



# City of Grand Island

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

Council Session

## Item E-1

**Public Hearing on Request from Grand Island Hotel, LLC, dba  
Comfort Suites, 228 Lake Street for a Class “I” Liquor License**

*Council action will take place under Consent Agenda item G-3.*

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

# Council Agenda Memo

**From:** RaNae Edwards, City Clerk

**Meeting:** March 24, 2020

**Subject:** Public Hearing on Request from Grand Island Hotel, LLC dba Comfort Suites, 228 Lake Street for a Class “I” Liquor License

**Presenter(s):** RaNae Edwards, City Clerk

## Background

Section 4-2 of the Grand Island City Code declares the intent of the City Council regarding liquor licenses and the sale of alcohol.

### **Declared Legislative Intent**

- It is hereby declared to be the intent and purpose of the city council in adopting and administering the provisions of this chapter:
- (A) To express the community sentiment that the control of availability of alcoholic liquor to the public in general and to minors in particular promotes the public health, safety, and welfare;
  - (B) To encourage temperance in the consumption of alcoholic liquor by sound and careful control and regulation of the sale and distribution thereof; and
  - (C) To ensure that the number of retail outlets and the manner in which they are operated is such that they can be adequately policed by local law enforcement agencies so that the abuse of alcohol and the occurrence of alcohol-related crimes and offenses is kept to a minimum.

## Discussion

Grand Island Hotel, LLC dba Comfort Suites, 228 Lake Street has submitted an application for a Class “I” Liquor License. A Class “I” Liquor License allows for the sale of alcohol on sale only inside the corporate limits of the city.

City Council action is required and forwarded to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission for issuance of all licenses. This application has been reviewed by the Clerk, Building, Fire, Health, and Police Departments. See attached Police Department report.

Also submitted was a request for Liquor Manager Designation for Milo Graff, 9909 Hollow Tree Drive, Lincoln, NE. Staff recommends approval of the liquor license contingent upon final inspections and liquor manager designation for Milo Graff contingent upon completing a state approved alcohol server/seller training program.

### **Alternatives**

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand. The Council may:

1. Approve the application.
2. Forward to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission with no recommendation.
3. Forward to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission with recommendations.
4. Deny the application.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission's criteria for the approval of Liquor Licenses, City Administration recommends that the Council approve this application.

### **Sample Motion**

Move to approve the application for Grand Island Hotel, LLC dba Comfort Suites, 228 Lake Street for a Class "I" Liquor License contingent upon final inspections and Liquor Manager designation for Milo Graff, 9909 Hollow Tree Drive, Lincoln, NE contingent upon completion of a state approved alcohol server/seller training program.

**Supplement**

309

Comfort Suites

Grand Island Police Department  
Supplemental Report

Date, Time: 3-16-20

Reporting Officer: Sgt Dvorak 309

Unit #: CID

The owners of the new Comfort Suites Motel are applying for a Class I Liquor License. Grand Island Hotel LLC consists of Milo, Georgia and Eric Graff. Milo and Georgia are parents of Eric. When reviewing the application, I noted that Eric Graff resides in Minnesota, while Milo and Georgia reside in Lincoln, NE.

In the application, all three Graffs disclosed prior motor vehicle violations, though none were in the past seven (7) years. No felony or misdemeanor convictions were disclosed. I checked Milo, Georgia and Eric Graff through Spillman and NCJIS. I found no Spillman entries, and no record for Eric in Nebraska. None of the Graffs have outstanding warrants for their arrest, and both Milo and Georgia have valid Nebraska drivers licenses.

I noted that Milo disclosed a traffic citation in S Sioux City, for speeding, in 2000. I found an entry from Dakota County for speeding in 2004, and no other moving violations on file. I believe that Milo made an error when reporting this citation from roughly 20 years ago, but was simply mistaken, and not trying to mislead with his response.

I checked Milo, Georgia and Eric through a paid Law Enforcement only database, which tends to provide mostly personal identifying information and details of any civil issues. No concerns were located.

On 3-16-20 Nebraska State Patrol Investigator Jeromy McCoy and I met with Milo and Georgia Graff at the new Comfort Suites location, 228 Lake Street. The motel is still completely under construction, and will hopefully open in June of this year. Milo advised that he has been in the hospitality industry for most of his life. Milo and Georgia have owned eight previous motels over the years, and recently sold their remaining other three motels to concentrate on this new Comfort Suites location.

The Graffs advised that they plan to offer a daily "Manager's Reception" to their patrons. No alcohol will be sold on the premises. Paid guests will provided two complimentary drink tickets daily, to accompany light hors d'oeuvres in the breakfast area. The reception will only be held from 5:30 to 7:00 pm daily. No interior spaces have been completed, so Milo indicated where the breakfast bar would be located, and also advised that the alcohol will be stored in the food prep/cooler area, and will only be visible to the public during the hours of the reception.

When questioned, Milo and Georgia said that while Eric is a part of the LLC, he will have little to no involvement in the day to day operations of the motel, and will not be involved with serving alcohol. Georgia advised that she or Milo will be on site initially, and will personally oversee the Manager's Reception to determine if it is viable. Georgia said she believes that motel guests will appreciate having a complimentary breakfast and light supper on a daily basis, so she believes it will be a success.

03/19/20

Milo advised that his staff will not allow anyone under age 21 to rent a room, so identification will be checked twice; once at check in and once at point of consumption. The Graffs indicated they initially plan to give paid guests two "drink tickets" each day, though they are not sure exactly how that will be completed.

McCoy covered several more topics and questions regarding square footage and storage, and also cautioned the Graffs regarding employee education and the constraints of the Class I license and property concerns. They advised they understood.

The Grand Island Police Department has no objection to Milo, Georgia and Eric Graff, DBA as Grand Island Hotel LLC, receiving a Class I liquor license as the new owners of Comfort Suites, and Milo Graff becoming the Liquor Manager.

03/19/20

# Liquor License Application: Class "I" : Comfort Suites

