

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE AND CANNABIS BOARD
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ROLL CALL HEARING

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IN THE MATTER OF:

Deset Ethiopian :
Restaurant, LLC :
t/a Deset Ethiopian :
Restaurant :
6128 Georgia Ave NW : Roll Call
Retailer CT - ANC 4A : Hearing
License No. 098818 :
Case #25-PRO-00102 :
:
(License Renewal) :
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Monday
November 11, 2025

The Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis
Board met via WebEx videoconference, LaVerne
Fletcher, Board's Agent, presiding.

PRESENT:

LAVERNE FLETCHER, ABC Board's Agent

ALSO PRESENT:

DESTA ARAYA, Applicant
PAULA EDWARDS, Protestant

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

10:20 a.m.

MS. FLETCHER: The next case on the calendar is Deset Ethiopian Restaurant, Case Number 25-PRO-00102. Deset Ethiopian Restaurant, LLC, 6128 Georgia Avenue, NW, License Number ABRA098818. This is a Retailer Class CT Tavern License Renewal. The protest issues are adverse impact on peace, order, and quiet, real property values, residential parking needs, and vehicular and pedestrian safety. My name is LaVerne Fletcher, conducting the role call hearing as the Board's agent. Is anyone present on behalf of Deset Ethiopian Restaurant?

MR. ARAYA: Hi, my name is Desta Araya, 6128 Georgia Avenue.

MS. FLETCHER: Thank you very much, Mr. Araya. Is anyone present on behalf of ANC 4A?

MS. EDWARDS: Hello, I am Paula Edwards, Chair of ANC 4A. How are you, Ms. Fletcher?

MS. FLETCHER: Good morning, Ms. Edwards. How are you today?

MS. EDWARDS: Fine, thank you.

1 MS. FLETCHER: Is anyone else with you
2 today, Commissioner?

3 MS. EDWARDS: Commissioner Alex Akula
4 is designated as the primary, but I do not know
5 if he is on the call today.

6 MS. FLETCHER: Yes, thanks for that.
7 I received your email this morning that you
8 afforded the invitation to Mr. Akula. Is he
9 going to be the person representing ANC 4A going
10 forward?

11 MS. EDWARDS: He will be the primary.
12 I will assist him if necessary.

13 MS. FLETCHER: Okay, and so we should
14 send the WebEx invitations to you both.

15 MS. EDWARDS: Yes, if you could.
16 Thank you. Do you need his email address?

17 MS. FLETCHER: I believe that it is in
18 the email that you sent, but if I do not have it
19 I will let you know.

20 MS. EDWARDS: Okay, that is great.

21 MS. FLETCHER: ANC 4A does have
22 standing as a protestant. We need to set a date
23 for a status hearing, a protest hearing, and a
24 mediation. I am going to give you the dates for
25 the status hearing and protest hearing first.

1 The status hearing is set for January 7th.

2 MS. EDWARDS: All right.

3 MS. FLETCHER: January 7, 2026 at
4 10:30 a.m. for the status hearing. The protest
5 hearing is set for February 4, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.
6 I am going to give you the next available day for
7 mediation. The next available day is Tuesday,
8 November 25 anytime between 10:30 and 1:30. That
9 is Tuesday, November 25th. Does that date work
10 for you, Mr. Araya?

11 MS. SERBESSA: I'm so sorry, November
12 25th is in 2026, right?

13 MS. FLETCHER: Just one second. Who
14 is speaking, please?

15 MS. SERBESSA: I'm so sorry, I am his
16 wife.

17 MS. FLETCHER: Okay, so what did you -
18 - well, can you tell me your name, please, since
19 you are present?

20 MS. SERBESSA: Okay, E-M-E-P-E-T,
21 first name.

22 MS. FLETCHER: What is the first name
23 again?

24 MS. SERBESSA: E-M-E-P-E-T, last name
25 S-E-R-B-E-S-S-A, Serbessa.

1 MS. FLETCHER: Spell the last name
2 again.

3 MS. SERBESSA: S-E-R-B-E-S-S-A.

4 MS. FLETCHER: Okay, I think I got
5 that. Now, what were you saying?

6 MS. SERBESSA: My question was, you
7 said November 25th on Tuesday, --

8 MS. FLETCHER: May I ask you
9 something? Are you speaking on behalf of Mr.
10 Araya?

11 MS. SERBESSA: Yes.

12 MS. FLETCHER: Does he need an
13 interpreter?

14 MS. SERBESSA: I'm so sorry, I wanted
15 to make sure the date for November that is all.

16 MS. FLETCHER: Thank you, I am just
17 asking whether or not he needs an interpreter
18 going forward. You are speaking on his behalf, I
19 just want to make sure.

20 MS. SERBESSA: No, he do not.

21 MR. ARAYA: Yes, yes, she is speaking
22 on my behalf.

23 MS. FLETCHER: Okay, so do you need an
24 interpreter from us or are you going to be okay?

25 MR. ARAYA: I will be okay.

1 MS. FLETCHER: Okay, thank you, Mr.
2 Araya. The date under consideration is November
3 25th anytime between 10:30 and 1:30.

4 MR. ARAYA: Yes, ma'am.

5 MS. FLETCHER: Do you have a
6 preference with the time? Let me ask
7 Commissioner Edwards, do you have a preference
8 for time?

9 MS. EDWARDS: I would prefer 1:30, but
10 I will defer to Mr. Araya, depending on what he
11 would like. Mr. Desta, I'm sorry.

12 MS. FLETCHER: Okay.

13 MR. ARAYA: It is okay.

14 MS. FLETCHER: So which ever time
15 works for you Mr. Araya is going to be fine. Are
16 you available at 1:30 on November 25th, or would
17 you prefer another time?

18 MR. ARAYA: Well, no, we are going to
19 say it is okay.

20 MS. FLETCHER: Okay, perfect, thank
21 you. Mediation is set for Tuesday, November 25th
22 at 1:30. I will send you the WebEx invitation to
23 attend. I will see you then. Any questions, Mr.
24 Araya?

25 MR. ARAYA: I do not have any. Thank

1 you.

2 MS. FLETCHER: Okay, thank you very
3 much. Okay, thank you for coming, and I will see
4 you on the 25th at 1:30.

5 MS. EDWARDS: Thank you very much.

6 MS. FLETCHER: You are welcome.

7 MS. EDWARDS: Goodbye.

8 MS. FLETCHER: The roll call hearing
9 in this matter is concluded.

10 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
11 went off the record at 10:27 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings; and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this matter was taken; and further that I am not a relative nor an employee of any of the parties nor counsel employed by the parties, and I am not financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ahamad-Shakil Azizi', written over a horizontal line.

Ahamad-Shakil Azizi

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