



TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOURTH OF JULY ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 HEALTH and OTHER SAFETY CODES RESULTS IN CHARGES FOR THREE MONTAUK BUSINESS OPERATORS

East Hampton will maintain focus on public safety and compliance with town codes and Governor Cuomo's executive orders on mask wearing, social distance

Town will take "firm and decisive action" against violators of Governor's public health orders, says Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc

The owners or managers of three Montauk establishments were arrested on Saturday night on misdemeanor charges related to alleged violations of the State Liquor Authority Alcoholic Beverage Control laws, during inspections related to COVID-19 safety regulation compliance.

A town enforcement and compliance detail consisting of a police officer, fire marshal, and police sergeant visited businesses to insure compliance with the restrictions placed on restaurants and bars under New York State's "New York Forward" reopening plan, designed to allow business to safely resume during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Long Island is currently in Phase Three of the economic reopening, according to New York State. In Phase Three, private gatherings are limited to 25 people or less, restaurants are limited to 50 percent capacity, and alcohol is allowed be served in conjunction with food service and only to patrons who are seated at a six-foot social distance.

Multiple misdemeanor charges were levied against Richard Gibbs, the owner of Rick's Crabby Cowboy Cafe, Vincenzo Lentini, owner of Ruschmeyer's, and Jeffrey Capri, the manager of Nick's on the Beach, regarding posting of signage and proper approved storage of alcohol.

Police officers documented numerous additional alleged violations at the three establishments, including some related to COVID-19 health and safety regulations, which will be referred to the State Liquor Authority.

The SLA has the ability to revoke the liquor licenses of businesses that do not operate within regulations, and Governor Cuomo can roll back the phased business reopening and shut down restaurant and bars across the board if deemed necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Videos and photos taken of crowds at several Montauk establishments will be referred by police to the SLA, for potential further charges under the Governor's executive order.

"While the vast majority of businesses are operating safely, and are respectful of the potential threat from COVID-19, we cannot allow some to operate in ways that threaten the public health as well as the continued ability for other businesses to remain open," said East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc.

"I will be asking the State Liquor Authority to suspend the license of any business that openly and repeatedly flouts COVID-19 safety regulations. We cannot afford to have responsible businesses shut down due to irresponsible operators."

In addition to the task force checking restaurants and bars, which found "a great deal of compliance with the dining, seating, and service of alcohol regu-

lations,” according to East Hampton Town Police Chief Michael Sarlo, East Hampton Town Police responded to 107 calls for service between 6 p.m. on the Fourth of July and 6 a.m. this morning.