



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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COREY JOHNSON
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

June 6, 2013

Mr. Donald Bernstein
Victor & Bernstein
18 East 41st Street
New York, New York 10017

Re: The Highline Hotel, LLC & Tenth Avenue Hotel Management LLC

Dear Donald:

Last December your client, The Highline Hotel, LLC and Tenth Avenue Hotel Management, came before Manhattan Community Board 4's Business Licenses and Permit Committee with an application for a hotel liquor license. At the time, a discussion was begun about the termination of former employees from the Desmond Tutu Center after the flooding of Hurricane Sandy. In a letter to MCB4 in January, before the application was to come before the full Board for a vote, your clients agreed to interview and consider hiring the terminated individuals. The Board accepted your presentation assuming it was offered in good faith. We understood your client's goal was not only to adhere to the path described but to actively seek employees from the pool of those no longer employed at the facility. However, we have since learned that **not one** of the former employees was rehired. We now feel misled and manipulated by your client.

In our view, your client followed the letter of the agreement but not the spirit. Many of us now doubt if there ever was any honest intention of rehiring some of the former employees.

Though your application was approved by the SLA in April, the screening and interviewing process you followed yielded not one single rehire. It did follow the January outline but you seem to have fallen back on the phrase, publicly quoted by your applicant's representatives, "criteria for this hotel." No one interviewed by your client met these (unstated) criteria. We certainly would be interested in

knowing what the criteria are because we find it incredible that not one of these employees, formerly staffing the Tutu Center with no complaints about the competency of their appropriate skills or the level of service they provided, made the grade for the new hotel. Incredible and unbelievable.

The Business Licenses and Permits Committee of MCB 4 will meet on Tuesday, June 11 at 6:30 pm at the Intercontinental Hotel. We will be hearing from some of the people involved in the rehiring interviews and would also like to hear from you and your client at the time. Your attendance would certainly be appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'CJ', is positioned above the typed name.

Corey Johnson
Chair

cc : NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn's Office
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
NYS Assemblyman Richard Gottfried
NYS Senator Brad Hoylman
U.S. Congressman Jerrold Nadler