

DOCKET NO. 589729

IN RE FELIX CASARES	§	BEFORE THE
D/B/A SHOOTERS	§	
PERMIT NO. BG438316	§	
	§	TEXAS ALCOHOLIC
	§	
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS	§	
(SOAH DOCKET NO. 458-01-0839)	§	BEVERAGE COMMISSION

ORDER

CAME ON FOR CONSIDERATION this 5th day of March, 2001, the above-styled and numbered cause.

After proper notice was given, this case was heard by Administrative Law Judge Don Smith. The hearing convened and adjourned on January 25, 2001. The Administrative Law Judge made and filed a Proposal For Decision containing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law on February 7, 2001. This Proposal For Decision was properly served on all parties who were given an opportunity to file Exceptions and Replies as part of the record herein. Petitioner filed exceptions on February 13, 2001.

The Assistant Administrator of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, after review and due consideration of the Proposal for Decision, Transcripts, and Exhibits, adopts the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law of the Administrative Law Judge, which are contained in the Proposal For Decision and incorporates those Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law into this Order, as if such were fully set out and separately stated herein, except for Finding of Fact No.7 and Conclusion of Law No.4.

Finding of Fact No. 7 is substituted as follows:

Based on the March 22, 2000 Order, Respondent's permits were cancelled for cause.

Conclusion of Law No. 4 is substituted as follows:

Based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, Respondent's conduct surety bond shall be forfeited.

The above changes are made pursuant to Section 2001.058(e)(1) of the Texas Administrative Procedures Act, TEX. GOV'T CODE ANN. 2000 (West Pamphlet). The administrative law judge did not properly apply or interpret applicable law in that any agency process that results in a final disposition is necessarily an "adjudication." Sierra Club v. Peterson, 185 F.3d 349 (5th Cir. 1999). It is uncontested that Respondent paid a civil penalty or had his permits suspended as a result the

adoption of the signed Agreement and Waiver of Hearing. Thus, a final disposition of the rights held under Respondent's permits occurred.

Furthermore, when an agency declares a legal requirement satisfied, it necessarily states a conclusion of law. Smith v. Houston Chemical Services, Inc., 872 S.W.2d 252 (Tex. App-Austin 1994, writ granted, order withdrawn, denied). The December 17, 1999 Order patently declares a legal effect or consequence. Thus a conclusion of law that Respondent violated the Code sections described in the Agreement and Waiver of Hearing is necessarily implied.

All Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, submitted by any party, which are not specifically adopted herein are denied.

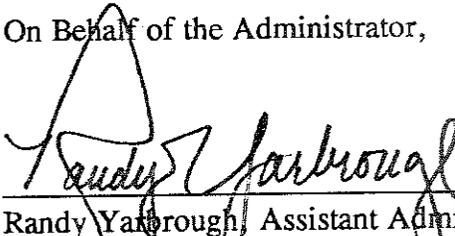
IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, by the Assistant Administrator of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, pursuant to Subchapter B of Chapter 5 of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code and 16 TAC §31.1 of the Commission Rules, that Respondent's conduct surety bond in the amount of **\$5,000.00** be **FORFEITED**.

This Order will become final and enforceable on March 26, 2001, unless a Motion for Rehearing is filed before that date.

By copy of this Order, service shall be made upon all parties by facsimile and by mail as indicated below.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE on this the 5th day of March, 2001.

On Behalf of the Administrator,



Randy Yarbrough, Assistant Administrator
Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission

CB/bc

The Honorable Don Smith
Administrative Law Judge
State Office of Administrative Hearings
VIA FACSIMILE (713) 812-1001

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TABC Legal Section

Licensing Division
Houston District Office

DOCKET NO. 458-01-0839

TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE
COMMISSION

V.

FELIX CASARES
D/B/A SHOOTERS
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

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BEFORE THE STATE OFFICE

OF

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

PROPOSAL FOR DECISION

The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (Petitioner) brought this forfeiture action against Felix Casares d/b/a Shooters (Respondent). Petitioner sought forfeiture of Respondent's conduct surety bond, alleging Respondent's permits were canceled for cause upon a final adjudication that Respondent had violated the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code (Code). For reasons discussed in this proposal, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) does not recommend forfeiture of the conduct surety bond.

JURISDICTION, NOTICE AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) has jurisdiction over this matter under TEX. ALCO. BEV. CODE ANN. ch. 5 and § 11.11 (Vernon 2000) and 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 33.24 (Vernon 2000). The State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) has jurisdiction over all matters relating to conducting a hearing in this proceeding, including the preparation of a proposal for decision with proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE ANN. ch. 2003 (Vernon 2000). There were no contested issues of notice or jurisdiction in this proceeding.

On November 6, 2000, Petitioner issued its Notice of Hearing, directed to Felix Casares d/b/a Shooters, 14911 Mosstex Dr., Humble, Texas 77396-2683. On January 25, 2001, a hearing convened before ALJ Don Smith (SOAH) at 2020 North Loop West, Suite 111, Houston, Harris County, Texas. Petitioner was represented at the hearing by Christopher Burnett, TABC Staff Attorney. Respondent appeared and was represented at the hearing by Clyde Burleson, Attorney At Law. Evidence was received from both parties on that date. The record was closed on January 30, 2001.

LEGAL STANDARDS AND APPLICABLE LAW

TABC is authorized under § 11.11(b)(2) of the Code to forfeit the amount of a conduct surety bond if the permit is revoked. An exception to the forfeiture of the conduct surety bond exists in 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 33.31 (Vernon 2000), if the permit is voluntarily canceled. Pursuant to 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 33.24 (Vernon 2000), the permittee may request a hearing on the question of whether the criteria for forfeiture of the bond, as established by the Alcoholic Beverage Code, § 11.11 has been satisfied. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. *Id.*

EVIDENCE AND PARTIES' CONTENTIONS

Petitioner alleged that Respondent is the holder of a Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit and a Retail Dealer's On-Premise Late Hours Permit, issued by TABC. Respondent did not dispute this allegation. Permit records contained in TABC Exhibit One establish that a Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit, Permit Number BG-438316, and a Retail Dealer's On-Premise Late Hours Permit, Permit Number BL-438317, was issued to Felix Casares, doing business as Shooters, 14342 Old Humble Road, Humble, Harris County, Texas, on August 31, 1999.

In reference to the issued permits, Petitioner alleged that Respondent posted a conduct surety bond. Again, Respondent did not dispute this allegation. TABC Exhibit One contains a certified copy of Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission Conduct Surety Bond Number XTL02428, dated August 4, 1998. The bond was executed by Felix Casares d/b/a Shooters, as Principal, and First Indemnity of America Insurance Company, 8150 Brookriver, Suite S-303, Dallas, Texas, as Surety. The bond is in the amount of five thousand dollars, and is payable to the State of Texas.

Petitioner alleged that Respondent's permits were canceled by Order of the Commission, subjecting the conduct surety bond to forfeiture. Respondent disputed this allegation arguing that the permit was not canceled for cause, but voluntarily canceled. TABC Exhibit One contains an Agreement and Waiver of Hearing, signed by Respondent on March 8, 2000, regarding a violation of the Code alleged to have occurred on February 23, 2000. The language appearing above Respondent's signature states, in pertinent part, that "I [Respondent] neither admit nor deny that the violations stated above have occurred and do hereby waive my right to a hearing...the permits will be suspended/canceled...The signing of this waiver may result in the forfeiture of any related conduct surety bond." TABC Exhibit One contains an Order, executed by TABC Assistant Administrator Randy Yarbrough on March 22, 2000, which adopts the Agreement and Waiver of Hearing signed on March 8, 2000. The order reads, in pertinent part,

as follows:

...[I]t is found that the respondent, the above said licensee or permittee, has waived hearing on said matter, has agreed that the violation of law did occur, and does accept the penalty which is assessed below. The agreed violations are as stated in the agreement and waiver of hearing. It is therefore ordered that the agreement and waiver of hearing be adopted and that the penalty designated below be imposed...

No evidence was received regarding any other alleged adjudicated violations of the Code by Respondent.

Finally, Petitioner offered evidence of its compliance with the notice requirements of 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 33.24 (Vernon 2000). TABC Exhibit One contains a letter dated May 24, 2000, addressed to Felix Casares d/b/a Shooters, stating that “we [TABC] are notifying you of our intention to seek forfeiture of the full amount of your conduct surety bond.” The second page of the letter contains Respondent’s signature, indicating his desire for a hearing to determine if the bond should be forfeited.

ANALYSIS

It is clear from the evidence, and undisputed, that Respondent held a Wine and Beer Retailer’s Permit and a Retail Dealer’s On-Premise Late Hours Permit, that Respondent posted a conduct surety bond in relation to the permits, and that Respondent received notice and requested a hearing regarding the proposed bond forfeiture. The only remaining issue to be determined is whether Respondent voluntarily canceled the permits or if the permits were canceled for cause.

Petitioner adopted the waiver agreements signed by Respondent in order dated March 22, 2000. However, the order never states that Petitioner finds the alleged violation occurred. As such, the ALJ cannot find that Respondent’s permits have been finally adjudicated to have been canceled for cause.

RECOMMENDATION

The ALJ recommends that Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission Conduct Surety Bond Number XTL02428, dated August 4, 1998, in the amount of five thousand dollars, not be forfeited.

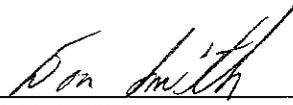
PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent, Felix Casares d/b/a Shooters, held a Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit, BG-438316, and a Retail Dealer's On-Premise Late Hours Permit, BL-438317, issued by TABC on August 31, 1999, for the premises located at 14342 Old Humble Road, Humble, Harris County, Texas.
2. Respondent posted Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission Conduct Surety Bond Number XTL02428, dated August 4, 1998. The bond was executed by Felix Casares d/b/a Shooters, as Principal, and First Indemnity of America Insurance Company, 8150 Brookriver, Suite S-303, Dallas, Texas, as Surety. The bond is in the amount of five thousand dollars, and is payable to the State of Texas.
3. On March 8, 2000, Respondent signed an Agreement and Waiver of Hearing regarding a violation of the Code alleged to have occurred on February 23, 2000.
4. The Agreement and Waiver of Hearing states that Respondent was neither admitting nor denying that the violation occurred.
5. The Agreement and Waiver of Hearing states that Respondent understands that the permits will be canceled.
6. The Agreement and Waiver of Hearing was adopted by TABC in an Order dated March 22, 2000. The Order was executed by TABC Assistant Administrator Randy Yarbrough.
7. The Order fails to state that TABC finds the violation occurred, therefore petitioner presented insufficient evidence that the permits were canceled for cause.
8. Petitioner sent Respondent written notice of its intent to seek forfeiture of the conduct surety bond by letter dated May 24, 2000.
9. Respondent requested a hearing to determine if the conduct surety bond should be forfeited.
10. On November 6, 2000, Petitioner issued its Notice of Hearing, directed to Felix Casares d/b/a Shooters, 14911 Mosstex Dr., Humble, Texas 77396-2683.
11. On January 25, 2001, a hearing convened before ALJ Don Smith, SOAH, at 2020 North Loop West, Suite 111, Houston, Harris County, Texas. Petitioner was represented at the hearing by TABC Staff Attorney Christopher Burnett. Respondent appeared and was represented at the hearing by Attorney Clyde Burlison.

PROPOSED CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission has jurisdiction over this proceeding pursuant to TEX. ALCO. BEV. CODE ANN. ch. 5 and § 11.11(b)(2)(Vernon 2000) and 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 33.24 (Vernon 2000).
2. The State Office of Administrative Hearings has jurisdiction over all matters relating to conducting a hearing in this proceeding, including the preparation of a proposal for decision with proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE ANN. ch. 2003 (Vernon 2000).
3. Respondent received proper notice of hearing.
4. Based upon the Proposed Findings of Fact, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission Conduct Surety Bond Number XTL02428, dated August 4, 1998, in the amount of five thousand dollars, should not be forfeited.

SIGNED on this the 7 day of February, 2001.



DON SMITH
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS