

TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND  
BOARD OF LIQUOR LICENSE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes of Public Meeting  
March 9, 2026

The meeting of the Talbot County Board of Liquor License Commissioners was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, March 9, 2026. Present were Chairman Jack M. Gottschalk, Commissioner Edward M. Bridges, Jr., Commissioner David Fike and Board Secretary Victoria E. Bradley.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Upon motion by Commissioner Fike, seconded by Commissioner Bridges, the minutes of the meeting of February 9, 2026, were unanimously approved with amendments.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Babe's SFP, LLC**– Application for new Class I, Beer, Wine, and Liquor License (on-sale and off-sale) alcohol dispensary bistros.

All those in attendance to testify in the matter were sworn in, (Applicant Kimberly Oristian and their attorney Anthony Kupersmith).

Chairman Gottschalk asked Mr. Kupersmith about the signatures for page 2 of the application. Mr. Kupersmith explained that they listed all the LLC members and signed the operating agreement and that Kimberly Oristian would be the manager at the location. Chairman asked if Ms. Oristian would sign page 2 of the application so it may be considered complete. Ms. Oristian signed the missing page.

Mr. Kupersmith gave opening statements about the application, applicants and the business. Mr. Kupersmith described the changes that the approved Bill 1623 made to the Code regarding the Class I Bistro license. Bill 1623 removed the conservation park from being considered in the 500 ft rule, Mr. Kupersmith noted the entrance to the park was more than 1000 ft from the business. Bill 1623 also changed the portion of the Code discussing the Market Test, allowing each municipality to have one class I license.

Mr. Kupersmith further testified as to the business plan, describing the concept floor plan that was submitted as part of their application. Mr. Kupersmith testified that the business will be able to maintain the separation of the on-site alcohol sales area and the off-site alcohol sales area.

Chairman Gottschalk asked if they plan to have a sign or way to mark the difference in the two areas. Mr. Kupersmith testified that there will be a doorway opening to help clearly separate the two areas. Mr. Kupersmith further testified that they will be able to have signs to clearly mark the

two areas. Chairman Gottschalk stated that the Board would urge the applicants to do so, in order to stay in compliance with the code.

Mr. Kupersmith testified that the application was missing the Health Department Permit and the Fire Marshall Certificate and that the applicants would be asking for conditional approval pending the missing certificates.

Chairman Gottschalk asked if the applicants had any concerns or comments about the building, kitchen or layout. Ms. Oristian testified that they had no concerns as the renovation needed would be small.

Mr. Kupersmith testified that the Oxford Community is in need of a business like this and they believe they have met all of the requirements in the code and asked that the application be approved.

Chairman Gottschalk asked if the applicant could describe the menu and business plan. Ms. Oristian testified that the menu concept was still under construction, however they know they want to offer a variety such as; sandwiches, pizza, appetizers and house made desserts. Ms. Oristian further testified that this is a family business and she, her brother and father will be managing the business. Ms. Oristian testified they have a seating capacity of 65 and they will not add to that.

Chairman Gottschalk reminded the applicant about the importance of controlling the alcohol served on site in and out of the restaurant and checking ID's before serving and selling alcohol. Chairman Gottschalk also suggested to the applicants to hold regular meetings with staff about their responsibilities with serving alcohol and keeping up to date with alcohol awareness training and expiration dates. Chairman Gottschalk further explained the responsibilities of following the County Code.

Chairman Gottschalk asked if they had an opening date in mind. Ms. Oristian testified that if everything goes well they hope to be open at the start of the summer, May or June.

Chairman Gottschalk asked the Board members if they had any questions or concerns before public comment. The other members had nothing further, so public comment was opened.

### **Public Comment** – Babe's Fine Provisions

Mr. Sewell Frey was sworn in and testified that the owners and family have had good business, however, he has concerns with the off-site sale aspect. Ms. Frey also testified that Oxford has an off-site location for alcohol and he has concerns about this new business having a negative impact on the current one. Mr. Frey further testified he had no issues and supports the restaurant on-site portion.

Ms. Catherine Bitter was sworn in and testified that she was in support of the restaurant and is looking forward to the new business. Ms. Bitter testified that her main concern for speaking today

was that the notice for the original hearing date was postmarked and sent late according to the code. Ms. Bitter further testified that she was able to contact Ms. Bradley and receive the updated information for the new date along with Bill 1623.

The Board considered all of the documents, testimony and information presented. The applicants, members of the public and Board had no further questions or comments.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was made:

- Motion made by Commissioner Bridges, seconded by Commissioner Fike that the Board approve the Class I, Beer, Wine, and Liquor License (on-sale and off-sale) alcohol dispensary bistros, pending the Board receiving the Health Department Permit and the Fire Marshall inspection. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Waterfowl Festival, November 2025** – Inspectors Report

The Board discussed the Staff report from the Alcohol Inspector from the 2025 Waterfowl Festival with the Chief Code Compliance Officer James Mullikin. The Inspector, Ms. Whitmer, has sensed left her position with the County and was unable to attend the meeting.

Mr. Mullikin testified to what he had seen at the Waterfowl Festival. Mr. Mullikin testified that there were many people and many locations including business and this had caused a problem with enforcement as well as control. Mr. Mullikin further testified that the location at the Bay street ponds had a large group of people walking through the area with open cups of alcohol.

Mr. Mullikin further testified that he was able to speak with some of the Easton Police Department Officers there that day and they had agreed that the large number of people had caused issues with enforcement. Chairman Gottschalk asked if the Police Department had been active and making arrest or enforcement. Mr. Mullikin testified that when they caught people they would make them dispose of the alcohol however the crowds were too large to police everyone.

Mr. Mullikin further testified that there were temporary locations set up including trailers and outside Waterfowl Festival locations causing containment issues. Mr. Mullikin suggested containing the area alcohol is offered more during festival events and having more enforcement to help with the large crowds.

Chairman Gottschalk updated the Board on his conversation with the County Manager, Clay Stamp. Chairman Gottschalk made Mr. Stamp aware of the inspector's report and discussed moving forward. Mr. Stamp discussed the possibility of the Liquor Board presentation to the County Council on this matter.

The Board discussed different ideas and solutions to festival license moving forward to help control the sale and serves of alcohol. Commissioner Fike suggested inviting the Waterfowl Festival to discuss the concerns with the Board. The Board agreed further discussion is needed and

possible changes might need to be made moving forward with regards to festival applications in the future. The Board agreed to put this item on future agendas to be discussed in more depth and invite The Waterfowl Festival, Easton PD and the Town of Easton.

Commissioner Fike asked Ms. Bradley about Ms. Bitter's public comment regarding getting the notice late. Ms. Bradley testified that the office was having internal mail issues that have sense been fixed. Ms. Bradley further testified that they are currently working on making changes to how we provide notices so more people can be reached.

There being no further business to discuss, the Board moved to adjourn.

- Upon motion by Commissioner Fike seconded by Commissioner Bridges, there being no further business to discuss, the Board voted unanimously to close the meeting at 11:15 a.m.