

CITY OF WAUWATOSA
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LEGISLATION, LICENSING & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, May 30, 2006
Committee Room #2

PRESENT: Alds. Becker, Birschel, Didier, Ewerdt, Hanson, Krol – 6

ALSO PRESENT: A. Kesner, Interim City Admin./City Attorney; Police Chief B. Weber

Ald. Becker as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:27 p.m. Ald. Krol arrived and assumed the chair at 7:28 p.m.

Class A Beer and Class A Liquor license application by Mega Marts, LLC, d/b/a Pick ‘N Save, 6950 W. State Street

The committee reviewed a request by Mega Marts, LLC, d/b/a Pick ‘N Save, 6950 W. State Street for a change in corporate name. Mr. Kesner said there were no concerns or objections from either the police department or the City Attorney’s office.

Moved by Ald. Birschel, seconded by Ald. Hanson to recommend approval of the corporate name change from Mega Marts, Inc. to Mega Marts LLC for Pick ‘N Save – 6

Class B Beer and Class B Liquor license application by Leff’s Lucky Town, LLC, d/b/a Leff’s Lucky Town, 7208 W. State Street

The committee reviewed a request by Christopher J. Leffler, Leff’s Lucky Town LLC, d/b/a Leff’s Lucky town, 7208 W. State Street for a change in corporate name from sole proprietor to a corporation. Mr. Kesner said his office had no concerns. Chief Weber said the police department had no objections. Leff’s Lucky Town has been a good business and a good neighbor with very little problems.

Moved by Ald. Becker, seconded by Ald. Ewerdt to recommend approval of the change in corporate name for Leff’s Lucky Town from sole proprietor to Leff’s Lucky Town LLC – 6

Advisory referendum on the Iraq war

The committee reviewed a request by Michael K. Duffy, 2573 N. 71st Street regarding proposed advisory referendum on the Iraq war.

Present in favor: Michael K. Duffy, 2573 N. 71st Street
Mike Walker, 7326 Hillcrest Drive
Lynn Woehrle, 10121 W. Highwood Avenue
Donna Woehrle, 10204 W. Feerick Place
William and Joan Lange, 2128 N. 73rd Street

Present in opposition: Ignatio Niemczyk, 743 N. 79th Street
Judy and Jerry Suttner, 2371 N. 116th Street
Victoria Ostry, 1409 N. 64th Street
Richard Badenhoop, 6323 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Karen Albers, 2102 N., 107th Street
Brian Faltinson, 2209 N. 62nd Street
Chris Weber, 11410 W. Wisconsin Avenue

Mr. Niemczyk said he was a Vietnam War veteran. The long standing question was how the army could have lost that war. It is his belief that the enemy knew that they could not win in the battlefield, but they could win the hearts and mind of people in small town America. The anti-war protesters of the 60s and 70s encouraged the enemy and consequently threatened the lives of countless American soldiers and ultimately contributed to their deaths. He felt that the proposed referendum was not an expression of patriotism, but a show of support for the terrorists in Iraq. He strongly believes that anyone who votes for this type of referendum bears a responsibility in the deaths of American soldiers in Iraq.

Ms. Suttner said strongly supports the American troops, the president and has a deep love for our country. She would not appreciate having this referendum on the ballot.

Ms. Ostry believed that the citizens of Wauwatosa had spoken regarding this issue in that Mr. Duffy's group could not get enough signatures on their petition to promote a referendum.

Mr. Badenhoop noted that he served in the military during the Korean War. Altogether he spent about 28 years in the military. He believed that when the United States pulled troops out too soon in earlier wars, the battles and lives lost were in vane. He strongly believes that the original impetus for the war, the presence of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) was valid. But constant postponing of the UN weapons inspections gave Saddam Hussein the time to destroy or move those weapons out of the country.

Ms. Albers felt that the federal government was not going to pay much attention to a referendum from Wauwatosa. She was also concerned about the expense to the city.

Mr. Walker said that while the broader issue of the war was not going to be solved at this meeting or by the city, he was in favor of citizens locally and nationally being able to express their views. He said this type of referendum could help bridge the gap between the very different view points that were being expressed. He supported placing the referendum on the ballot.

Mr. Faltinson said he served in the military in Iraq in a city where Saddam Hussein had killed large numbers of his own people. He helped conduct elections there and saw firsthand how excited the people were to participate. He said there is progress in Iraq, although it is slow. He said it was very disheartening for the soldiers to hear all the criticism coming from the American public. He felt that the American people hear very little about the good things the soldiers are doing. While the referendum is non-binding, it sends a negative message to the soldiers especially coming from Wisconsin. He would like to propose a referendum in support of the soldiers.

Ms. Lynne Woehrle said she currently works in the conflict resolution field. They work very hard to try to achieve a peaceful resolution to issues such as these. She supported the opportunity to let people voice their views. There were approximately 43 referendums on the ballots in other cities during the last election. Some cities voted for and some voted against the referendum. She thought this was an important opportunity for people to talk about this subject.

Ms. Donna Woehrle felt very uncomfortable with the earlier reference to people supporting the referendum having “blood on their hands”. She felt that if the United States stays in Iraq, the blood of the military will be on our hands since we know that some of the soldiers going over there are going to die.

Mr. Lange said he believed this referendum was a very important part of the political dialogue regarding the war. He felt that arguments are resolved in terms of discussion.

Ms. Lange said she would like the committee to consider the democratic process and allow the referendum on the ballot.

Mr. Duffy said the time spent gathering the signatures for the petition gave his group an opportunity to hear from people on both sides of the issue. They were very heartened by the experience. He stressed that if citizens only allow government officials at the federal level to make these policy decisions, they are abrogating their civic responsibility. He noted that each person has different opinions on the reasons for the war in Iraq and some officials in Washington are not always privy to the correct information or intelligence. The \$480 billion price tag for this war over the last two years and the loss of life has put a tremendous drain on our country’s resources. It was his hope that this referendum could bring about a dialog. He said that approximately 1/3 of the veterans coming home will experience debilitating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). That is a further cost to the nation and to the families of the service people. He noted that they will need support for years to come.

Mr. Badenhoof noted that there are still troops in Kosovo, Germany and Japan and no one talks about that. It will be much more devastating if the terrorists strike again in the United States.

Mr. Weber said this is a very important issue, but he didn’t think it was important for the City of Wauwatosa to bring it to a referendum. He felt that Wauwatosa should be focusing on issues that are important to the city. He added that if the city allows this type of referendum without the qualifying petition signatures, other groups will want to put referendums on the ballot on any topic without any requirements.

Ms. Albers expressed concern that the petition process is being bypassed only because they could not get enough signatures.

Mr. Suttner said that it seems to be forgotten that the United States was the country that was attacked first.

Ald. Birschel said this is an issue that is very close to him. He served in the army. His father served in the army and was part of the forces that liberated the Dachau concentration camp during World War II. His son-in-law is in the Air Force and spent 9 month in Iraq. He said the United States armed forces have not been in these countries as conquerors, but as liberators and to ensure the continuation of democracy. With regard to the petition, the people gathering signatures came up short. He believed the committee was not in the position to circumvent the due process of law.

Ald. Hanson asked how much it would cost to add this referendum. Ald. Krol said the City Clerk could provide that information and they could have it by the Common Council meeting. Ald. Hanson said he agreed with Ald. Birschel

Ald. Didier thanked everyone attending for their thoughts and opinions. She said she would have to agree that if the signatures fell short, the referendum could not be included on the ballot. She pointed out the if

she did not have the required signatures on her petition to run for alderman in the Fourth District, she would have been out of the race.

Ald. Becker noted that he was one of the people who decided to bring this issue before the committee. He said that when they are sworn in as aldermen, they swear to uphold the constitution. He agreed that this issue is more on the federal level. If elected officials are not doing what citizens would like them to do they can be voted out. He thought that by not obtaining the proper number of signatures, the citizens of Wauwatosa have spoken. If the referendum was put on the ballot it would seem that the whole city is against the war.

Moved by Ald. Birschel, seconded by Ald. Hanson to place the request on file – 8

License applications forwarded for review

Mr. Kesner said the Council has authorized the clerk to issue operator licenses without any action unless there is something in the police report that is of concern.

It was the consensus of the committee to invite the applicants to appear at the next Legislation, Licensing and Communications meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
City of Wauwatosa

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