



**Town of Indian Trail**  
**Minutes of Town Council**  
**Special Meeting**  
**June 26, 2012**  
**Civic Building**  
**5:45 P.M.**

The following members of the governing body were present:

Mayor: Michael L. Alvarez

Council Members: Robert Allen, David Cohn, Christopher King, Darlene Luther,  
and David Waddell.

Staff Members: Town Manager Joe Fivas, Town Clerk Peggy Piontek, and Town  
Attorney Keith Merritt.

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Alvarez called the meeting to order.

**TOWN OF INDIAN TRAIL ABC BOARD INTERVIEWS**

Mr. Fivas informed Council there are three applicants tonight to be interviewed, after which the Council needs to determine the following: one candidate that submitted his application late by a couple of days and Council can waive that

requirement or interview all three and we will post it for the public for a week and then come back and make a decision at the July 10th meeting providing an opportunity for others to apply, be interviewed and considered by Council. Council can then appoint their choice at the July 10th meeting. Mr. Fivas advised it would be best to establish the ground rules prior to starting the interview process.

Robert Allen made a motion to approve extending for another week allowing other folks to apply also.

Council voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

a. ABC Board \* Jan Brown \* Gary D'Onofrio \* Steven Long

**Jan Brown**

Mr. Brown provided his address, advised that he has been a member of the ABC Board and is currently reapplying.

Ms. Luther asked Mr. Brown What motivated him to submit his application. Mr. Brown responded initially original spoken in favor of ABC Board, provided recommendation for positions (accountant, attorney and a good bank) which was taken by Council. He believes the Board has served the community well and provided their accomplishments over the last 2 years and anticipated endeavors in the upcoming years, advising that speaks well for itself and he would like to continue to give back to the community.

Mr. Cohn asked Mr. Brown what non-profit, civic or government involvement do you have? Mr. Brown replied he is on his community HOA Board, the Indian Trail Planning Board and the Indian Trail ABC Board. He wants to give back to the community; he has the time and resources.

Mr. Waddell asked: Do you have any ideas on how Indian Trail can improve its public participation? Mr. Brown replied to show up. Mr. Waddell requested that Mr. Brown expand on that. He recommended that Council pass the word that the ABC Board meetings are an open forum, as word of mouth is the best advertising.

Mr. Allen asked Mr. Brown: What his vision is where the ABC Board could/would go within the next 5 years? Mr. Brown responded with current and expected sales figures advising they are an asset to the community. He advised an example is the anticipated scholarship for Sun Valley High School, along with the need for an additional 2000 square feet obtained for warehouse purposes, as well as the low rental rate the Board negotiated.

Mr. King advised that his question was redundant because it inquired about any experience in this field, as Mr. Brown has served on the ABC Board and Planning Board; he's very satisfied and had no comment

Mayor Alvarez asked Mr. Brown: As a current member of the ABC Board, how do you feel the ABC Board can improve its process of communication? Mr. Brown responded that the Board could probably improve on getting information posted more expeditiously. However, he feels success speaks louder than words, advising the State ABC Board has referred to them as a reference to others who are interested in opening stores on how to get it done right.

### **Gary D'Onofrio**

Ms. Luther asked Mr. D'Onofrio: what motivated you to submit your application to serve on a Board for the Town? Mr. D'Onofrio responded that he has lived here since 2005 and in 2006 took keen interest in local affairs and what was going on. One of his pivotal interests was alcohol sales, beer and wine, liquor by the drink and an ABC store. He explained this was part of what motivated him to run for Council, acknowledging that this matter was one of his platforms on which he ran. He stated that he was proud to bring that vote to the citizens and was successful. Mr. D'Onofrio went onto explain the process in which the store was created, acknowledging the fine job conducted by the present Board members. Since he's been involved in the issue early on, he feels he can add something to it.

Mr. Cohn asked Mr. D'Onofrio what he can add to make it better. Mr. D'Onofrio replied that transition planning will be very important for this operation,

suggesting that Council reaches out to talent early on, gauge interest for willing individuals and have them in the pipeline so that when Mr. Porter and Mr. Hinson's term expire there are people of a similar caliber in to continue running the operation. His occupation is a Territory Manager which requires an analytical mind to surmise a situation and determine how to propel it and make it more successful. He would like to get the store to the point from a distribution perspective that the distributions equal 1 cent of the tax revenue, if accomplished he would feel successful.

Mr. King asked Mr. D'Onofrio if he has any private/public sector experience which could help you give input to this Board.

Mr. D'Onofrio replied he is Manage a territory for an insurance company and his expertise is property and casualty insurance with about 120 independent insurance agents and it is his job to manage the premium on books, to grow it each year with required targets and objectives.

Mr. Allen asked Mr. D'Onofrio what his vision is where the ABC Board could/would go within the next 5 years? Mr. D'Onofrio replied the credit should be given to the current Board members who have gotten the store up and running and the success that it is, but obviously there's a need for this service in the area that enable those results. Ascertaining whether there is a service need in another location in Indian Trail for a satellite location would be something to consider. Although a business, it's a public operation and he feels everything we do should be better and the best experience for our citizens and the public in general and the ABC store is no different.

Mr. Waddell asked Mr. D'Onofrio how communication between the Board and Town can be improved. Mr. D'Onofrio replied he doesn't know he's not there yet. One of the things noticed recently was agendas, minutes and publication on town's website seemed to be lacking. He researched many other jurisdictions, discovering we're not doing any better or worse than the rest, but is that where we want to set the bar? From the outside looking in transparency and communication between ABC Board and Council can be improved. Having been a

Council Member, he believes he can bring that to the ABC Board, as he understands public concern.

Mayor Alvarez asked Mr. D'Onofrio if other boards are lacking is that justification for us lacking also. Mr. D'Onofrio replied that's what he said, he does not think that's where we have to set our bar, we need to strive and do better. He's uncertain of the circumstances, but someone should be able to stay on it and make sure it gets done.

**Steven Long**

Ms. Luther asked Mr. Long what motivated you to submit your application to serve on a Board for the Town? Mr. Long replied his interest in beverages and serving the town. His experience includes being a bartender, owning a restaurant and managed bars. Initial involvement was to discover what was going on with the Board, once satisfied he felt he should move forward and jump in and help out. He wanted to clarify to everyone whether he's appointed to a board he will be here to help the town move forward.

Mr. Cohn asked Mr. Long what he would do to improve the Board and do you see things that need to be improved. Mr. Long replied anything human needs to be improved at some time; he is not knowledgeable enough of what issues are on the table at the current time.

Mr. King asked Mr. Long do you have any private/public sector experience which could help you give input to this Board. Mr. Long replied 24/7 historic diner in Buckhead, Atlanta, bar tended throughout college, managed bars, cost control, 20 years in personnel business. Pinching pennies to get the most out of it for the community.

Mr. Allen asked Mr. Long what his vision is where does he want to see Indian Trail in 5 years? Mr. Long replied better roads, public safety, and the parks definitely. He's excited about where Indian Trail is going now.

Mr. Waddell asked Mr. Long what responsibility a Board Member has with respect to the enforcement of the liquor laws. Mr. Long described how he had instituted supply responsibility policy with previous employees and that he would go and ensure that all facilities have the correct information is on the supply of the facilities that sell the alcohol. He explained that he is passionate in all that he does.

Mayor Alvarez asked Mr. Long how important is communication between the ABC Board, the Town Council and the public? Mr. Long replied it is the most important thing; information should be thorough and timely. If the people have questions they should be given answers to prevent any suspicion.

Mr. Fivas restated that Council voted not to make a decision tonight and make a decision at the July 10th meeting. He informed Council that Mr. Brown is also interviewing for the Planning Board and Mr. Long has also applied for the Planning Board as well, inquiring if Council wants to re-interview them again or is the information given tonight satisfactory.

**ADJOURN**

Robert Allen made a motion to adjourn  
Council voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**APPROVED:**

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Michael L. Alvarez, Mayor

Attest:

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Peggy Piontek, Town Clerk