



State Liquor Authority

Contact: Bill Crowley william.crowley@sla.ny.gov (518) 474-4875

Jade Kraszewski jade.kraszewski@sla.ny.gov (518) 473-5908

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SLA ORDERS EMERGENCY SUSPENSION FOR “MILO’S CANTINA” IN POUGHKEEPSIE

Bouncer’s Assault on Patron Leads to License Suspension

Albany, NY – The New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) summarily suspended the license of Sweetheart Enterprises Inc, doing business as “Milo’s Cantina” at 206 Main Street in Poughkeepsie today. The suspension was ordered by Chairman Vincent Bradley and Commissioner Greeley Ford at a meeting of the Full Board on Wednesday June 13th. Effective immediately, no alcohol may be sold or consumed on the premises.

On May 31st, a patron was assaulted by a security guard at Milo’s Cantina with the incident captured by another patron on video. SLA Enforcement opened an investigation after receiving numerous complaints including the video which had been posted on Youtube and various social media sites depicting a bouncer employed by Milo’s Cantina initially preventing a patron from exiting the bar, then slamming the patron to the ground in a chokehold. The bouncer continues to hold the patron, who does not appear to be acting aggressively or resisting, on the ground in a chokehold for over two minutes.

At no time during the recorded video does a member of Milo’s Cantina’s staff attempt to intervene or diffuse the situation. In fact, during the altercation the manager and another individual working behind the bar are seen simply picking up bar stools that have been knocked over during the skirmish. Additionally, the manager tells the patron recording the video to leave the bar, and is observed locking the door with the victim still being held down inside. Shortly after locking the door, the video captures the bouncer kneeling the patron in the head and chest area several times. When the patron is finally allowed to stand, he attempts to leave but is again blocked by the bouncer when the video ends.

On June 6th, SLA investigators visited Milo’s Cantina to meet with the owner. The licensee indicated that he was not present during the incident, but that his staff advised him that the assaulted patron was acting obnoxiously and using foul language. The owner also indicated that the patron dumped shots on the bar and threatened the security guard with a knife. The licensee further claimed that video recording of the incident was edited to remove the security guard’s voice yelling that the patron had a knife. The licensee claimed a video from the bar’s security cameras shows the bouncer with the knife taken from the patron, however no such video was turned over to SLA investigators.

SLA investigators later confirmed through the NYS Department of State that the bouncer is not a licensed security guard. Additionally, the application filed with the SLA stated the

owner would not employ security personnel and or management staff. On June 11th, the SLA charged Milo's Cantina with four violations of the ABC Law, including operating a disorderly premises, failure to supervise, and employing unlicensed security guards.

"The video captures a disturbing scene which shows the very person whose job it is to prevent these kinds of incidents, committing an assault," said Deputy Counsel to the Authority Lisa Ogden. "The actions of this bar's manager, or lack thereof, are equally problematic. Rather than take control the situation, she simply locked the door and idly looked on as her bouncer slammed a patron onto the floor, held him in a chokehold, and proceeded to pummel him on the ground. The SLA will take immediate action against any licensee whose employees actions threaten the safety of their patrons."

The State Administrative Procedure Act authorizes a State agency to summarily suspend a license when the agency finds that public health, safety, or welfare requires emergency action. When the SLA summarily suspends a license, it also serves a Notice of Pleading alleging one or more disciplinary violations. In invoking a summary suspension, the SLA has deemed the violation to be sufficiently serious upon initial review to warrant an immediate suspension. The SLA's decision to summarily suspend a license is not a final determination on the merits of the case. The licensee is entitled to an expedited administrative law hearing before an Administrative Law Judge. An order of summary suspension remains in effect until such time as it is modified by the SLA or a reviewing Court.

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