



**Minutes
Liquor Commission - Regular Session
Tuesday, March 10, 2026 - 4:00 PM**

The Liquor Commission convened in regular session in the Government Center Boardroom. Commissioner Brady called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Dan Brady	Commissioner	Present
Lindsey Meister	Commissioner	Absent
Sreenivas Poondru	Commissioner	Absent
Michael Jordan	Commissioner	Absent
Cleotha Peterson	Commissioner	Absent
Roger Bedeker	Commissioner	Present

Staff Advisors

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Leslie Smith-Yocum	City Clerk	Absent
George Boyle	Asst. Corporation Counsel	Present
Chris McAllister	Building Official	Absent
Paul Williams	Asst. Police Chief	Present
Ashley Lara	Records & Licensing Specialist	Present
Gayle Price	Fire Inspector	Present

Commissioner Brady noted that only he and Commissioner Baedeker were present, so they did not have a standard quorum, but explained that as Liquor Commissioner, he would proceed with the agenda if there was no objection. Commissioner Bedeker agreed to serve in an advisory role and understood he would still be able to question witnesses.

Public Comment

No in-person public comment was received. The following emailed public comments: (1) Megan Reha; and (2) Edwina (Marty) Lane.

Consent Agenda

Items listed on the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion; Items pulled from the Consent Agenda are listed and voted on separately.

Commissioner Brady made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bedeker, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Item 4.A. Consideration and Action on Approving the February 10, 2026, Regular Liquor Commission Meeting Minutes. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

Commissioner Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Bedeker

Motion carried.

Regular Agenda

All license creations, amendments or transfers are contingent upon compliance with all building, health and safety codes.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5.A. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Aroma Hospitality Group, LLC d/b/a Scramblers, located at 1607 Jumer Dr., Requesting Approval of a Change in Ownership for their Class RAS (Restaurant, All Types of Alcohol & Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

Commissioner Brady opened the Public Hearing at 4:04 p.m.

Jeremy Cruthis, General Manager of Aroma Hospitality Group, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Asst. Corporation Counsel George Boyle explained that a similar Item had come before the Commission a few months earlier and was sent to the Council with a positive recommendation for approval; however, before the State license could be issued, new information about the business's ownership surfaced, and the Applicant was before the Commission to clarify and address that updated ownership information. Mr. Cruthis explained that at an earlier Commission hearing he believed the liquor license would be held in a single owner's name, but it turned out it needed to be held under both an individual owner and an LLC. He stated that all required background checks and information had been completed and characterized the ownership listing issue as a simple clerical error on the Applicant's part, for which he apologized.

Mr. Boyle asked Mr. Cruthis, who had previously informed him about the ownership structure. Mr. Cruthis explained it was the primary owner, Nalan Gupta, who he believed owned 100% of the business, but who in fact was only part-owner with an LLC holding 51%. Mr. Boyle then asked how the issue came to light with the State. Mr. Cruthis explained that it was discovered when he applied for a "MyTax" account, which showed the tax ID tied to multiple entities rather than just Mr. Gupta. He confirmed there would be no operational changes associated with the corrected ownership and that there would be the same General Manager, the same BASSET- certified staff, and business operations would continue as before.

Mr. Boyle pointed out that the request qualified as a change of ownership under Chapter 6, Section 2 of the City Code and, because the change was for less than 100% of the ownership, it was a type of action the Liquor Commissioner could approve either together with Commissioner Bedeker or on his own.

Mr. Cruthis thanked the City Clerk Department for all their assistance over the past few months and apologized for the extra work the issue may have caused.

Commissioner Brady asked if there was anyone in the audience present to speak for or against the Item. No one came forward.

Commissioner Brady closed the Public Hearing at 4:08 p.m.

Commissioner Bedeker made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brady, to positively recommend the Item to Council.

Commissioner Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Bedeker

Motion carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5.B. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Tailwind BMI, LLC d/b/a Tailwind Deli News & Gifts, located at 3201 CIRA Dr., Unit 112, Requesting Approval of a Change in Ultimate Parent Company for their Class RAS (Restaurant, All Types of Alcohol & Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

Commissioner Brady opened the Public Hearing at 4:11 p.m.

Matthew Dambacher, General Manager of Tailwind BMI, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Asst. Corporation Counsel George Boyle explained that the Item was a request to approve a change in the ultimate parent company that owned the local business, which was one of several similar airport (Central Illinois Regional Airport) operations under that parent firm. He noted that they did not expect significant changes at the local level and that Legal had not had any issues with the establishment. He stated that staff had identified possible concerns about how the licensed premises were located and defined within the airport, and that those details would be addressed later in the discussion.

Mr. Dambacher explained that the affected area was just past the TSA (Transportation Security Administration) checkpoint, where they were seeking to adjust liquor service hours. He noted the location limited concerns about drinking and driving because only ticketed passengers were permitted beyond the TSA checkpoint and added that the establishment also operated with a two-drink maximum per customer.

Mr. Boyle confirmed that Tailwind operated two areas at the airport: a public-side restaurant open from roughly 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and a post-TSA location upstairs near the departure gates. Mr. Dambacher explained the post-TSA bar currently opened at 6:00 a.m., and they were seeking to move that to 5:00 a.m. to better serve early departing passengers.

Commissioner Bedeker and Mr. Boyle confirmed that both the public and post-TSA spaces were managed and operated under the same company, and that the application paperwork covered both locations, even though the public-side restaurant would not have any functional change from the request. Mr. Dambacher explained that their post-TSA bar operated in alignment with departing flights and currently was not open until 6:00 a.m. He noted that they were requesting to move that opening time to 5:00 a.m. because many early-morning passengers flew out before 6:00 a.m., and the earlier opening would allow them to serve those customers.

Mr. Boyle noted that a staff member involved in inspecting the site had concerns about how the licensed premises were defined and pointed out that the business had operated there since at least 2010.

Gayle Price, Fire Inspector, explained that the site plan on file was outdated and showed the news/gift area and storage in different locations than they were today. Mr. Dambacher walked through the current layout on the drawing Ms. Price had provided and clarified where the art display, storage room, restaurant, TSA checkpoint, and upstairs gift shop were actually located. Ms. Price noted that their sketch work during the meeting helped reconcile what was on paper with what was on site. She recommended that a new, accurate drawing be submitted to clearly show the present locations of all licensed areas.

Commissioner Brady confirmed that the Police Department had no questions and

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reported no history of problems with the establishment.

Commissioner Brady asked if there was anyone in the audience present to speak for or against the Item. No one came forward.

Commissioner Brady closed the Public Hearing at 4:18 p.m.

Commissioner Brady made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bedeker, to positively recommend the Item to Council with the condition that staff receive and approve an updated floor plan prior to Council action.

Commissioner Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Bedeker

Motion carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5.C. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from 505 Pub, LLC d/b/a Pub I, located at 505 W. Market St., Requesting Approval of a Class TAPS (Tavern, All Types of Alcohol, Package & Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

Commissioner Brady opened the Public Hearing at 4:20 p.m.

Asst. Corporation Counsel George Boyle explained that the Item was a new liquor license application for 505 W. Market St., a location that previously housed another establishment. He noted that the Applicant was seeking a new tavern-class license, similar to what was in place before, and was expected to outline specific plans for how they intended to use and improve the premises.

Derek Sample, Owner of 505 Pub, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Sample stated that they planned to reopen and improve the 505 W. Market site. He outlined modest, but thorough renovations, which included refacing and refinishing the interior, cleaning and lighting the parking lot, and installing a comprehensive camera system like those at their other venues (Daddios, Elroy's, Reality Bites, and Sport & Bait) to aid safety and any police interactions. He noted that they also planned to add a small kitchen behind the bar and convert the existing kitchen space into ADA-compliant restrooms. He acknowledged there was substantial cleanup and work ahead, but reported they had already walked the site with Gayle, the Fire Inspector, who identified what must be addressed before the liquor license could be completed.

Commissioner Bedeker asked if outdoor dining would be offered. Mr. Sample described an existing gated lawn area on the East side of the building, enclosed by a wooden fence and currently unused except for occasional picnic tables. He stated that for now, they envisioned it simply as a fenced outdoor space accessed by a side door from the main bar, mainly for patrons to step outside—such as to smoke—while still complying with distance requirements from the doors under applicable laws. Commissioner Bedeker asked if they would have outdoor music and expressed concerns regarding the residential area. Mr. Sample agreed and noted he worked with the City closely on other matters so we would be able to reach out if needed. He shared that they would like to leave the option open for music, but that it would depend on how the layout of the space was used.

Mr. Boyle asked whether the Applicant was requesting that the liquor license cover the

outdoor area as well, or only the interior of the premises. Mr. Sample explained that they were seeking an overall license to reopen and operate the business and had also included the fenced grassy area on the application. He noted that if the Commission approved alcohol service for that enclosed outdoor space, they would allow patrons to step outside and use it as part of the licensed premises.

Mr. Boyle asked if, given the nearby residential area, the Applicant would agree to have outdoor activities end by 10:00 or 11:00 p.m., at least initially. Mr. Sample responded that they would absolutely be open to that limitation.

Commissioner Brady confirmed that, under the proposed request, patrons would be allowed to take alcoholic drinks into the fenced lawn area on the East side of the building, which would be treated as a patio. Mr. Sample confirmed.

Asst. Police Chief Paul Williams asked whether staff from Mr. Sample's other businesses would be used interchangeably at the new pub—for example, filling in if someone calls in sick—or whether this location would operate as its own stand-alone business with a dedicated manager and its own regular employees. Mr. Sample explained that, like his Sport & Bait location, the new pub would have its own primary staff and core team to build a loyal following, while employees from other bars might occasionally fill in if someone called off and they were short-handed. He stated that the intent was for the establishment to function with its own dedicated staff who are invested in that specific bar.

Asst. Chief Williams asked what the target audience would be. Mr. Sample described the business as a local pub and explained that the concept for the location would be to serve as a local neighborhood spot that capitalized on the heavy traffic along Market Street. He noted that in particular, they hoped to attract construction workers, truck drivers, and others regularly traveling in and out of the West side of town. Asst. Chief Williams asked if they planned to have live music on the patio. Mr. Sample explained that they would be open to it, and if they decided to, they would work within the directions of the City and Police. He further emphasized that any outdoor events or music would not be constant or heavily promoted as a regular feature. He added that he was always willing to listen to concerns or complaints from the neighbors or the City and would be responsive to any issues. Asst. Chief Williams asked for clarification from Mr. Boyle about the proposed condition on outdoor music and asked whether the intent was to limit outdoor music specifically—rather than all outdoor activity—so that any music outside must stop by 10:00 p.m. and confirmed that this was what Mr. Boyle had been suggesting. Mr. Boyle responded that his recommendation was to limit outdoor music—and possibly outdoor service or patron presence—to around 10:00 p.m. or 11:00 p.m. He noted that it was common practice, when a bar opened or reopened in a residential area, to impose such initial conditions, because it was generally easier to relax restrictions later than to add stricter ones after problems arose.

Asst. Chief Paul Williams asked if the plan would be to have a lunch crowd with food options. Mr. Sample confirmed and noted their goal was not to create a late-night bar like Elroy's, Daddios, or Reality Bites, and that they were not focused on the 11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. crowd. He stated that instead, they wanted to emphasize day-to-day, earlier business, and had even planned to open earlier in the day so third-shift workers would have a place to stop in for something like a breakfast sandwich and a drink.

Asst. Chief Williams asked about occupancy. Gayle Price, Fire Inspector, explained that they had not yet calculated the new occupancy load for the building because the project was still in early stages. She noted that the previous establishment, Pub I, was approved for an indoor

occupancy of 60 people, and that no official occupancy limit had ever been set for the exterior area. Mr. Sample noted that he would not intend to have more than 60 people in the bar.

Commissioner Brady asked if the inspectors had any other concerns. Ms. Price answered no and reminded Mr. Sample that all renovation work required permits.

Commissioner Brady asked if there was anyone in the audience present to speak for or against the item.

Edwina (Marty) Lane, after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Ms. Lane noted that she was speaking on behalf of several churches and neighborhood groups. She shared that they strongly opposed expanding or intensifying the pub's use on Market Street. She described living in a long-established, owner-occupied residential area and says the pub had never been a positive presence in her 30 years there, functioning more like a liquor store with heavy packaged-liquor foot traffic than a tavern. She detailed frequent problems tied to alcohol sales—including loitering, drunkenness, fights, overdoses, ambulance and police calls, and people drinking and littering in nearby church lots and yards—and noted that the Fire and Police Departments had already raised concerns. She also explained that sidewalk and access changes, as well as costly retaining walls around homes, were added due to persistent disorderly behavior from pub patrons. She described how the nearby Salvation Army facility released people each morning who then walked to the pub to buy alcohol and argued that expanding or replicating a “Daddios or Elroy’s” type operation, especially with continued packaged liquor sales, would worsen an already serious situation in the neighborhood.

Mr. Boyle asked Ms. Lane for the name of the liquor store they were referring to. Ms. Lane answered Market Street Groceries (*actual name is West Market Groceries*).

Mr. Boyle and Commissioner Brady asked Asst. Police Chief Paul Williams if he had any data on the area. Asst. Chief Williams explained that when a change to the Market Street Grocery liquor license was previously considered (about a year ago), they analyzed Police call data and found it to be a very “Police-active” location, with more calls for service than most places in town. He confirmed the corridor had high activity, agreed that many unhoused people leave nearby shelters in the morning and tend to move toward the area, and although he didn't have exact figures on hand, he emphasized that call volumes there were notably higher than in most other parts of the City.

Ms. Lane explained that the City of Bloomington, its Police, and the Center for Human Services had established a behavioral health crisis center just off of Market Street because the area was effectively an “alcohol swamp” with many people experiencing mental health issues. She argued that granting an open liquor license with outdoor bands would worsen neighborhood problems, describing how residents already struggled with public drinking, especially by people leaving Safe Harbor who then bought hard liquor at the Pub, since Market Street Grocery only sold beer. She noted that the individuals often sat on neighbors' retaining walls to drink, which contributed to public drunkenness, frequent Police calls, and safety concerns that deterred new businesses from locating on the West side. She stated that there was a history of liquor-related issues in the area including a past murder near another liquor-licensed site, and said the Pub had long been a major factor in these problems, even when business appeared slow from the street.

Commissioner Brady asked if there was anyone else in the audience present to speak for or against the item. No one else came forward.

Commissioner Bedeker thanked the resident for her comments and acknowledged her passion, clarifying that his questions were meant to understand the situation, not to take sides. He confirmed his understanding that Mr. Sample did not want the establishment to become like other larger bars (such as Daddios or Elroy's) and noted that she raised many important points.

Mr. Sample expressed that he was glad the concerns were being discussed in the hearing rather than erupting later at the business. He stressed that he did not want to turn the location into another high-intensity bar like Daddios and noted that he already operated one and had no desire to run a second of that type. He acknowledged that, under the prior owner, packaged liquor was a major focus and a problem and explained that he personally disliked package sales because they shifted responsibility outside the bar—people can buy alcohol, leave, drink elsewhere, and then drive or return intoxicated. He described removing packaged sales at another bar he owns (Sport & Bait) for that reason, even though it might have made good business sense, and said he didn't want this new establishment to function like a liquor store. He emphasized that packaged liquor was not meant to be the emphasis of the business going forward and that he wanted better control over patrons' drinking and behavior.

Mr. Boyle expressed his understanding that Mr. Sample's comments meant that packaged liquor sales would be only a small part of the business. He suggested this might even be something to consider adding later, if that would help address neighborhood concerns, rather than approving it immediately as requested. He noted that many of the issues raised by residents related more to how late activities might run—especially outdoors—than to anything else specific in the application.

Commissioner Bedeker asked for clarification on the role of the outdoor area in the application. He noted that based on what he's read and heard, he believed the outdoor space was more of a "nice to have" feature rather than essential to the business.

Mr. Sample stated that he would like to use the outdoor area, but viewed it as an added amenity, not something he intended to operate as late as the full liquor-license hours, which would cease at 1:00 a.m. on weeknights and 2:00 a.m. on weekends. He explained that his goal was more modest—such as allowing patrons late in the evening to step outside to a well-lit, controlled space rather than into the parking lot—and emphasized that he was willing to operate within agreed-upon limits so everyone was comfortable with how the space was used.

Ms. Lane objected strongly to the idea of the Pub opening early in the morning to serve third-shift workers and stated that the neighborhood did not need people drinking outside at 7:00 a.m., especially with multiple school buses picking up children nearby. She recalled past problems when the Pub quietly opened early including construction workers, prostitution, and inappropriate activity in parked cars while kids were trying to get to the bus, which the community had to organize to stop. She emphasized that the real issue was not the music, but the behavior of certain patrons, many who would not live in the neighborhood and came from places like Safe Harbor or Downtown to buy packaged liquor, and then caused fights, public disturbances, and safety concerns. She noted that the previous owners relied heavily on packaged liquor sales rather than food and argued that the same problematic clientele would return regardless of cosmetic changes to the bar, which created ongoing problems for long-time residents.

Commissioner Brady explained that, based on the testimony, the application could not be resolved that day. He stated that key issues—such as operating hours, the package liquor component, and outdoor activities—likely needed to be modified and suggested carrying the application over to the next Liquor Commission meeting so a revised request could be worked

out. He emphasized that the goal was a neighborhood-friendly bar/restaurant that could be an asset, not a problem, and noted the Applicant appeared willing to invest and was not seeking a “Downtown, late-night” crowd. He encouraged the parties to talk and try to find a compromise that addresses residents’ concerns while still leaving the Applicant with a viable business and stated he would not move to approve the license in its current form.

Ms. Lane stated that the neighborhood did want a functioning business at the Pub site and would welcome it if it becomes a positive asset. She described how neighbors already worked hard to keep the area clean and host community events, and noted it being a “breath of fresh air” while the Pub had been closed and the street had been quieter. She emphasized that if the Pub reopened, people would inevitably use it, so the goal is for it to be “bigger and better,” not bigger and more of a problem or “thorn” for the neighborhood.

Mr. Sample explained that he took over a failing business that had a problematic crowd, was losing money, and was viewed as a “thorn” in its neighborhood and noted that conditions had improved under his management. He noted that they regularly refused service to people they believed would cause trouble and that they do this successfully at multiple locations. He stated that he would prefer not to delay another month.

Commissioner Brady noted that continuing the application to the next meeting could have pros and cons for the Applicant in that it may delay business plans, but ultimately having a license with community support is better than having no license or one that neighbors oppose. He emphasized that a license backed by the neighborhood would make for a stronger, more sustainable business in the long run.

Ms. Lane explained that the packaged liquor component was the biggest problem and she believed that if the Pub did not sell alcohol to-go, many of the troublesome individuals who only came to buy bottles and then drink outside would stop coming, and it would require people to sit inside, drink on-premises, behave appropriately, and then leave.

Commissioner Brady asked the resident to clarify whether she would support the application if the packaged liquor portion was removed, and whether, from the business’s perspective, eliminating packaged sales would still allow the Applicant to move forward with a license that she could accept as a fair compromise. Ms. Lane responded yes. Commissioner Brady then asked both Mr. Sample and Ms. Lane whether, if the packaged liquor component was removed from the application, they were willing to proceed on that basis and move forward with the license under those revised terms.

Mr. Sample answered that he was happy to make a compromise and asked that if the business could hold it together in the future, possibly he could look forward to amended the license to include package liquor. Ms. Lane stated no and expressed that she would never support adding packaged liquor back into the license in the future. She explained that the community had too many problems tied to alcohol sales, which is why there were effectively no other such businesses in the immediate area besides the Pub.

Commissioner Brady explained that there are two options. Option one was to postpone the entire matter to the April 14, 2026, Liquor Commission meeting for more discussion and option two was to move forward now and recommend a license that excludes packaged liquor sales. He noted that, even if packaged sales were removed at this time, the Applicant could return later and apply separately to add that component, but proceeding without it now would allow the process to keep moving rather than fully delaying it to the next meeting.

Mr. Sample asked to move forward.

Mr. Boyle clarified that the Commission would be voting to advance the application to the Council with a positive recommendation, but with the packaged liquor portion removed from the request. He then asked whether, in addition, the Commission intended to place any specific conditions on use of the outdoor area or on outdoor music.

Commissioner Brady noted they would have to comply with City Noise Ordinances. Mr. Boyle explained that the City's noise rules were more nuanced than a simple "no noise after 10:00 p.m." ban, and that instead of a blanket prohibition, the Ordinance looked at factors like decibel levels (which must be measured) and the context—how loud the sound is for that specific location and time of day. He clarified that there was no automatic, across-the-board rule forbidding music after 10:00 p.m. and noted that compliance depended on these contextual standards.

Mr. Sample noted that he did not intend to blast loud music outside or create a "party" atmosphere and explained that the outdoor area was meant mainly as a place for people to step out and sit. He added that, if the Commission set a cutoff time for outdoor music, he could have the outdoor sound system wired to a timer so it shuts off automatically at that time, regardless of who is on duty, to avoid ongoing complaints or enforcement issues.

Commissioner Brady recommended setting specific limits on outdoor music as a condition of the license, which would be no outdoor music after 9:00 p.m. on weeknights and after 10:00 p.m. on weekends. He noted that patrons could still use the outdoor patio after those times, but any music would need to stop and be kept indoors only.

Ms. Lane explained that neighbors are not quick to call the Police over every noise issue; instead, they typically contact the business directly to ask them to turn the music down when people were trying to sleep, and the business usually cooperates.

Commissioner Brady recommended Ms. Lane and Mr. Sample exchanged contact information after the meeting.

Commissioner Brady closed the Public Hearing at 5:05 p.m.

Commissioner Brady made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bedeker, to positively recommend the Item to Council with the following conditions: (1) package liquor is removed from the request; and (2) outdoor music must end by 9 p.m. Sunday–Thursday and 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Commissioner Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Bedeker

Motion carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5.D. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Revery Bloomington, LLC, located at 704 McGregor St., Requesting Approval of a Change in Ownership and an Increase in Classification from a Class RAS (Restaurant, All Types of Alcohol, and Sunday Sales) to a Class RAPS (Restaurant, All Types of Alcohol, Package, and Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

Commissioner Brady opened the Public Hearing at 5:05 p.m.

Asst. Corporation Counsel George Boyle explained that the Item was a request to approve a change of ownership for the restaurant now operating as Revery Bloomington, LLC. He noted the site was formerly the Ozark House for many years, then changed hands completely (including the building) and had more recently been run under Revery Bloomington, LLC's liquor license. He noted that an application to change ownership was filed around December 1, but it was unclear to Legal whether that ownership change had already occurred or was still pending, which he asked Mr. Harris to clarify. He also pointed out that, as a rule, ownership changes should be requested in advance, and that currently the business is believed to be operating under Revery Bloomington, LLC's existing liquor license.

Rakeem Harris, Manager of Revery Bloomington, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Harris clarified that he misspoke when he said he was officially the Manager, and that legally, nothing had changed yet with Revery Bloomington LLC. He explained that instead, there was only a proposed ownership arrangement under which Whiskey River Collective LLC, would own Revery Bloomington LLC. He noted that under that structure, Revery Bloomington LLC would operate the business, while Whiskey River Collective LLC would manage it.

Commissioner Brady asked Mr. Harris to clarify who the owner of Revery Bloomington, LLC was. Mr. Harris stated that Mark Henrichs was the sole owner and Anna Tabb was listed on the LLC with 0%.

Mr. Boyle explained that the original application submitted in December appeared to assume Revery would be purchased, and a recent email from Mr. Harris described the purchase in the past tense, as if it had already occurred. He stated that because of those inconsistencies, he was unclear about who currently owned Revery and who was supposed to own it in the future and noted that if no ownership change had actually happened or was clearly planned, it was unclear why a change-of-ownership hearing was being held. Mr. Harris stated that Mark Heinrich was currently the 100% owner of Revery and the proposed change of ownership was for Whiskey River to become the new owner of Revery, while the entity itself would be the same, so it was strictly a change in ownership rather than creating a new entity.

Commissioner Brady asked if anyone else could clarify the future ownership structure under the requested license, specifically who was expected to be the owner responsible for operating under the new liquor license. Mr. Harris stated that Whiskey River Collective, LLC would own Revery Bloomington, LLC if the license were approved. Mr. Harris also noted that he and Brandon Casey owned Whiskey River Collective LLC.

Commissioner Brady explained that, as Liquor Commissioner, his goal was to clearly establish who would own Revery if the license was recommended to the City Council since the Council will ask detailed questions about ownership. He emphasized that this needed to be clarified at the Commission level first and then invited Mr. Casey to further explain the planned ownership beyond what Mr. Harris had already stated.

Brandon Casey, Part-Owner of Whiskey River Collective, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Casey explained that he was a 50% owner aside Rakeem Harris.

Mr. Boyle asked when Whiskey River Collective, LLC was incorporated. Mr. Harris answered November. Mr. Boyle asked if Whiskey River owned or operated any other business. Mr. Harris answered no. Mr. Boyle asked what assets and liabilities the LLC holds. Mr. Harris explained that they owned all of the equipment inside the business, which represented a

significant asset. He added that the business was currently operating and generating approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000 in revenue per month, and that they also had additional capital available to sustain ongoing operations. Mr. Boyle noted that, in change-of-ownership applications, the City typically looked for information about the purchasing company's assets to determine financial responsibility under Section 6-106 of the Ordinance. He said it is up to the Commission how much weight to give that factor, but pointed out that he still had not heard a clear answer about Whiskey River's own assets, only that the existing business was generating a certain level of sales. Mr. Harris explained that Whiskey River essentially held capital that could be used to support the business if needed, had no current liabilities, and basically just had a pool of funds sitting in the company. Mr. Casey noted that they had purchased all of the equipment as well.

Commissioner Bedeker clarified his understanding by confirming that the Applicants were Whiskey River, that they intended to buy Revery, but had not completed the purchase yet, and that the sale depended on them obtaining the liquor license. He summarized that, so far, they had purchased the equipment and were effectively running the business and receiving its proceeds, while likely paying rent or other expenses to Revery, even though the formal ownership transfer had not yet occurred. Mr. Harris confirmed.

Commissioner Bedeker followed up by asking whether the Applicants had submitted their assets and liabilities, noting that any cash they had on hand should be reflected there. He added that he was unsure of all the exact requirements, but mainly wanted to be clear on what the Applicants were trying to do and what information the Commission was being asked to evaluate.

Mr. Boyle pointed out that documents in the packet added to the confusion about the timing of the Revery sale, which included an email from Anna Tabb dated January 25 that stated the sale had occurred months ago, and a recent email, labeled the City's Exhibit 1, from Mr. Harris also described the sale as already having been completed. He noted that while he was not treating those emails as definitive proof, he said they illustrate why staff was unclear about whether the sale had in fact taken place, especially since the Applicants were now saying it had not. He added that it was also unusual that, while Whiskey River's capital had been mentioned, there had been no clear disclosure of the specific amount or nature of Whiskey River Collective LLC's assets and liabilities.

Asst. Police Chief Paul Williams stated that his first concern was that the Applicants had not submitted the requested financial information, which the Police Department needed to evaluate whether the business had sufficient financial support, since a lack of resources often led to problems from their perspective. He then asked who was actually running the establishment, whether those managing it were BASSET certified, whether staff or hours would change, and whether they planned to use the large back party room. He concluded that, without answers to these issues, he did not have enough information to recommend for or against the application.

Commissioner Brady noted that the Applicants were operating Revery using the current license, which was solely owned by Mark Henrichs.

Mr. Harris noted that he submitted financials to the City Clerk, but received an out-of-office message, so he submitted it through the portal.

Asst. Chief Williams asked whether there would be a change from the current restaurant model, specifically if the back party room would start being used for events. He noted that this restaurant had long operated in a residential neighborhood, and that any major change—such

as staying open later and drawing more late-night patrons and traffic—could negatively affect nearby residents and increase calls to the Police. He therefore wanted to know if the business intended to remain primarily a restaurant or shift more toward a bar-like operation, and what their plans were moving forward. Mr. Harris responded that they were not looking to make major changes at this time, and that after meeting with the Fire Inspector, they learned the back party room was currently considered storage, so they had no plans to use that space right now. He explained that their goal was mainly to keep the restaurant operating as it is with the possible addition of gaming machines in the future.

Commissioner Brady asked if the establishment currently held a video gaming license. Mr. Harris answered no.

Commissioner Brady stated that it was unclear if the financials had been submitted, but they were not reviewed by staff at the time of the meeting. Ashley Lara, Records & Licensing Specialist, noted that the financials had been received.

Commissioner Brady stated that, given the unresolved questions, the only practical step was to treat the application as pending while staff reviewed the applicants' financial information and any other outstanding issues. He explained that if, after that review, the financials were found to be compliant, the Commission could then move the request forward to the full City Council. He then asked Mr. Boyle whether such a conditional, pending motion would be acceptable from a legal standpoint. Mr. Boyle replied that there were a couple of concerns with a conditional approval, specifically, he asked who would actually decide whether the financials were acceptable and by what process. He noted that if the review is negative, his suggestion would be that the application come back to the Commission for another hearing so Mr. Harris and Mr. Casey could respond to whatever issues were identified, rather than having a decision made without giving them a chance to address the problems.

Commissioner Brady stated that, since the City Clerk Department had requested additional information, the Clerk should review those documents to determine what was complete and how they related to the current and future operation of the business. He proposed making a motion to place the application in a pending status, contingent on that review and any further information needed by the Liquor Commission, and if, after review, staff or Legal determine the application should not move forward—for specific reasons—they would notify the Applicants, and the matter would return to the Liquor Commission in April so the Applicants could address those concerns before any license was sent to the City Council for final action.

Mr. Harris expressed frustration that they would be delayed further and noted that they met all requirements at least one month prior to the hearing and were only recently notified about submitting financials. Mrs. Lara confirmed that their documents were submitted, but explained that the missing financials were found in a secondary review.

Commissioner Brady asked how long the Applicants could operate on the present license. Mr. Harris stated that the license was valid until the end of April.

Mr. Boyle noted there was a transition agreement running through March 31st between the Applicants and the current license holder and explained that as long as ownership had not formally changed and they were simply acting as managers under the existing owner, they could continue to operate on the current license for now. He then clarified that the newly submitted information would be reviewed, and if questions remained unresolved by the next Liquor Commission meeting, the case would return to the Commission in April. However, if the information was found satisfactory or supplemented to resolve concerns, the application could

move forward to the City Council's April 13th meeting.

Commissioner Brady confirmed that, if the Commission adopted a pending motion with conditions—requiring review of the financials by the Clerk Department, Legal review, and his own review as Liquor Commissioner—then, assuming all those reviews were satisfactorily, the application could still be forwarded from the Commission to the full City Council for consideration.

Mr. Boyle asked what the hours of operation were. Mr. Harris answered that the hours would be 4:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily since they could not use the back room.

Asst. Chief Williams asked if the intention was to use the back room. Mr. Harris explained that they were waiting for further guidance from the Fire Inspector, who indicated another specialist would review the Sprinkler Code requirements. He stated that their hope was that only the back room will need a sprinkler system installed, rather than having to retrofit the entire restaurant.

Asst. Chief Williams asked what the back room would be used for, if it were operational. Mr. Harris explained that they wanted to use the back room as an extension of the main restaurant, serving additional food and drinks there in a more casual, "sporty" space with pool tables, dart boards, and TVs. He noted that customers had said the front dining area feels too formal and quiet, and some even asked if they needed to dress up, so this back area would give patrons a place to relax more. He added that they agreed to take over the location largely because they believed the back room could be used this way, and felt it was misrepresented to them.

Asst. Chief Williams responded that the proposed back room—serving alcohol and housing pool tables and gaming machines—sounded more like a bar operation and asked how late they planned to keep that space open at night, especially given that the restaurant was in a residential neighborhood. Mr. Harris explained that on weekdays they would likely keep the same hours they had now, but on weekends, if there was a crowd staying and actively buying food, drinks, and using gaming machines, they would want to remain open in the back room until 1:00 or 2:00 a.m.

Commissioner Brady noted there were still unknowns about future hours, but clarified that currently the restaurant was allowed to be open until 9:00 p.m. on both weekdays and weekends, and that this would remain the limit unless the owners returned to the Liquor Commission to formally request different hours.

Mr. Boyle clarified that the license being considered would limit operations to a 9:00 p.m. closing time and if the financials were approved, the Commission's positive recommendation to Council would include that 9:00 p.m. closing condition. Mr. Harris asked whether they could be allowed later weekend hours as requested on their application and explained that with new ownership and a possible initial surge of customers, they might want extended weekend closing times when they first open under the new arrangement. Commissioner Brady noted that the only way to remove the condition would be to reappear at Commission to request removal.

Commissioner Brady reiterated that the Commission's next step was to place the application in a pending status, contingent on review of the financials and any other required documents by Legal and the Clerk Department. He then explained that if that review was unfavorable, the application would not move forward and the Applicants would have to return to the Liquor Commission; if it was favorable, the Commission would recommend the license to the City Council for the April 13th meeting. He stated that in either case, the closing time would

remain 9:00 p.m. for now, and any request to extend hours would have to come back to the Liquor Commission after the license and financial issues were resolved.

Mr. Harris asked if there was a timeline for when the review of financials would be completed. Commissioner Brady explained that the reviews of the financials and related documents must be completed before the City Council's April 13th meeting and emphasized he did not want that review to happen at the last minute. He stated that Legal, the Clerk Department, and he as Liquor Commissioner would work quickly to complete the review and inform the Applicants whether the outcome was favorable. He explained that otherwise, if no action would be taken, the application would have to come back to the Liquor Commission in April.

Commissioner Brady asked if there was anyone in the audience present to speak for or against the item.

Michael Garrison, after being sworn, address the Commission. Mr. Garrison confirmed with the Applicant that package sales was being requested. Mr. Harris answered yes and noted that customers had asked to take home wine, so he wanted to have that as an option.

Commissioner Brady asked if package sales were part of the existing license and clarified that his request was only for packaged wine and no other types of alcohol. Mr. Harris answered no and said his only intention was for packaged wine. Mrs. Lara clarified that the current license being requested would be RAPS, which would allow for the package sale of all types of alcohol, and if the applicant chose to only sell a certain type of alcohol, that would be their choice, but the license would allow for all types.

Mr. Boyle added that because the underlying license class was "restaurant – all types of alcohol," package sales would, by default, match that classification and allow all types of alcohol for carryout unless an additional condition was placed on the license to restrict it. He then explained that even though Mr. Harris had said he only intended to sell wine, the license type they were requesting could legally permit package sales of all alcoholic beverages unless specifically limited.

Mr. Garrison explained that nearby residents were worried that allowing package alcohol sales would draw more foot traffic into the area. He noted there was a park and a golf course across the street that hosted a large July 3rd fireworks event, where there had already been past problems with people consuming alcohol on the premises. He stated that because of these concerns, he did not support having package sales in that neighborhood.

Commissioner Brady asked again if package sales were part of the existing license. Mrs. Lara stated they were not.

Mr. Boyle suggested a possible compromise of limiting any package sales to beer and wine only—consistent with what Mr. Harris said he intended to sell—though he acknowledged he did not know whether that would fully address the neighborhood's concerns.

Mr. Harris restated that he did not intend to sell anything except wine by the package.

Commissioner Brady stated that, given the outstanding reviews needed from the Clerk Department and Legal, he was prepared to move forward with a motion—if seconded—to recommend the license without any package liquor sales for now. He noted the applicants could return later to request package sales but felt that initially demonstrating to the neighborhood that they will operate responsibly, without carryout alcohol, was more important than risking a likely denial at the City Council level at this time.

Mr. Garrison responded that he would definitely support that approach and said he would be willing to return and work with the future owners to discuss what longer-term plans for the business should look like.

Mr. Harris was agreeable to the condition.

Commissioner Brady closed the Public Hearing at 5:48 p.m.

Commissioner Brady made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bedeker, to positively recommend the Item to Council with the following conditions: (1) package liquor is removed from the request; (2) pending favorable review by staff of financial and other necessary documents; and (3) that the establishment closes at 9:00 p.m. daily.

Commissioner Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Bedeker

Motion carried.

New Business

No New Business to discuss.

Adjournment

Commissioner Brady made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bedeker, to adjourn the meeting.

AYES: Brady; Bedeker

Motion carried (viva voce).

The meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

ATTEST



Dan Brady

Ashley Lara

Dan Brady, Commissioner

Ashley Lara, Records & Licensing Specialist



FW: Revery Bloomington, LLC Liquor License Application - RESPONSE REQUIRED

From George Boyle <gboyle@CityBlm.org>
Date Tue 3/10/2026 3:05 PM
To Ashley Lara <alara@CityBlm.org>; Paul Williams <pwilliams@CityBlm.org>

From: Leslie Yocum <lyocum@cityblm.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2026 1:24 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Cc: George Boyle <gboyle@CityBlm.org>; Ashley Lara <alara@CityBlm.org>; Amanda Stutsman <astutsman@cityblm.org>
Subject: RE: Revery Bloomington, LLC Liquor License Application - RESPONSE REQUIRED

We need financials or other similar documentation including assets/liabilities for all the businesses proposed to be owners/applicants under the requested license application. The purpose of the review is so that the Liquor Commission (and later potentially Council) can assess the financial viability of the businesses/ownership.



Leslie Yocum
City Clerk
309-434-2509 Ext. 6
lyocum@cityblm.org
The Government Center
City Clerk Department
115 E. Washington St. Ste. 103
Bloomington, IL 61701

[Book time to meet with me](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2026 1:15 PM
To: Leslie Yocum <lyocum@cityblm.org>
Subject: Re: Revery Bloomington, LLC Liquor License Application - RESPONSE REQUIRED

So we are needing to submit all assets (owned equipment) and liabilities (expenses, vendors ect) for the business we purchased?

On Thu, Mar 5, 2026, 12:23 PM Leslie Yocum <lyocum@cityblm.org> wrote:

Good afternoon,

I'm reaching out in regard to your liquor license application going before the Liquor Commission on Tuesday, March 10, 2026. In reviewing items for the Commission meeting I

saw that we don't have adequate financials on file for the proposed businesses. The Code requires that "the financial responsibility of the applicant" be considered. All that we have on file currently is a POS (Point of Sale) Financial Report for Revery Bloomington, LLC from November of 2025. We kindly request that financials addressing both assets and liabilities of all applicant/businesses be provided as soon as possible.

Respectfully,
Leslie



Leslie Yocum
City Clerk
309-434-2509 Ext. 6
lyocum@cityblm.org
The Government Center
City Clerk Department
115 E. Washington St. Ste. 103
Bloomington, IL 61701

[Book time to meet with me](#)