

1835 Communication from Wm. H. McClendon requesting that he be granted restaurant license to operate Club Savoy at 1500 N. Williams Avenue and that customary 90-day waiting period be waived, was presented and read by title.

COMMISSIONER BEAN:

This is an application regarding a letter asking us to give the License Inspector the right to accept an application for a liquor license in the Club Savoy. It is for colored people. While I haven't investigated a great deal I learned from some of the commissioners that this man is a very high-grade person and it seems to me we should give it consideration, under the circumstances.

It is a question of whether or not we will waive the 90-day rule.

COMMISSIONER PETERSON:

This is a man and his wife operating the Club Savoy. They would have to wait a 90-day period before they could make an application for the sale of liquor. I have a copy of a letter and I think it explains it fully.

MAYOR LEE:

Do you want the letter read?

COMMISSIONER BEAN:

Yes, Madam Mayor.

The Clerk read the following letter: (from Mr. McClendon)

"I am herewith requesting the City Council to grant me a restaurant license and also to approve waiving the customary 90 day waiting period before an Oregon Liquor Commission restaurant license is granted. It is my desire to begin immediate operation of a restaurant with bar service available at premises known as the Club Savoy, 1500 N. Williams Avenue, Portland, as soon as possible. If I should be required to comply with the 90 day waiting period, the good will of this business and the limited capital I have to conduct operations would be thoroughly dissipated.

"This request, while perhaps somewhat irregular, is of immense significance. At the present, a restaurant of this type, where Negro people are welcome, is non-existent in this city. It is within reason to expect that such accommodations should exist. At this writing there are approximately 10,000 adult citizens in this area who are denied this form of social participation because of factors that need not be emphasized at this time.

"This problem, where Negroes are concerned, has been seriously aggravated. As a result of the floods of 1948, the population of the Negro people in this immediate vicinity has more than doubled its pre-flood status. Evening entertainment and relaxation such as I propose to offer has been withheld from this group of citizens much too long."

"In the conduct of this business Negroes will be employed regularly as musicians, bar attendants, cooks, waiters and in maintenance. This is of extreme importance to this community. As you know, the avenues for extensive work opportunities for members of this group are not at all plentiful.

"Prior to January 1, 1949 these premises had been in almost continuous operation since 1944. Its service to its patrons was keenly felt. The building is fully furnished and equipped. The kitchen and restaurant has always merited a Class A rating. All fire, plumbing and other requirements are fully complied with.

"I have been a resident of Oregon for a number of years. I am married and the father of two children. I am a college graduate and the past 6 years, I have edited and published the OBSERVERthe oldest and most influential Negro publication in this State. I am a musician by avocation and a member in good standing of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 99. I am also a licensed union booking agent.

"I will appreciate this matter being given immediate attention. Please feel free to have me appear before you at any time to answer any further questions that may aid your giving favorable consideration to this request."

MAYOR LEE:

Commissioner, if this request were granted will this come back before us for screening?

COMMISSIONER BEAN:

Yes, it will.

COMMISSIONER PETERSON:

The only thing this will do, it will instruct the License Inspector to accept the application prior to the 90-day waiting period.

Commissioner Peterson made a motion which was seconded by Commissioner Bean that the License Inspector be instructed to accept the application prior to the 90-day waiting period.

MAYOR LEE:

I take it, in this case they have restaurant service but they have had almost continuous service.

The motion of Commissioner Peterson was carried by unanimous consent of the Council.