DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD

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IN THE MATTER OF:

:

Toppromo, Inc.,

t/a Ultrabar/Chroma :

911 F Street NW : Fact Finding

Retailer CN - ANC 2C : Hearing

License No. 74767 :
Case #19-251-00108 :
(Assault with a Deadly :

Weapon) :

Wednesday
October 9, 2019

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 BOBBY CATO, JR., Member RAFI ALIYA CROCKETT, Member JAMES SHORT, JR., Member

ALSO PRESENT:

SIDON YOHANNES, COUNSEL FOR APPLICANT INVESTIGATOR JAVON MILLER, ABRA INVESTIGATOR MARK BRASHEARS, ABRA SHELDON LONG, APPLICANT KALEN EPPS, APPLICANT (PHONETIC) ANTONIOS KARAGOUNIS, APPLICANT DIMITRIOS MARMARAS, APPLICANT

1	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S				
2	3:54 p.m.				
3	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Our next is a				
4	fact-finding hearing, Case No. 19-251-00108.				
5	Will the parties please approach. Will the				
6	parties please identify themselves for the				
7	record, please. We'll start with, I'll start				
8	with the Investigator.				
9	INVESTIGATOR MILLER: Investigator				
10	Javon Miller.				
11	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Miller.				
12	INVESTIGATOR BRASHEARS: Investigator				
13	Mark Brashears.				
14	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Brashears.				
15	MS. YOHANNES: Good afternoon, Sidon				
16	Yohannes, Counsel for the licensee.				
17	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Yohannes,				
18	good afternoon.				
19	MR. LONG: Sheldon Long.				
20	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who are you,				
21	Mr. Long?				
22	MR. LONG: I'm the General Manager of				
23	the establishment.				
24	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, who else				
25	do we have?				

1	MR. EPPS: Kalen Epps, head of					
2	security at the establishment.					
3	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Epps.					
4	MR. KARAGOUNIS: I'm Tony Karagounis.					
5	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Karagounis.					
6	MR. KARAGOUNIS: Yes, owner of the					
7	establishment.					
8	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, sir.					
9	MR. MARMEROUS: Dmitrius Marmerous,					
10	part-owner of the establishment.					
11	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Marmerous.					
12	And maybe if I'm out of line I'm going to say					
13	this, but Ms. Yohannes, are all of the owners on					
14	this license?					
15	MS. YOHANNES: Are?					
16	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The owners who					
17	have identified themselves today as owners of the					
18	establishment, are they on this license? And the					
19	reason why I'm asking, Ms., and this is just an					
20	educational, educating the parties. So I had a					
21	hearing, was it last week?					
22	MEMBER SHORT: Last week.					
23	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And I had a					
24	gentleman in the audience who identified himself					
25	as an owner, as a significant owner of an					

establishment, and he didn't, he was not on the license. And because there were some other issues that went on and folks had to straighten the ownership, so this owner had to identify himself.

So I don't know, I've not looked at the documentation, but I would just ask you that since we have parties here who have identified themselves as owner, an owner of the establishment, to make sure that all owners who, as you are aware, if the person owns more than ten percent of the establishment, that their name is on the license.

And one of the reasons why I said that because, and I should know his name by now, Mr. Scara --

MR. KARAGOUNIS: Karagounis.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry?

MR. KARAGOUNIS: Karagounis.

And I should, I had so much practice before that it should just roll off my tongue, but it's not. But since he's here, and based on the discussion that we had, he said I didn't know, I didn't know, I didn't know, I didn't know, I didn't know.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON:

Karagounis.

So I want to make sure that you know, as the attorney, to make sure that you look at the ownership, that at least the ABRA paperwork to see the folks who are identified as owners and to make sure that these individuals who identified themselves publically as owners that they are on our paperwork, okay?

MS. YOHANNES: Understood, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Again, it has nothing to do with this case, but this is just public information to make sure that folks say they don't know, so I'm putting it out there so if they didn't know before, that they now are on notice.

All right. Mr. Miller, can you just give us some background information about this case and how you're familiar with this facility, sir.

INVESTIGATOR MILLER: I was assigned this case.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You can just pull the microphone over to you so you can be comfortable speaking, sir.

INVESTIGATOR MILLER: I was assigned this case as far as the assault with a deadly

weapon for Ultrabar. That investigation initiated as a result of a telephone call to ABRA hotline from MPD Saturday, June 22, 2019. As an assault with a deadly weapon took place inside the Ultrabar.

A male patron was struck in the head and back multiple times with a steel stanchion by another unknown male patron. As a result, the victim bled profusely. The suspect was arrested and the victim was transported to George Washington University Hospital.

I spoke with MPD Officer Thermidor on the incident. He stated that he was informed by security personnel that a physical altercation inside the establishment happened between six male patrons. There was a three-on-three fight on the penthouse floor of the establishment.

Officer Thermidor stated when Security brought suspects outside the establishment,
Security notified him of a victim being injured.
He asked to hold the patrons that were escorted out. Security personnel did aid the victim until emergency responders arrived.

In addition, Security notified Officer
Thermidor that the suspect, who was wearing a red

baseball cap with, was swinging a gold stanchion, and the victim was struck by a suspect 1 in the head and back. Officer Thermidor stated that the suspect was identified and interviewed. The suspect admitted that he struck the victim to protect his brother, who was assaulted by the victim.

Officer Thermidor stated that he then placed the victim under arrest. I also spoke with the ABC Manager, Mr. Long, and the head of Security, Mr. Epps. Both of their stories matched Officer Thermidor's earlier statements.

On Sunday, June 23, 2019, I visited
Ultrabar to conduct a regulatory inspection, pick
up incident report, and obtain video footage.
Ultrabar did cooperate by providing the
information I needed for the report. No ABRA
violations occurred during the regulatory
inspection.

Ultrabar has a security plan. Upon reviewing the security plan, no security plan violations occurred. Ultrabar does not have a settlement agreement. Ultrabar was cooperative with MPD and myself during the incident and investigation.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, Ms.
Yohannes, how do you, or how did your client
respond to this incident?

MS. YOHANNES: Well, our client's position here is that, I mean, as the Investigator stated, the staff, Security personnel cooperated with the Investigator, cooperated with MPD. They notified officers of the incident, helped to identify the suspects, de-escalated the situation, followed the security plan and protocol.

This was a bad situation that occurred, it was unfortunate. But staff did as they were supposed to do. And we're happy to answer any questions, but in terms of violations, we feel like we did everything we were supposed to do in that situation to identify what was going on and to help the victim after it happened, and to help the investigators and officers after as well.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So how quickly, how quickly did the Security of the establishment respond to this incident?

MS. YOHANNES: Immediately. So, and you can speak because you were there. Do you

want to speak --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You can identify yourself for the record before you speak, sir.

MR. LONG: Sheldon Long, the General Manager. I did not personally witness the incident. A Security Manager was there. From the time the fight started to the time we interjected, I'd say ten seconds maybe. Mr. Epps, you know, dispersed the clients. And we have security that were helping guide the victim.

And we had another set of security escorting the more aggressive party outside. We already identified who the assailant was and MPD was already on the way up. And they, everybody, they intercepted them and brought them outside. And we helped the victim in the back area, towards security.

And we called the MPD and let them know. And we called the ambulance, and they attended to him for a couple minutes before -- he at first didn't really want to go. But eventually he left with them, they went to the hospital.

MS. YOHANNES: The crime scene was

preserved immediately, and you can see from the report and the Investigator's review of the camera surveillance footage that within ten minutes of the time that the altercation occurred to the time that Security escorted the suspects out of the establishment, it was only ten minutes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I mean, it's not related, I'm just looking at the investigative history over the last, since between January 9, 2016 and March 3, 2018, we happened to have a lot of assault at this place. I mean, what's it all about?

I mean, what's going on there that there's one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, eight -- I mean, and yes, there's been NFAs, but why are we having so many assaults at this place? I know folks will come and we can't, you, folks will come and things happen. But it's, I'm not really seeing this as a place where there's all these assaults.

MS. YOHANNES: I can't speak to the specific situations that occurred in every specific case. But you know, as you stated, no further action was taken in each case. There is

a security plan in place at the establishment and 1 2 their security is trained. 3 They follow what's in the security 4 plan and they're taking steps to try to ensure 5 that if a, you know, if there is some sort of confrontation or there's a fight that occurs, 6 7 they do their best to intervene as quickly as 8 possible, de-escalate, and to make sure that, you 9 know, it doesn't happen, that people are not 10 injured. 11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now, what was 12 the object that was used, that was utilized in 13 this particular case? MS. YOHANNES: A stanchion. 14 15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What is that? 16 MR. LONG: It's a stanchion, it holds 17 It's like a barrier. the ropes. 18 PARTICIPANT: Like a metal pole. 19 PARTICIPANT: It's like a metal pole. INVESTIGATOR GARCIA: It's a picture, 20 21 Exhibit 4. 22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But how -- oh, 23 you can separate the, you can take off the rope 24 off of it. All right, any questions by any other 25 members. Yes, Mr. Short.

1	MEMBER SHORT: This is to the General					
2	Manager. How many staff do you have there?					
3	MR. LONG: Security staff, twenty-two,					
4	twenty-two.					
5	MEMBER SHORT: Twenty-two.					
6	MR. LONG: Yes.					
7	MEMBER SHORT: Are they all trained?					
8	MR. LONG: Yes, they are.					
9	MEMBER SHORT: Who trained them?					
10	MR. LONG: Kalen trains them, and					
11	another Security Manager, Tony Barnes, has been					
12	there from inception. And he trains them as					
13	well.					
14	MEMBER SHORT: Okay, what training					
15	does the trainer have?					
16	MR. EPPS: Well, I've been certified					
17	by, his name Robert, Robert, he does nationwide					
18	security training.					
19	MS. YOHANNES: Robert Smith.					
20	MR. EPPS: Robert Smith, yes. He does					
21	nationwide security training and I have					
22	certification. And I use that, as well as my					
23	experience. I've been working here about five or					
24	six years at Ultrabar.					
25	MEMBER SHORT: Okay, so all 22 of your					

security staff, have they been trained, and what 1 2 standard have they been trained by? MR. EPPS: Well, they're trained by 3 myself. 4 I pass the information along. I can't 5 say that they are all being certified, but a number of them have been certified. And I pass 6 that information along. I do training every 7 8 Friday, after roll call we do a training session 9 every --10 MEMBER SHORT: Every week? But again, as the Chairman said, there's 11 12 a lot of violence going on there. So I don't 13 know what I can say to you. But let me ask you 14 this, when the incident occurred, were you there 15 that night? 16 MR. EPPS: Yes, I sir, I dealt with it personally. Yes, sir, I dealt with it 17 18 personally. 19 MEMBER SHORT: How many floors in the establishment? 20 21 MR. EPPS: Four. 22 MEMBER SHORT: Which floor did this incident occur on? 23 24 The top floor. MR. EPPS: 25 MEMBER SHORT: Fourth floor.

MR. EPPS: 1 Yes, sir. 2 MEMBER SHORT: Okay, when the incident 3 happened, did you stop serving alcohol, did you 4 cut the lights up, cut the music off? MR. EPPS: When I found out that there 5 was a crime had occurred, yes, I called for them 6 7 to cut the lights and cut the music. 8 MEMBER SHORT: So the other 22 that 9 are trained, they didn't, they were waiting for 10 you to do that, or? 11 MR. EPPS: Well, they heard my call on 12 the radio. So if they can't get 13 MEMBER SHORT: 14 you on the radio, they just keep moving until 15 they hear you on the radio, or? No, if one of my security 16 MR. EPPS: 17 would have witnessed a crime they would have let me know a crime occurred and I would have made 18 19 that call myself. 20 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Now, the other 21 three floors after the incident occurred, did 22 they stop serving alcohol or just kept on? Or 23 what happened? 24 MR. EPPS: Well, we preserved the 25 crime scene immediately, you know. As soon as I

found out it was a crime, we shut it down. 1 2 then shut, the General Manager made a call to 3 shut it --MEMBER SHORT: A lot of blood, it's 4 5 the testimony then, there was a lot of blood, 6 correct? 7 MR. EPPS: There was a quite amount of 8 blood, yes. 9 MEMBER SHORT: Head injuries cause a 10 lot of bleeding, a lot of bleeding. And hit with 11 a metal pole I would imagine was a lot of trauma. 12 Just to say so how did you bring him down from 13 the fourth floor to the ambulance, or did the 14 ambulance come upstairs and get him? 15 MR. EPPS: We, I escorted, when I went 16 outside, once I took the violent party out first, 17 and the ambulance got there, I took them up 18 through the back stairwell, which is a little more accessible, and it goes directly up to the 19 20 back kitchen area, where we had the victim. 21 MEMBER SHORT: So you moved him from 22 the fourth floor down to the first floor? 23 MR. EPPS: No, no, he remained on 24 the fourth floor. 25 Okay, good, okay, good. MEMBER SHORT:

1	MR. EPPS: So the paramedics were able					
2	to get through the back stairwell, where I					
3	ushered them.					
4	MEMBER SHORT: Thank you, that's all					
5	I have. Thank you very much.					
6	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other					
7	questions from any other Board members? And Mr.					
8	Miller, you're saying that the establishment, you					
9	did not see any ABRA violations?					
10	INVESTIGATOR MILLER: No, sir, they					
11	followed their security plan and they did a, they					
12	get to the incident pretty fast during the video					
13	footage, so.					
14	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And they were					
15	cooperative with ABRA?					
16	INVESTIGATOR MILLER: Yes, sir.					
17	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any final					
18	comments you want to make, Ms. Yohannes?					
19	MS. YOHANNES: No, I think that's all.					
20	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Once again,					
21	I'll make a recommendation to the Board that we					
22	take no further action in this matter. Is there					
23	a second?					
24	MEMBER SHORT: Second.					
25	CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Short has					

seconded the motion. All those favor, say ayes. 1 2 (Chorus of ayes.) 3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The Board will take no further action, but we shouldn't have all 4 5 these assaults at the establishment and we need to figure out some way how to prevent it. 6 7 don't know the clientele or the crowd that goes 8 to the establishment, but, and of course we can't 9 prevent. But now the establishment is aware 10 11 that these stanchions can be utilized as weapons, 12 so maybe we need to keep that in mind in their 13 placement. And I'm not quite sure if, how many 14 are in the establishment and if -- how large is 15 this establishment? 16 MR. KARAGOUNIS: It's about 10,000 17 square feet. 18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So you have 22 19 security guards? 20 MR. KARAGOUNIS: Yes. The usable 21 space is much less than that, though. 22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But I'm just 23 saying then now that you're aware that stanchions 24 can be utilized as a weapon, then maybe this 25 needs to be, I'm not saying be removed, because

1 of course they can't be removed. But your 2 security needs to be aware that this is now a 3 potential weapon and try to figure out how to prevent this from being used as a weapon. 4 5 Yes, Mr. Cato. 6 MEMBER CATO: Quick question. 7 rope and stanchion, that's specifically for a VIP section, right? So it's a very small section? 8 9 Okay, all right. 10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. 11 Thank you for being here, have a great day. 12 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter 13 went off the record at 4:12 p.m.) 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

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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: Ultrabar

Before: DCABRA

Date: 10-09-19

Place: Washington, DC

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

Court Reporter

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