

***Thank you for taking the time to fully read this email. I apologize for its length, however, it is all pertinent information.***

I have never met anyone in the Wells family, however, based on Mr. Wells' presentation in the written form, I am confident that he is a well-respected adult who knows how to make good business investments. He is **investing** in a business venture, as well as investing in the future success of his son. He should be commended not tossed aside! He is excited to assist his son to move on from his past, only to have a roadblock thrown up in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour.

I do, however, know Joseph J. Johnson. I've known him his entire life. I have watched Joe excel as a student, falter as a teenager/young man (while *still* excelling as a student – taking university courses), and grow into a mature adult man. Yes, he is convicted of a felony. Notably, he was released early from his probation as his probation officer also saw the maturity, intelligence, and drive Joe had for redirecting his life. She recognized his focus on excelling in business. She saw the gleam in his eye as he moved toward a positive future! Because this **professional probation officer with the State of Wisconsin** saw the potential in Joe, he was allowed the early release from probation which allowed him to move to Cheyenne, Wyoming, for a job wherein he continually was promoted and received bonuses. His relocation to Madison was with the same company, HSBC. Unfortunately, due to the house financing meltdown, Joe was left unemployed.

In the interim between then and today, Joe has tried to develop a new plan for his life work. Joe and Jason have joined together to promote their strengths, along with the financial investment provided by Dale and Debra Wells. I doubt the Wells would invest money in something they thought would sink! Why would people who are saving toward retirement years, choose to make a foolhardy investment? Because they have faith. Faith in their son, faith in the community, faith in the system. They too see the drive, creative ability, focus, and determination innate to these two individuals (Jason Wells and Joseph Johnson). They see their focus is on today, tomorrow, and years from now rather than the "in the moment" focus of young immature males.

Joe's exuberance and efforts in the MyBuddies business venture is equal to Dale Wells, Debra Wells, and Jason Wells.

Joe and Jason's past is unfortunate, but it is their **past**. Can't we leave it there and let them prove their worthiness to the community. Those who are supportive of this endeavor see positives, in many areas. I heard from professionals in the human services community that often young males that get into the trouble that Joe and Jason did in their youth are the most likely to succeed at entrepreneurship.

I understand that the parties reviewing this request for a liquor license are concerned. However, you do not know these people but for a few meetings. Obviously, if Dale and Debra Wells have money to open this restaurant/bar business, they have achieved much success in their personal lives that is now allowing them the ability to make this investment. To me, that shows impeccable quality of character.

Because you have had only occasional interaction with those involved, including two men who have felonies on their record (from many years ago), I understand your concern. You should be. I think, however, it would be prudent to consider and give weight to the other facts presented here and presented in person by Debra and Dale Wells: the obvious investment strategy the Wells have that allows them ability to further **invest** in a business venture, the Wells' character references as to their son Jason, and the word of a Mother in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. We DO know these young men and we will always have faith in them. For the Wells to take an additional step to financially invest in a business endeavor, in which Jason and Joe would likely be employed, well that goes beyond the love of a parent towards his child. It is also an investment toward the Wells' financial stability.

Please give weight to this email. I apologize for the length but as the Mother of Joseph J. Johnson, I have many more positives to share than negatives.

Respectfully

Cindy Larson  
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