as long as this city lives by
9 those regulations, I don't have a problem with
10 pub crawls.

11 And we also came up with from the new
12 board members -- and the people in the public who
13 are not as familiar with this -- we came up with
14 the regulations that for the first time, people
15 who had pub crawls in Washington D.C. like they
16 had in Montgomery County and Virginia would have
17 to pay a fee. And they would also have to clean
18 up after themselves.

19 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

20 MEMBER GRANDIS: And so I'll just to
21 have to say this, last year, I don't know how or
22 why, but it happened, some people didn't clean up
23 after themselves because they cleaned up at 12
24 o'clock, but at 6 o'clock in the morning, the BID
25 was complaining because the clean-up didn't

1 happen. But the regulation says that by 6
2 o'clock the next morning, the pub crawl persons
3 would do that. So if you're allowed to have this
4 pub crawl, will you make sure that the street is
5 cleaned up by 6:00 a.m. like is in our
6 regulations?

7 MR. LOPEZ: Yes. And to address -- to
8 address a couple of your points, Mr. Short,
9 that's one of the --

10 (simultaneous speaking)

11 MEMBER SHORT: Well, wait a minute.
12 First of all, just to be clear, you on the public
13 record are saying now that if you're allowed to
14 have a pub crawl on the 28th of October 2023, by
15 6 o'clock on the 29th, the street will be as best
16 you can make it with your -- because you have a
17 company. Correct?

18 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, sir.

19 MEMBER SHORT: All right. And they're
20 going to -- they're going to make sure by 6
21 o'clock in the morning that we don't have to
22 worry about what we worried about over the years?

23 MR. LOPEZ: That is correct.

24 MEMBER SHORT: All right. Okay, go
25 ahead. You were in the middle of --

1 (simultaneous speaking)

2 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So I do remember
3 that conversation exactly and I do remember, you
4 know, they -- Essentially one of the things we
5 discussed with you and I think when Mr. Kline was
6 on the call with us was the fact that, you know,
7 the BID moving forward, they wanted to make sure
8 that they were the ones that were doing the
9 cleaning. And us as a company, we were going to
10 pay for that because --

11 MEMBER SHORT: The regulations didn't
12 deal with any of that, does it? The regulations
13 that we have passed and the law says that you as
14 the person who gets the permit will make sure.
15 So we can't say the BID or anybody else had any
16 responsibility by 6 o'clock the next morning.
17 The law says and the regulations that were passed
18 that you, the person who's the Applicant for a
19 pub crawl would make sure that happens.

20 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

21 MEMBER SHORT: Do you remember that?

22

23 MR. LOPEZ: I do.

24 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Let's stick with
25 the law. Let's don't go --

1 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. No worries.

2 MEMBER SHORT: -- where Mr. Kline said
3 because Mr. Kline is not the law of this Board.

4 MR. LOPEZ: No worries.

5 MEMBER SHORT: Okay, thank you. Go
6 ahead.

7 MR. LOPEZ: No. So one of the things
8 we've been doing with our -- with our clean-up
9 company is we're asking for pictures. So post-
10 clean up, we receive pictures. I send those
11 pictures and the paid invoice over to Mr. Gordy
12 just to make sure that, you know, there's --

13 MEMBER SHORT: And that's at 6:00 a.m.
14 in the morning.

15 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

16 MEMBER SHORT: Okay.

17 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

18 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Go ahead.

19 MR. LOPEZ: So their cleanup -- their
20 cleanup starts after the venues close. So there
21 is no venue that's open while the cleanup is
22 taking place. So the cleanup starts around 4:30
23 in the morning.

24 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. I understand
25 that. We are past that. The law says that it

1 will be cleaned up by 6 o'clock in the morning.
2 So let's go to another issue. The other issue I
3 want to bring up is --

4 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

5 MEMBER SHORT: -- we had more than
6 one, two, or three different persons that the ABC
7 Board at that time allowed more than three
8 vendors selling over \$2,500 each and that was a
9 catastrophe. Was it not?

10 MR. LOPEZ: Are you still talking
11 about the perfect storm?

12 MEMBER SHORT: I'm talking about --
13 Okay, no. Let's leave the perfect storm alone
14 because the regulations came to correct that.

15 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

16 MEMBER SHORT: Did you have a pub
17 crawl last year?

18 MR. LOPEZ: We did, Mr. Short.

19 MEMBER SHORT: Were there any issues?

20 MR. LOPEZ: We had a call with the
21 Board after that event if you recall because our
22 company hosted the Halloween event in multiple
23 cities if you recall --

24 MEMBER SHORT: I understand. But
25 let's just stick with Washington D.C. because I

1 don't have anything to do with New York or Boston
2 or any place else.

3 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

4 MEMBER SHORT: Let's just stick with
5 D.C.

6 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

7 MEMBER SHORT: Were there any issues
8 last year and what were they?

9 MR. LOPEZ: The issue that we faced is
10 the ABRA investigator came over to me and asked
11 what our numbers were. And because all our three
12 events were under one dashboard, it was not -- we
13 couldn't give them numbers.

14 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Stop right
15 there. Stop right there.

16 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

17 MEMBER SHORT: So that won't happen if
18 you're allowed to have a permit again this year.
19 Would that happen again?

20 MR. LOPEZ: It would not.

21 MEMBER SHORT: And how can we be
22 guaranteed of that?

23 MR. LOPEZ: We've been working with
24 our ticket merchant for this. So now we can
25 separate cities even though all the QR codes are

1 going to be under one scanning platform.

2 MEMBER SHORT: So not a problem if an
3 investigator comes to you and says to you, how
4 many tickets did you sell? You will be able to
5 tell them in Washington D.C. -- We don't have to
6 talk about the Boards and the other cities -- if
7 the investigator from Washington D.C., our ABCA
8 investigator says to you, Mr. Lopez, how many
9 tickets do you sell? What would you say to her
10 or him?

11 MR. LOPEZ: I will pull up the device
12 and I will answer her, the number that it shows
13 on the screen.

14 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. So we won't have
15 -- So we won't have that problem again this year?

16 MR. LOPEZ: That is correct.

17 MEMBER SHORT: And you've always been
18 pretty honest with us and I trust what you say.

19 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you, Mr. Short.

20 MEMBER SHORT: All right. Now again,
21 the only issue I would have is to your knowledge,
22 are there going to be more than one pub crawl in
23 that area this year?

24 MR. LOPEZ: To my knowledge, yes. To
25 my knowledge that I'm aware of from what I've

1 heard from other venues and licensees, U Street
2 is going to have one --

3 MEMBER SHORT: We're talking about --
4 yours is going to be on Connecticut Avenue.
5 Right?

6 MR. LOPEZ: Yeah.

7 MEMBER SHORT: Let's just stick with
8 Connecticut Avenue.

9 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

10 MEMBER SHORT: Are there going to be
11 more than one Halloween pub crawls for the 28th
12 of October 2023 on Dupont Circle?

13 MR. LOPEZ: Yes. If the Board
14 approves the other company, yes.

15 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Well, let me ask
16 you this.

17 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

18 MEMBER SHORT: So that we can keep in
19 compliance with what we've been doing and what
20 we've got the MPD to buy into and other city
21 agencies to buy into and especially the BID, the
22 Business Improvement Division of Dupont Circle,
23 we can handle certain numbers. And you know what
24 those numbers are. Correct?

25 MR. LOPEZ: I do.

1 MEMBER SHORT: All right. So knowing
2 that there's going to be another one, what number
3 would you give so that the other person could
4 also have one at the same time you're having one
5 that could be managed and we won't have the
6 problems that we've had in previous years. No
7 more perfect storms. What number would you give
8 this Board today and the citizens who are tuned
9 in to this public session of the ABCA Board
10 dealing with your event October 28th, 2023? And
11 again, we trust you. We know you. We've dealt
12 with you over the years. You know what are
13 situation is. What number could you give us
14 knowing that we've had situations before --
15 numbers that we could work with, with another --
16 another applicant just like yourself for October
17 28th at Dupont Circle?

18 MR. LOPEZ: I understand the question.
19 So for Halloween, we average anywhere from 15 to
20 18 venues. Given the capacity of said many
21 venues, 1,700 to 2,300.

22 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. And then on
23 Saturday night normally --

24 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

25 MEMBER SHORT: -- Dupont Circle

1 without even being a holiday or being Halloween,
2 there's a crowd. Correct?

3 MR. LOPEZ: That is correct.

4 MEMBER SHORT: All right. So knowing
5 those numbers, knowing the number you're going to
6 bring -- that you're going to sell tickets to and
7 knowing there's another vendor, what number could
8 you comfortably say to this Board you would like
9 for us to approve for the 28th of October 2023?
10 Because I want to work with you.

11 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you. I mean we
12 definitely want to work with the Board too.

13 MEMBER SHORT: Thank you.

14 MR. LOPEZ: 1,750 to 2,000?

15 MEMBER SHORT: So you said 1,750.
16 Suppose we said 1,500 for you and 1,500 for the
17 other person, would that work? That's 3,000
18 people. That's still a lot of people. Think
19 about the city --

20 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, sir.

21 MEMBER SHORT: -- your long history
22 with us --

23 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, sir.

24 MEMBER SHORT: -- the numbers you've
25 given us. And I'm just asking you as a board

1 member who wants to work with you and vote yes on
2 your application, would 1,500 work with you?

3 MR. LOPEZ: Yes, sir. We can make
4 that work, Mr. Short.

5 MEMBER SHORT: All right. Thank you
6 very much. Mr. Chairman, I believe Mr. Lopez.
7 We have a long history with him. So if he can
8 have 1,500, I think if the other applicant -- if
9 we can work on those numbers, I think we can get
10 the Police Department and we can get the BID and
11 everybody else to go along with it. And I think
12 that it would be a reasonable -- a reasonable
13 assumption that Mr. Lopez and the other -- I
14 won't mention any names -- the Applicant at this
15 time can work it out on the 28th so that the
16 business can go on, Halloween can go on. The
17 businesses on Connecticut Avenue should be happy
18 and all the ___ coming to celebrate Halloween can
19 be happy and safe. So with that said, Mr. Chair,
20 I am finished. Thank you, Lopez. And thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman for allowing me to ask these
22 questions and get Mr. Lopez to commit to 1,5000.

23
24 MR. LOPEZ: It's always a pleasure,
25 Mr. Short.

1 CHAIR ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Lopez.

2 MEMBER GRANDIS: Chairman, when you
3 have time, I'd like to ask a question. Where's
4 my video? There's my video. I've been having
5 some problems. May I ask a question?

6 CHAIR ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
7 Grandis.

8 MR. LOPEZ: Good afternoon, Mr.
9 Grandis. How are you?

10 MEMBER GRANDIS: Fine, thank you. You
11 were explaining to us, but I don't think we gave
12 you a chance to finish --

13 MR. LOPEZ: Sure.

14 MEMBER GRANDIS: -- what was -- what
15 was your working relationship with the BID
16 Masters?

17 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So essentially when
18 the perfect storm happened --

19 MEMBER GRANDIS: Let's not say years
20 ago. I don't want to -- We don't need to talk
21 about that.

22 MR. LOPEZ: No worries. Okay. Okay.

23 MEMBER GRANDIS: Just last year --

24 MR. LOPEZ: No worries.

25 MEMBER GRANDIS: -- because it was two

1 years ago that we had complaints from the ANC and
2 the BID.

3 MR. LOPEZ: Right.

4 MEMBER GRANDIS: And I believe this
5 past year, we did not get complaints because we
6 understood that you worked with the BID regarding
7 the cleanup. So could you just for our record
8 here, remind us what you did -- how you
9 coordinated with the BID?

10 MR. LOPEZ: So one of the things that
11 we're asking for when it comes to the cleanup, is
12 we're demanding pictures. That way we have proof
13 to show the BID if anything -- if they want proof
14 that the streets were cleaned, so that's one
15 thing that we've been doing. And I mean we've
16 been, you know, obviously emailing those pictures
17 to Mr. Gordy. But the thing that kind of, you
18 know, made me question the direction in which the
19 BID wanted to go in, the BID initially asked for
20 them to take care of the cleanup and for us as a
21 company to pay for that. And we thought in our
22 head, you know, that's a win-win because they
23 know exactly how to clean. They have their staff
24 already. And we have no issues in obviously
25 paying the BID for the post-event cleanup. I'm

1 not too sure where that conversation went or if
2 it's going to happen again, but that's
3 essentially a conversation that started I would
4 say maybe like a year and a half ago for this
5 event.

6 MEMBER GRANDIS: So just to make sure
7 I understand. This past year when you had your
8 event, the cleanup was actually performed by the
9 Cleaning Team that the BID has and you had took
10 pictures at 6:00 in the morning or your team took
11 pictures at 6:00 in the morning to show that it
12 had been cleaned. Am I repeating what I thought
13 you said?

14 MR. LOPEZ: No, the cleanup was done
15 by a third party company that we hired called
16 Bayside, LLC. And after we had the call with the
17 BID -- and our lawyer was present on the call --
18 we are demanding pictures of the post-cleanup
19 now.

20 MEMBER GRANDIS: And did you get them
21 last year?

22 MR. LOPEZ: We did.

23 MEMBER GRANDIS: And did it look like
24 it was clean?

25 MR. LOPEZ: It did.

1 MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay. So while the
2 statute makes -- the regs may say that you are
3 responsible for cleanup, I don't think it says
4 you can't have a third party as long as you're
5 coordinating and you're there or you have staff
6 there and you make sure that the cleaning that
7 the city demands occurs. So I don't think we
8 want to micro manage how you get the cleanup done
9 as long as you know you're responsible for it.

10 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

11 MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay? So my
12 recollection is that we did not get complaints
13 last year. It was two years ago and it was based
14 on -- and you brought this up about you saying
15 you talked to the BID about a year and a half go
16 -- well before that, they had complained about
17 the cleanup situation from two years ago and we
18 had a hearing. And they came in and then we
19 talked to you and we talked to other promoters
20 that do this type of thing. And my understanding
21 is last year it worked out fine. So do you have
22 a different recollection that the cleanup didn't
23 go well last year?

24 MR. LOPEZ: No. It worked out fine
25 and we're definitely more on our end, I guess you

1 could say we micromanaged in terms of hey, these
2 are the times that you have to be in Dupont by.
3 The cleanup needs to be finished by this Summer.
4 Please send proof -- pictures, videos.

5 MEMBER GRANDIS: Well you know, like
6 I said, as long as you get the -- you meet the
7 requirements of the city on what type of cleanup
8 and where the cleanup is and you provide us
9 pictures that document the time and the date,
10 then I think we're satisfied.

11 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you, Mr. Grandis.

12 MEMBER GRANDIS: And I look forward to
13 working with this Board in making sure that the
14 numbers that we finally come up with are suitable
15 because as you know, there are other companies
16 that want the same night. And you know, I -- And
17 Mr. Short is correct. We are concerned about
18 narrow sidewalks. We are concerned about, you
19 know, people who are not -- who don't have your
20 tickets that try to get involved with some of
21 your establishments. But you've had a lot of --
22 you've had a lot of experience and I think we can
23 work well with you again and we look forward to
24 you having a successful event. But please be
25 concerned about the numbers because numbers are a

1 factor when you have narrow sidewalks and people
2 in costumes and things. Thank you. Mr. Chairman
3 --

4 (simultaneous speaking)

5 CHAIR ANDERSON: Let me get back --
6 I'm going to get to you, Ms. Nelson. Let me -- I
7 want to get back to Mr. Lopez regarding numbers.
8 Now I need specifically from you, what area -- is
9 it just Dupont Circle? Is it just the Dupont
10 Circle area or is it farther? So what specific area
11 are you seeking approval to have this pub crawl?

12 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So we have a few
13 venues that are closer to I Street. But I would
14 probably say about 80 percent plus of our
15 participating venues are on M Street and
16 Connecticut.

17 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right. So the
18 majority of your participants are going to be in
19 the Dupont Circle area. Is that correct?

20 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

21 CHAIR ANDERSON: And so I know you had
22 a conversation with Mr. Short regarding numbers,
23 so I just want to make sure that whenever the
24 Board -- the entire Board makes this
25 determination about numbers, what is that you

1 have requested and why did you request whatever
2 numbers you requested?

3 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. I mean the reason
4 we requested this number was because we have, you
5 know, 15 to 17 venues that usually participate
6 for this event. And given the capacity for said
7 venues, I mean I think in my eyes, you know, the
8 2,500 made sense. But again, we're definitely
9 looking and willing to work with the Board when
10 it comes to that figure.

11 CHAIR ANDERSON: I know last year --
12 What area was this pub crawl? Is this the same
13 area you had the pub crawl last year?

14 MR. LOPEZ: Correct.

15 CHAIR ANDERSON: It's my understanding
16 the Board approved last year 1,500 participants
17 for this pub crawl. Why did you or why are you
18 then seeking an increased number this year?

19 MR. LOPEZ: If I'm not mistaken, we
20 also sought to have 25 to 30 to 3,000 last year.
21 It's a number for us that makes sense when it
22 comes to the number of venues. So we have, I
23 know, 1,500 was the number the Board decided to
24 move forward after both companies spoke in front
25 of you for the fact-finding hearing. It's not

1 that we're asking for an increase. I think for
2 us it's more of a number that makes sense given
3 the number of venues that we have. But again, I
4 mean it's also a thing where if another company
5 is approved, I understand that 1,500 could make
6 more sense. But when we apply and sit in front
7 of you, it's also with the premise that, you
8 know, we are the only company that could
9 potentially host this event. So we don't think
10 of another company when it comes to us, you know,
11 applying or writing a security plan.

12 CHAIR ANDERSON: Well, you're talking
13 about "make sense". What do you mean by "makes
14 sense"? I need you to be specific in your -- I
15 mean I'm asking this specifically because I'm not
16 comfortable when folks throw numbers out without
17 explaining these numbers. So you said "makes
18 sense". So what does it mean, "makes sense"?

19 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So the reason why
20 we chose 2,500 was because we have about 17
21 venues that are, you know, that gave us the green
22 light to participate in this event. And a lot of
23 our venues that we work with are nightclubs and
24 they have a very, very big capacity. So for us,
25 the 2,500 approval made sense in a way where, you

1 know, our venues are large. I mean just to give
2 you one, Bravobravo near Farragut, I mean they're
3 capacity is over 400 people. You know, we have
4 Ozio that potentially holds over 400 people. And
5 Abigail -- You know, there's venues we work with
6 that are very, very spacious and large. And when
7 we applied and chose 2,500, that was the reason.
8 I know that there is another company that's
9 looking to apply and get approved for the same
10 date, so I do understand that the Board perhaps
11 needs to reduce that. But that's essentially how
12 we chose 2,500.

13 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right. Ms.
14 Nelson, I'm going to bring you in. Who are you?
15 Just tell us the work group -- who are you?
16 Where are you employed, ma'am?

17 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Good afternoon,
18 everyone. I am an ABCA investigator, Mikea
19 Nelson.

20 CHAIR ANDERSON: How long have you
21 been working for ABCA?

22 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: For four years.

23 CHAIR ANDERSON: Now are you familiar
24 with pub crawls?

25 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, sir. I am.

1 CHAIR ANDERSON: Have you ever gone
2 out and monitored any pub crawls?

3 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, I have.

4 CHAIR ANDERSON: Are you familiar with
5 this provider of the pub crawl?

6 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes.

7 CHAIR ANDERSON: Have you had a chance
8 to review the establishments that the operator
9 has proposed to be the sites or establishments
10 that would participate in this pub crawl?

11 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, sir.

12 CHAIR ANDERSON: Are there any
13 establishments in your estimation who are not
14 able to participate in this pub crawl based on
15 either settlement agreements or has violations by
16 this Agency?

17 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, sir.

18 CHAIR ANDERSON: What establishments
19 in your view are unable to participate in this
20 pub crawl?

21 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: The Mansion
22 Lounge/The Manor has a settlement agreement that
23 prohibits them from participating in bar crawls.

24 CHAIR ANDERSON: Is that the only
25 establishment -- Is that the only establishment

1 on the list that was provided that you believe
2 should not participate -- that is unable to
3 participate if the Board was to approve this bar
4 crawl -- this pub crawl?

5 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, sir.

6 CHAIR ANDERSON: Any questions or
7 comments that you have to make, Mr. Lopez?

8 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. If I produce an
9 email, the updated settlement agreement, Ms.
10 Nelson, is that something I can email to you or
11 do I have to email it to the Board?

12 CHAIR ANDERSON: What type of
13 settlement agreement are you talking about?

14 MR. LOPEZ: I know this has been
15 brought up, but the Phantom, I believe last year
16 had a -- they had a settlement agreement that
17 pretty much allows them to participate in pub
18 crawls. I want to say they've emailed that to me
19 in the past. Is that something that I could
20 potentially email you, Ms. Nelson?

21 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Absolutely.

22 (simultaneous speaking)

23 CHAIR ANDERSON: I hear what you're
24 saying, Mr. Lopez, but I would hope that the
25 Agency would have the official records of all the

1 establishments. I would hope that the Agency
2 would have the appropriate settlement agreement
3 because the -- whatever settlement agreement the
4 establishment would have had, would have to --
5 was voted upon by this Board. So I would hope
6 that the Agency as the official body of the
7 records would have the updated -- would have the
8 updated settlement agreement for all the
9 establishments in the District of Columbia. I
10 would want you to -- I will ask Ms. Nelson to
11 review our records to make sure that we have the
12 most updated settlement agreement. I mean, you
13 can provide it to her, but I think any settlement
14 agreement that controls is what it's -- whatever
15 agreement that is maintained currently by the
16 Agency.

17 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. The only reason I
18 say that is because the Phantom participated in
19 two events this Summer and the Phantom was
20 approved by the Board to be a venue that
21 participates. So I know they had that issue over
22 a year ago and they had to get the settlement
23 agreement fixed. But again, I mean I'm
24 definitely willing to help and you know, find a
25 solution for that, Ms. Nelson.

1 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right. I would
2 ask that you to provide the settlement agreement
3 and I hope that Ms. Nelson will look to ensure
4 that the Agency has the correct settlement
5 agreement for this establishment. The question I
6 was asking was if Ms. Nelson had any specific
7 questions for you.

8 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, I do if you
9 don't mind, Mr. Chair.

10 CHAIR ANDERSON: Go ahead.

11 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: I know you
12 stated previously that the number you were
13 looking to seek was 2,500; however, upon
14 reviewing your website and reviewing the
15 application, there was a range. And from working
16 the pub crawl, I tend to see that there are more
17 people participating than what is absolutely
18 applied for. So do you have a plan in place to
19 make sure that we stay at the exact number of
20 tickets that are sold, instead of people
21 purchasing tickets and passing them out to other
22 people?

23 MR. LOPEZ: Sure. So one of the
24 things that we've been -- we've been very, very
25 proactive in the last -- especially this year is

1 -- There's a lot of -- There's a lot of third
2 party companies that -- it's usually around St.
3 Patty's. It's usually around Halloween that I
4 just set up a ticket merchant, hey, I'm going to
5 set up Eventbrite and just try, you know, to sell
6 tickets and make money. What we're doing as a
7 company is as soon as we see companies that are
8 selling tickets for Dupont Circle, we report
9 them. So Mr. Gordy gets an email. I know -- I
10 don't know if it's Didi or someone else, but we
11 report third party companies outside of Lindy and
12 outside of Project D.C. so that ABRA knows
13 exactly hey, there's this company and there's
14 this company and this company that are also
15 selling tickets for this. So that's one thing
16 we're being very, very proactive about.

17 Another thing is -- I mean this is
18 something we've seen is the fact that there is a
19 U Street bar crawl that happens the same day.
20 And you know, we've definitely seen those people
21 come towards Dupont after 6 o'clock. And on our
22 end, we're definitely trying to make sure that,
23 you know, if there's only two companies that are
24 approved to sell tickets, only two companies sell
25 tickets, not six or seven. And that's something

1 that, you know, we've been reporting and
2 obviously emailing Mr. Gordy.

3 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Thank you, Mr.
4 Lopez. If you don't mind, Mr. Chair, I do have
5 one more question.

6 CHAIR ANDERSON: Go ahead.

7 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Will your
8 company be assisting with the establishment's
9 controlling the lines?

10 MR. LOPEZ: That's something that we
11 do, especially at the check-in locations. The
12 check-in locations when the event happens, we get
13 the majority of the people because everybody
14 needs to go check in, so we have about ten to 12.
15 Depending on the event, sometimes it's eight.
16 But for Halloween and St. Patty's, it's usually
17 ten to 12 staff members that are at each check-in
18 location. And yeah, we assist with the line.

19 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Thank you.

20 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right. Any other
21 questions of Mr. Lopez by any board members? Go
22 ahead, Mr. Short. You're on mute, Mr. Short.
23 Mr. Short. Mr. Short, you are on mute.

24 MEMBER SHORT: Forgive me, Mr. Chair.
25 Please forgive me. This is for the investigator.

1 Investigator, let's not talk about a pub crawl
2 night on a Friday. What is normally the
3 population -- Bravobravo was mentioned. What is
4 normally their crowd capacity when it's even a
5 pub crawl on a Friday night?

6 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Mr. Short, if
7 you don't mind, I can check the records and give
8 you the exact capacity of Bravobravo.

9 MEMBER SHORT: Not a problem. The
10 point I'm trying to make is on Friday nights,
11 whether there's a pub crawl in the area or not,
12 Connecticut Avenue is crowded.

13 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, it is.

14 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. So the 1,500
15 number that Mr. Lopez and I talked about earlier
16 is something that we think that is feasible
17 public safety wise to accommodate the normal
18 crowd and the pub crawl crowd. And hopefully we
19 don't get a lot of feedover from the other pub
20 crawls or other pub crawlers on U Street. But
21 the bottom line is Mr. Lopez knows the business
22 well. And I do appreciate so much, Mr. Lopez,
23 you saying you could work with the 1,500. And
24 that's the reason why I as a former public safety
25 person for the city, think 1,500 for you and

1 1,500 for the other person, along with the normal
2 regular crowd we have there, especially when the
3 city is prepared. The Police Department knows
4 because you sent them information. Is that
5 right, Mr. Lopez?

6 MR. LOPEZ: That is correct.

7 MEMBER GRANDIS: And all pub crawl
8 persons after we did the regulations are required
9 to notify the Police of the crowd they intend on
10 having. So that means preparations from the DPW
11 gets notified and all the other persons get
12 notified. And so it makes thing work a little
13 more harmoniously. And so again, I'll say to the
14 Board, I appreciate Mr. Lopez's professionalism
15 in agreeing that 1,500 is workable with him,
16 especially with another person having a pub crawl
17 the same night and with the normal crowd that's
18 there on a Saturday night. And I think that,
19 that's a win-win for the business community, the
20 Applicant, and for our responsibility as the
21 Board. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for
22 allowing me to question and get what I had on my
23 chest off. Thank you.

24 CHAIR ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Short.
25 Ms. Nelson, what shift do you work on? Ms.

1 Nelson.

2 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: I apologize, Mr.
3 Chair. I currently work day shift; however, we
4 are required to work every other weekend night
5 shift.

6 CHAIR ANDERSON: All right. So when
7 does the next shift start?

8 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: 7:30 p.m.

9 CHAIR ANDERSON: Are you familiar
10 with, I guess it's Dupont Circle area like where
11 this pub crawl is supposed to -- if it's
12 approved, where it would occur?

13 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Absolutely.

14 CHAIR ANDERSON: Now when is that you
15 believe that -- I missed in your -- Have you
16 worked this -- Have you worked in this area on a
17 Saturday night?

18 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: Yes, sir. I
19 have.

20 CHAIR ANDERSON: So typically when is
21 it that this area becomes saturated with
22 participants?

23 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: During the pub
24 crawl or on a typical Saturday night?

25 CHAIR ANDERSON: On a typical Saturday

1 night, yeah.

2 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: I'm sorry?

3 CHAIR ANDERSON: Yeah, on a typical
4 Saturday night.

5 MEMBER SHORT: This is a Friday night,
6 isn't it, Mr. Chair?

7 CHAIR ANDERSON: Saturday night, Mr.
8 Short.

9 MEMBER SHORT: The 28th, okay. Thank
10 you.

11 INVESTIGATOR NELSON: On a typical
12 Saturday night, I would say this area becomes
13 busier between 10:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

14 CHAIR ANDERSON: Okay. All right.
15 Any other questions for Ms. Nelson or Mr. Lopez
16 before we move on to another case? All right.
17 Thank you very much, Mr. Lopez. The Board will
18 take this matter under advisement and we'll
19 advise you what decision the Board will make
20 regarding whether or not we will approve the pub
21 crawl and what number. It's my understanding
22 that we have two other fact-finding hearings and
23 I'm just trying to get some clarification if all
24 three pub crawls are going to be in the same
25 area. That's one of the reasons I was just

1 asking you specifically what area the pub crawl
2 will occur.

3 All right. So we will take this
4 matter under advisement and we will alert you to
5 the decision that the Board makes. Thank you
6 very much, sir. Have a great day unless you want
7 to say something else before I close this
8 hearing?

9 MR. LOPEZ: No. I just wanted to say
10 it's always a pleasure speaking to you and Mr.
11 Short. I'm looking forward to the answer and
12 it's always a pleasure.

13 CHAIR ANDERSON: Thank you, sir. Have
14 a great day.

15 (Whereupon, the hearing in the above-
16 entitled matter was concluded at 2:50 p.m.)
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In the matter of: Alex Lopez

Before: DC ABCA

Date: 09-14-23

Place: teleconference

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Court Reporter

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