

A CONVERSATION WITH CHAIRMAN BRASCO

ON THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
CONTROL COMMISSION (ABCC)



Tell us about your role as Chairman of the Waltham Board of License Commissioners.

I've been sitting on the licensing board for 30 years now, maybe a little more. I'm in the funeral business, so I know the community well and what the community needs are. We treat the licensees like they're our customers and use our position to assist them. Without them we wouldn't work well. We're not a punitive board. We don't find many people who want to violate the law, so we try to work with them, we require them to be retrained if they have a violation. These things work out well for us.

ABOUT CHAIRMAN BRASCO

Wayne Brasco is a Certified Funeral Practitioner and CEO of his family's funeral home in Waltham, Brasco & Sons Memorial Chapels Inc. For the past 40 years, Wayne has dedicated himself to his community in Waltham and has served on various city commissions, including the Licensing Board for 30 years. Among his many civic duties, he is also the Vice President for the MA Municipal Licensing Association. For his steadfast and continued service to the community, he was formally recognized by Governor King, Governor Dukakis, and the MA Legislature.

The ABCC and the City of Waltham have an excellent working relationship and it is because of this relationship that we can deliver for our licensees. We have developed a program where all the licensees in Waltham come to an annual mandatory meeting to prepare them to be relicensed. A lot of licensees appreciate that. It's great that the ABCC is there to answer questions directly since they're the people who define the rules.

We were also the first community to go al fresco during the pandemic. [Our mayor] called and said 'what can we do for our licensees? Let's start brainstorming.' She went out of her

“ If it wasn't for the ABCC, we would have been gone a long time ago. ”

way to get outside dining and seating for our licensees. We've gotten calls from many towns wanting to know what we're doing and how.

Why is this role important to you?

It gives me a chance to do good things in the community. This is how I contribute socially; it's given me everything.

Tell us about your work with the MA Municipal Licensing Association and the ABCC outreach program.

Twelve or thirteen years ago I was asked to serve on the Municipal Licensing Association. Because licensing authorities from across the state are working together, we find common misunderstandings and learn from each other. The ABCC comes to all our meetings, takes questions, and speaks on important topics.

How many outreach training classes do you estimate you've taken part in?

A lot of them, whenever I have the opportunity. I'm always looking for what's new and what people are wondering about or questioning. The regional meetings are good as it's the only time we get these licensees from all over the state together...all exchanging ideas, listening to each other.

Why is this type of work important for the community, in your opinion?

You have to find the balance between the people who legally have a license and the people who have a right to a good quality of life. I'm usually able to find a balance where everyone ends up happy.

What are your main takeaways from being the Chairman of the Licensing Board, an officer with the MA Municipal Licensing Association, and working with the ABCC?

When I first came on, I thought this [licensing violation] is terrible, but then I realized it wasn't egregious, that it was an error and human beings make errors. We say you can't do this; you have to stop that behavior and you'll never do it again. For other people who have disregard for training employees, we do come down harder. I'm the tough guy when it comes to being tough and a teddy bear when it comes to being understanding. I've enjoyed serving this city and I'll do it until they ask me to go.

My highest compliment was from an attorney that said 'I've sat through a lot of our meetings and you guys are the best. I've been all over the state and you guys treat everybody well.' We're doing something right.

[Buy tickets](#) for the **Phantom Festival in Waltham!** We have a wonderful community of 69,000 people and some of the best restaurants west of Boston.

ABOUT THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONTROL COMMISSION



The ABCC provides uniform control over the sale, transportation, possession, purchasing, and manufacturing of alcoholic beverages in the Commonwealth. The ABCC also works with stakeholders in the alcoholic beverage industry and municipal licensing authorities to provide licenses, enforce legislation and regulations, and resolve licensing issues.

The outreach training program began in 2009 and has been working with municipal licensing associations ever since.