DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD

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IN THE MATTER OF:

Brixton Pub, LLC,

t/a The Brixton

t/a The Brixton 901 U Street NW : Fact Finding

Retailer CT - ANC 1B : Hearing

License No. 82871 Case #17-251-00136

(Person Injured Outside : of the Establishment)

Wednesday May 2, 2018

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board met in the Alcoholic Beverage Control Hearing Room, Reeves Building, 2000 14th Street, N.W., Suite 400S, Washington, D.C. 20009, Chairperson Donovan W. Anderson, presiding.

PRESENT:

DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson

NICK ALBERTI, Member

BOBBY CATO, JR., Member

DONALD ISAAC, SR., Member

MIKE SILVERSTEIN, Member

JAMES SHORT, Member

REMA WAHABZADAH, Member

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1	ALSO PRESENT:	
2		
3	CANDACE FITCH, Licensee's Attorney	
4	IAN HILTON, Licensee	
5		
6		
7		

1	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S
2	11:17 a.m.
3	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
4	We're back on the record. Our next case is a
5	Fact-Finding Hearing, Case No. 17-251-00136, The
6	Brixton, License No. 82871.
7	Will the parties, please, approach and
8	identify themselves for the record, please?
9	MR. HILTON: Ian Hilton from The
10	Brixton. That's I-A-N last name H-I-L-T-O-N.
11	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Hilton,
12	good morning.
13	MR. HILTON: Good morning.
14	MS. FITCH: Candace Fitch, attorney
15	for The Brixton.
16	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning,
17	Ms. Fitch.
18	MS. FITCH: Good morning.
19	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
20	This is a Fact-Finding Hearing and the purpose of
21	this Fact-Finding Hearing is that there was an
22	allegation that on Saturday, June 17th, which is
23	over a year, almost a year and a half ago, that
24	at probably about, approximately, 2:12 a.m. a
25	patron was in line to enter your establishment

and apparently a glass bottle fell from the -from somewhere off the rooftop of the
establishment and the person was injured.

I know that -- I have been on the Board, this is going to be my third year that I have been on the Board and at least this is the second time that we have had you here regarding something falling off your rooftop. And I think I need to find out from The Brixton what is it that is being done to prevent this.

over and you can either -- the ABC Board can take action against you for future events or someone can sue you because they were seriously injured based on what is going on. So can you -- this has been a year and a half ago, in June of 2017. So can you updated the Board on this incident and what is it that what steps or measures have you put in place to prevent incidents like these from occurring?

MR. HILTON: Sure. Yeah, I think that is the described incident perfectly. We had taken steps prior to that and I'll just go through the ones that we have gone through since this particular incident.

	Just to clarify, it wasn't a bottle.
2	It was a glass. It wasn't a glass bottle. We
3	had removed glass bottles from the roof long
4	before and we had
5	MEMBER SHORT: Forgive me for a
6	minute. Can you clarify, you said it wasn't a
7	glass bottle, it was a glass?
8	MR. HILTON: It was a glass. So it
9	was a glass that you would drink a drink out of.
10	It wasn't a bottle. Like it wasn't like an empty
11	beer bottle, which would be they are equally
12	problematic. I just wanted to clarify because
13	MEMBER SHORT: So could we call it a
L 4	beer mug?
15	MR. HILTON: That's fair, a fair
16	statement.
17	MEMBER SHORT: So not a beer bottle,
18	a beer mug?
19	MR. HILTON: Yes, a pint glass.
20	MEMBER SHORT: I just wanted it for
21	the record.
22	MR. HILTON: Yep. So since then and
23	now, we removed all glassware from both. We had
24	at the original incident, we removed all
25	glassware and replaced it with acrylic on the

second floor and we also changed from all bottles to cans on the roof deck.

Subsequent to this incident, we now have -- we only have acrylic on the second floor and the roof deck, so you can't now take a glass from the second floor and go up to the roof deck. If you do, the people that monitor occupancy, our security staff, who monitor occupancy, they take that glass, they pour your drink into an acrylic and they return that glass to the first floor of the establishment.

In addition, we placed additional cameras and we have put roving security to basically spot check if a glass does get through from say the first floor now, we have a three-story bar/restaurant, if -- they will roam through and, basically, make sure that nothing has gotten by our checkpoint to go to the deck with anything in their hand other than acrylic.

In addition, the cameras, yes, they are certainly preventative. I mean, obviously, I want to catch somebody attempting or thinking about doing this, because what is next? I mean, they could literally throw anything off of the top of a building with intent to injure somebody

and that's obviously unacceptable behavior.

But these are the steps that we have taken. We did a lot of training with our security staff on how to, you know, basically line the perimeter more, so that, you know, they deter. They are in very clearly marked shirts, so that people know that they are basically being monitored.

The cameras are very obvious to them. We have increased our capacity on recording on our cameras, so that we will have better footage, so that we -- and I think it was even inconclusive on whether it was thrown or it was fallen. In my opinion, it had to have been thrown, based on just our setback and our parapet. It's almost impossible to knock a glass over 7 feet onto the street.

The main thing is, you know, I'm not saying acrylic couldn't hurt somebody, maybe bruise somebody, but it certainly is safer than glassware. I did a -- I worked with -- Nellie's did, they made that switch approximately the same time we did, we kind of followed their lead. It just made sense. They have less of a parapet, so I think they were more concerned about things

1	being knocked over. We went ahead and just
2	changed over to acrylic.
3	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
4	MR. HILTON: It's not a great look,
5	you know, when you go in on a Tuesday night and
6	you want to have a nice glass of wine and it's in
7	a plastic cup, but we've got to do what we've got
8	to do to make sure that that doesn't happen
9	again.
10	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Do
11	you have any further representations to make
12	prior to the Board asking questions?
13	MR. HILTON: I don't think so.
14	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Questions by
15	the Board? Mr. Short?
16	MEMBER SHORT: Well, first of all,
17	thank you for coming in again today. And when
18	was the last time you were here?
19	MR. HILTON: Oh, boy, for The Brixton,
20	because I have appeared for other things.
21	MEMBER SHORT: No, the last time you
22	were here for The Brixton.
23	MS. FITCH: February 17, 2016.
24	MR. HILTON: February 2016.
25	MEMBER SHORT: Why were you here then?

MR. HILTON: It may have been the 1 2 It may have been the same type of 3 incident. MS. FITCH: That one was a bottle. 4 5 MEMBER SHORT: If I'm not mistaken, a lot of the same testimony you just gave about the 6 7 roamers and the other things, and I think we talked then about public safety. And I told you 8 9 I, as a Board Member, have an affinity that we should be able to walk 9th and U Street without 10 11 something coming off the top. 12 And you agreed that you -- and 13 apparently, I guess, from what you are saying, 14 you have done -- we haven't had any more since 15 last year this time, correct? 16 MR. HILTON: That's right. 17 MEMBER SHORT: And I think the Chair 18 said it very plain to you that pretty much there 19 are a lot of liabilities and the city would hold 20 this Board, the Mayor's Office, and I couldn't 21 blame them, to say to us you have had them there 22 twice for the same thing and what happened? 23 No punitive action was taken against 24 you the last time, correct? 25 MR. HILTON: Correct.

MEMBER SHORT: And you did say you found out that the measures you took the first time didn't work as well as you thought they would have.

MR. HILTON: They obviously weren't -obviously, there was a hole in the system that,
obviously, didn't prevent 100 percent of that
from happening. It did happen. You know,
clearly, we have had once instance since
February.

on the public record and say this to you. A beer mug/beer bottle, whatever, if someone really wanted to do some harm on 9th and U Street as crowded as it gets there and you know it gets quite crowded and we also know this, a lot of people don't like to talk about it, but people in Homeland Security are saying not if, when something terrible could happen here.

so if persons like yourself who have a good business establishment were to take every measure they could take and work aggressively to make sure that anyone who came to your establishment who even thought about it or indicated that some action would be taken, I

think you would go a long way to make things a lot better for yourself and for 9th and U Street.

But again, we haven't had any more problems with that since this time last year and I hope we don't see you again for it. So hopefully the measures this time will work, but I, as a Board Member, just want to go on record stating that public safety is something that we have to be quite aware of when we have an establishment with people drinking alcohol on the second and third stories of buildings.

It could be a catastrophe and I think we talked about netting or wiring or something like that the last time. Have you thought about that?

MR. HILTON: Yes. I just -- I remember when we had that discussion and I don't know -- I know that my problem at the time was that, you know, it certainly -- well, one, I know that HPRB would have an issue with it, because I even thought of just, basically, enclosing more of the roof deck to kind of just get ahead of the problem, rather than having a net which seems -- it seems kind of like a chicken wire at a country music bar or something.

It seems like it's a deterrent for --1 2 it almost would encourage people --3 MEMBER SHORT: I understand --MR. HILTON: -- to throw things over 4 5 a net. MEMBER SHORT: -- chicken wire versus 6 7 a couple million or a multi-million dollar 8 lawsuit or versus the city taking your liquor 9 license. 10 MR. HILTON: Yeah. 11 MEMBER SHORT: Because there has got 12 to be something that is going to happen. 13 nothing that drastic --14 MR. HILTON: Um-hum. 15 MEMBER SHORT: -- but there has got to 16 be something done to ensure that we are not 17 sitting here another 18 months from now with the same kind of discussion. 18 19 MR. HILTON: Agreed. I don't -- you 20 know, I'm certainly open for -- you know, to 21 exploring all possibilities to help us improve 22 overall, you know, public safety. I mean, it is 23 in my best interest to not come and appear in 24 front of you in 18 months and say well, okay, now

I have dropped capacity down to nothing and I'm

giving people --1 MEMBER SHORT: 2 Your name again? 3 MR. HILTON: -- baby bottles to drink 4 out of. 5 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: Mr. Hilton. MR. HILTON: It's Ian. 6 7 MEMBER SHORT: Your name again? 8 MR. HILTON: Ian, sir. 9 MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Ian? 10 MR. HILTON: Yes. 11 MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Ian, let me ask you 12 Have you done maybe like a best practices of other establishments that have rooftops in the 13 14 city? And the reason why we don't -- and since I 15 have been here on the Board, we haven't had -your establishment is probably the only one I can 16 17 remember in the whole town where this has 18 happened. Maybe another Board could correct me, but so under best practices, what are other 19 20 people doing that they don't have the problems 21 that you are having down there? 22 MR. HILTON: I know that a lot of 23 places -- we never fancied ourselves as a 24 nightclub. If you go to nightclubs, they

typically don't have glass anywhere in their

establishment.

We are trying to be a neighborhood pub and that is a little bit counter to having all acrylic in your establishment. Now, on Fridays and Saturdays when people like to turn our nice neighborhood pub into a bit of a nightclub, which by the way we control the best we can by going way under our allowable capacity, it's -- the unfortunate thing is we have to operate a different business on Friday and Saturday than we do the rest of the week.

And if that means having to take all of our glassware off the shelves for those two nights, that's what we will do. That's basically what I have asked -- I have asked -- you know, there is no real great sharing of information among operators. Some are friends with other operators and they will have just sidebar conversations about how do you handle this? How do you handle that?

But in terms of like, you know, best practices that are disseminated for people like me, I don't believe it is out there, but I certainly out of curiosity am wanting to run a better business and a safer business. I

certainly do reach out to people when I have something like this, which is like I explained, I basically got some help from Nellie's on how they handle it. And they were helpful.

And I think we have -- that was part of -- they helped us with the recommendation of listen, you've got to just eliminate capacity.

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Ian, I really hope this will be the very, very last time that we will see you in here for this type of incident. I'm very familiar with the region and night life and so we're very happy that your business is there and it's really kind of transformed the community. So it's a model.

And unfortunately, they -- this problem with objects coming off of our rooftop has put a damper on that, but I would just like to -- for you to just think deeply of if you have to do best practices around the country. There has got to be some way that we can help Homeland Security and help the people walking past your establishment.

Just know -- I know nothing is going to come off that rooftop, because Nellie's has got the best practice of any night spot with

people on the rooftop. That's all I have, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much. Thank you.

MR. HILTON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Mr. Silverstein?

MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: I would like to associate myself with the remarks of my colleague and friend, Mr. Short.

And I would remind you that this is perhaps the first beautiful weekend coming up of the year, that this is the first time that you are going to really have the spring and outdoor situation. You are going to be full up there.

And this would be a very good time for you to go over your security plans and all of that with your people, because this is your first test.

And being that this isn't your first rodeo here with this particular problem, the concern that you need to have is that you have established here or your patrons have what could be considered a continuous course of conduct.

And the repetition of this puts an onus on us to guarantee public safety.

There is no legal obligation we have to keep that roof open if, in fact, we believe

down the road -- if this Board feels and can prove that public safety is at risk, no one wants to go that. I'm speaking as a single Board Member, no one wants to go there and we hope that you work very closely with your people right now, because this is the change of weather. This is the time when you have to drill into them that this is something that is hanging over your head and we want to all make it go away.

That's all, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other questions by any other Board Members?

Just let me ask you another question, a follow-up in reviewing the Board, the -- I'm sorry, the Board -- the report by the Investigator. He said the video was inconclusive and I know you said that you have added cameras and change. So just elaborate for us on the changes you have made to your camera system, please.

MR. HILTON: So we had a number -- I don't want to give you the incorrect numbers. I know we have increased the amount of cameras, just so that we have coverage over, really better coverage over, that area. If someone is intent

on causing harm to somebody by throwing an object off of a roof, that is not a person I, you know, want basically walking the street. So we have increased that coverage considerably. I don't know the exact number of cameras. I can get that for you.

We also made a significant investment in the recording device, so that we can have more hours of usable footage, should we be able to assist MPD with finding somebody who does this sort of action.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now, I guess I was asking for a perspective. It says that it was inconclusive. So was it that -- and this has been a while back, is it that it was fuzzy or the area wasn't covered or that's what I was trying to find out.

MR. HILTON: Well, this is where we get to the point where I don't want to become argumentative. I don't think there was any way to prove that this did not come from Nellie's.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No.

MR. HILTON: However -- no, that's what I'm saying.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Oh.

MR. HILTON: It wasn't -- so there 1 2 wasn't -- you can't see somebody at The Brixton 3 throwing an object off of the roof. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now, let me ask 4 5 you, so where is your establishment in comparison to Nellie's? 6 7 MR. HILTON: Across. 8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Is it next to 9 it or across the street? 10 MR. HILTON: Across the street. 11 then we have another area -- excuse me, another 12 bar that is next door, but they don't have 13 operable windows, so I can't --14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. 15 MR. HILTON: -- I understand why the 16 process of elimination would say, you know, 17 unless you have Joe Namath over at Nellie's 18 throwing something across the street, I would say 19 that it's a reasonable conclusion to say that 20 this came from Brixton, but we have pretty good 21 coverage of the area where it probably came from 22 and there is no evidence of anybody throwing an 23 object from our roof deck. 24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, but was the 25 person -- were -- in the report, where were -- do

you recall where were they hit? Were they hit in 1 In the -- where? 2 the head? 3 MR. HILTON: I think it was in the 4 head. 5 It was in the head. MS. FITCH: CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So it would 6 7 have to come from -- it can't come --8 MR. HILTON: Well, it can't come 9 straight down. 10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- from across 11 the street. 12 MR. HILTON: It's not possible with 13 our parapet. It had to have come on some angle. 14 Yeah, I don't -- I would, you know, sit and hear 15 and tell you it probably came from The Brixton 16 I know that we looked through the footage. We, I believe, turned footage over. 17 It was reviewed in real time and there was no -- we did 18 19 not see the action of someone knocking anything 20 over, which again would have fallen into the 21 parapet and our setback and you did not see 22 anybody throw anything. 23 But I -- it's hard to prove something 24 didn't happen at your establishment. It would 25 have been very easy to prove that it did, but we

1	had good footage. I didn't install these cameras
2	so that I'll be able to prove hey, it didn't come
3	from The Brixton. I did it to deter and to be
4	able to provide, you know, better evidence to
5	whatever whoever may be investigating this in
6	the future and should it happen again, which it
7	better not, but that's the only answer I can
8	give.
9	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
10	MEMBER ALBERTI: Can I?
11	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
12	Alberti.
13	MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm sorry. Since we
14	have opened that can of worms, were there glasses
15	on the rooftop then?
16	MR. HILTON: There may have been.
17	There are pictures of glasses behind the bar.
18	Now, our
19	MEMBER ALBERTI: Yeah, so that's what
20	I mean, I
21	MR. HILTON: No, but those glasses
22	Mr. Alberti, please, what they do with the
23	glassware when they transfer a drink from one
24	from a glass to another one, they may not

immediately take it down the stairs, right?

1	MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So
2	MR. HILTON: They may accumulate them.
3	MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm going to stop
4	you right there, Mr. Hilton.
5	MR. HILTON: Okay.
6	MEMBER ALBERTI: Please, don't dig
7	yourself a hole.
8	MR. HILTON: I don't believe that that
9	is what happened.
10	MEMBER ALBERTI: Because wait,
11	wait, just
12	MR. HILTON: I'm sorry.
13	MEMBER ALBERTI: Did you see the
14	picture? That does not look like they stacked a
15	few glasses because I mean, how would that
16	doesn't look like they caught let me finish.
17	MR. HILTON: Yes.
18	MEMBER ALBERTI: That doesn't look
19	like they caught one or two people up there with
20	a glass. That looks you know, if they are
21	stacking them like this, like this picture in
22	Exhibit 2 of the report, you know, if that came
23	from all in one night, then you are not stopping
24	people from getting glasses.
25	If it came from several nights, I

1	wonder why you keep them up there for so long.
2	This does not lead me to believe that these were
3	up there just because you confiscated them.
4	MR. HILTON: No, they are not.
5	MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm sorry.
6	MR. HILTON: They are not.
7	MEMBER ALBERTI: All right.
8	MR. HILTON: Those as I stated, we
9	use acrylic only on the weekends. We were using
10	glassware other days of the week.
11	MEMBER ALBERTI: Oh, okay. So this is
12	from other days of the week.
13	MR. HILTON: Yeah, if you go up there
14	not any more.
15	MEMBER ALBERTI: All right.
16	MR. HILTON: We used to during the
17	week. Between that incident and now, during the
18	week now, we use acrylic all the time.
19	MEMBER ALBERTI: All the time. And
20	you don't have any glasses up there?
21	MR. HILTON: Yeah, it would be
22	extremely difficult to
23	MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay.
24	MR. HILTON: you know
25	MEMBER ALBERTI: All right.

1	MR. HILTON: to get away with
2	throwing a glass off of there when it is not very
3	busy during the week.
4	MEMBER ALBERTI: No, I understand.
5	MR. HILTON: Yeah, I was not trying to
6	no, that
7	MEMBER ALBERTI: All right. I
8	misunderstood.
9	MR. HILTON: I'm certainly not
10	saying
11	MEMBER ALBERTI: And I was just like
12	MR. HILTON: the glass certainly
13	came from my point was, they weren't serving
14	it at the bar. Somebody walked up the stairs.
15	MEMBER ALBERTI: Oh, that I can
16	believe. That I can believe.
17	MR. HILTON: Yes.
18	MEMBER ALBERTI: Yeah. I mean, I
19	trust you on that.
20	MR. HILTON: We had not yes.
21	MEMBER ALBERTI: All right.
22	MR. HILTON: We had our system is
23	not fool-proof.
24	MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. Thank you.
25	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Any

other questions by any other Board Members? Any final statements that you want to make?

MR. HILTON: Just to Mr. Silverstein's point. We have been working -- basically, the gentleman in the back of the room, he sort of runs operations for us. He has been elevated to the position. He is more familiar with security plans and best practices than I probably will ever be and he has been working non-stop with management in anticipation of another beautiful, hopefully, one month spring season in Washington, D.C.

So I am very sensitive to it. It is-the training that we can do to get ahead of this
and it's not just our internal training. We
have, you know, done -- we have attended all of
the trainings that the Homeland Security folks
had setup. We take it very seriously.

I can't -- I'm doing the best I can, but I apologize I was here twice in two years over something that I need to nip for sure.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

Thank you, sir. The Board will take this matter under advisement.

MR. HILTON: All right.

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1	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. Thank
2	you. Have a good day.
3	MR. HILTON: Thanks very much.
4	(Whereupon, the Fact-Finding Hearing
5	was concluded at 11:40 a.m.)
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<u>C E R T I F I C A T E</u>

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Brixton Pub, LLC

Before: Alcoholic Beverage Control Board

Date: 05-02-18

Place: Washington, D.C.

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Court Reporter

Mac Nous &