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2020 OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITS' REPORT FINDS BOARD OF LIQUOR LICENSE COMMISSIONERS FOR BALTIMORE CITY IMPLEMENTED "SIGNIFICANT" AND "APPROPRIATE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS" TO ADDRESS PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS

Baltimore, MD – On May 14, 2020, the Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) for the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) issued its 2020 Performance Audit Report (2020 Audit) for the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City (BLLC) to the general public.

In his letter addressed to the Joint Audit Committee of the Maryland General Assembly relating to the release of the 2020 Audit, Legislative Auditor Mr. Gregory Hook stated that the "BLLC made significant improvements in addressing the conditions noted in [the OLA's] preceding audit of the BLLC, with only one of the prior findings repeated" in the 2020 Audit of the BLLC. Mr. Hook further acknowledged the BLLC's "willingness to address the audit issues and to implement appropriate corrective actions" through its implementation of new "Standard Operating Policies and Procedures" and "management oversight processes that allowed for consistency and accountability."

Chairman Matricciani stated "We thank the OLA for its time and effort in conducting a performance audit of the BLLC. Upon my appointment to the BLLC in 2016, I made it the Board's priority to ensure that the recommendations made by the OLA's Audit of 2016 were fully implemented." He further said, "I believe that the OLA's 2020 Audit Report (of 17 prior audit findings satisfied and 1 remaining finding still contested) is a testament to the hard work and effort that the Commissioners and employees of this agency put forth in addressing prior deficiencies."

Commissioner Greenfield added "By restructuring the agency, drafting and implementing new policies and procedures, and introducing new management tools to the agency, the BLLC was able to turnaround its performance and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the agency." Greenfield also stated, "Through these changes the

BLLC produced an average annual surplus of \$508,000 per year between FY16-19, increased inspections performed by the agency between LY18-19 by 32%, increased the number of violations hearings brought before the Board by the agency between FY16 and FY19 by 200%, increased the number of non-violation hearings brought before the Board by 48% during the same time period, and ended the practice of extending the life of “zombie licenses” that did not meet State law requirements.”

Commissioner Jones stated, “I thank and applaud my fellow Commissioners and BLLC staff for their achievements. Though the BLLC has made great strides in improving its delivery of services as per the 2020 Audit, we take heed of the OLA’s recommendations in this report and will work as a team towards incorporating their suggestions in order to improve our operations where applicable.” He added, “While much has been accomplished, we must remain steadfast in our efforts to continuously improve the agency for communities and stakeholders.”

To view a copy of the Office of Legislative Audits’ 2020 Performance Audit Report for the BLLC and the agency’s response, please visit the OLA’s website at: <https://www.ola.state.md.us/>

Please view our website for additional information regarding this and other agency matters: lb.baltimorecity.gov. Additional questions or concerns about this matter should be directed to Thomas R. Akras Deputy Executive Secretary at 410-396-4377 or Thomas.Akras@baltimorecity.gov.

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