



**Minutes
Liquor Commission - Regular Session
Tuesday, April 14, 2026 - 4:00 PM**

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

Roll Call

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

Staff Advisors

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

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

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 Jordan 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 Meister directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Meister; Jordan; 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 Singh Munder, Inc. d/b/a Munder Foodmart, located at 1801 S. Veteran's Pkwy., Requesting Approval of an Increase in

Classification from a Class GPBS (Gas Station Grocery Convenience Store, Beer & Wine Only, and Sunday Sales) to a Class GPAS (Gas Station Grocery Convenience Store, All Types of Alcohol, and Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

Commissioner Meister opened the Public Hearing at 4:02 p.m.

Gurmeet Kaur, Owner of Singh Munder, Inc. (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Ms. Kaur noted that she was there to change from a Class GPBS to a Class GPAS liquor license.

Commissioner Meister asked if there were any other changes. Ms. Kaur answered no.

Commissioner Bedeker asked Ms. Kaur to confirm that they had appeared before the Commission the previous month and that their liquor license for a GPBS had already been approved at that time. He then clarified that the Applicant was now requesting a change to allow all types of liquor and followed up by asking what prompted the decision to move from the previously approved, more limited license classification to the broader one. Ms. Kaur explained that they just wanted to meet high demands and increase business revenue.

Leslie Yocum, City Clerk, explained that the Applicant had initially applied to sell beer and wine only, later sharing they had intended to apply for a license to sell all types of alcohol. She noted that by the time the Applicant realized the need for the change the application notice had already been sent to the surrounding area. Changing at that stage would have caused the need for re-noticing and, ultimately, a significant delay in the Applicant getting licensed. The Applicant chose to proceed with the beer and wine application, get that approved first, and then come back right away to request the broader, all types of liquor license.

George Boyle, Asst. Corporation Counsel, explained that this request was considered an increase in liquor license classification, which could mean more alcohol sales or sales of stronger types of alcohol. He stated that because of that impact, the City wanted to ensure the community received proper notice.

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

Commissioner Meister closed the Public Hearing at 4:06 p.m.

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

Commissioner Meister directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Meister; Jordan; Bedeker

Motion carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5. B. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Braize, LLC, d/b/a Empire Coffee, located at 1406 E. Empire St., Requesting Approval of a Change in Ownership for their Class RBS (Restaurant, Beer & Wine Only, and Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

Commissioner Meister opened the Public Hearing at 4:06 p.m.

Jacob Sutton, proposed owner of Braize, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Sutton explained that this was a change of ownership and that he was excited about taking over the business. He stated that the opportunity arose and, having been around coffee his entire life, he was enthusiastic about running the shop and serving more coffee.

Commissioner Meister asked if anything major would change with the business. Mr. Sutton stated nothing would change.

Asst. Corporation Counsel George Boyle asked if the establishment would continue to have video gaming machines and if Mr. Sutton was aware of the 50/50 rule. Mr. Sutton answered yes.

Commissioner Jordan asked if Mr. Sutton had worked at the location previously. Mr. Sutton explained that he had been working at the business for the past few months and during that time, several other employees had left for coffee jobs in Chicago or moved back home, so he had been covering a lot of shifts and was there nearly every day.

Mr. Boyle asked if Mr. Sutton had experience selling alcohol anywhere else. Mr. Sutton noted that this would be his first real experience selling alcohol and explained that, aside from the last few months working there, he had not done this before, but he was properly prepared because he already held his BASSET Certification and food safety license. Mr. Boyle asked for an estimate on how many employees they expected to have. Mr. Sutton stated he expected to have about eight employees at the location, but noted they were currently understaffed. Mr. Boyle asked what the hours of operation would be. Mr. Sutton was unsure of the hours listed on the application, but noted that they would not change from the current hours.

Ashley Lara, Records & Licensing Specialist, noted that the application request included hours from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. every day.

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

Commissioner Meister closed the Public Hearing at 4:10 p.m.

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

Commissioner Meister directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Meister; Jordan; Bedeker

Motion carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5. C. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Vedanta Hospitality, LLC, d/b/a Ramada by Wyndham, located at 919 Maple Hill Rd., Requesting Approval of a Class PBS (Package, Beer & Wine Only, and Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

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

Vishal Patel, Manager of Vedanta Hospitality, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Patel explained he was appearing to request a liquor license for the hotel limited to beer and wine only, in order to increase revenue and improve the

business.

Commissioner Meister asked if there had been a liquor license at the location before. Mr. Patel answered no. Commissioner Meister then asked if employees selling alcohol would be BASSET Certified, explained what BASSET was, and noted that anyone selling alcohol would be required to be BASSET Certified. Mr. Patel said okay.

Commissioner Jordan asked if applicants for liquor licenses had to have BASSET Certification completed before the Liquor Commission could approved. Leslie Yocum, City Clerk, explained that it would not have to be done before approval, but that a license would not be issued until proof of Certification was provided.

Asst. Corporation George Boyle asked if the Applicant planned to sell packaged alcohol and confirmed whether alcohol would be poured or served. Mr. Patel answered yes to selling packaged alcohol and stated that no one would pour or serve.

Asst. Police Chief Paul Williams asked whether the hotel had any outdoor areas, such as a patio, where alcohol might be taken outside, and confirmed that alcohol service would remain inside the building. Mr. Patel stated that it would remain in the building only. Asst. Chief Williams then asked if the point-of-sale area was covered by a camera to record transactions. Mr. Patel answered yes.

Building Official Chris McAllister explained that City Fire Inspectors have had trouble reaching the hotel to complete required inspections and offered to provide additional contact information after the meeting so they could successfully coordinate and schedule inspections.

Mr. Boyle noted that granting the liquor license was conditional on successfully passing all required inspections and wanted both the Applicant and the public to clearly understand that the license could not be issued until those inspections were passed.

Leslie Yocum, City Clerk clarified that, regardless of whether the Commission formally adds conditions about BASSET certification or inspections, both would still be required and must be completed before a liquor license could be issued.

Commissioner Meister confirmed that the Applicant understood BASSET training documentation and that a fire inspection must be completed before the license could be issued, and that issuance would occur only after City Council approval.

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

Commissioner Meister closed the Public Hearing at 4:16 p.m.

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

Commissioner Meister directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Meister; Jordan; Bedeker

Motion carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5. D. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Luther Oaks, Inc., located at 601 Lutz Rd., Requesting Approval of 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 Meister opened the Public Hearing at 4:17 p.m.

Pete Weidman, Executive Director of Luther Oaks, Inc. (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission.

Mr. Weidman explained that Luther Oaks had held a liquor license for several years, but a recent change in culinary management led to the previous director failing to renew the license. He explained that he had now taken over leadership of their Culinary Department and the Luther Oak's community and had submitted a new application to reinstate the license. He noted that operations were unchanged and that the same BASSET-trained staff were in place and they would be sure to complete the required inspections.

Asst. Corporation George Boyle noted that Legal had no previous issues with the location.

Leslie Yocum, City Clerk, noted there was an outstanding agreement between the City and Luther Oaks related to Lutz Road, as mentioned in the Clerk's memo. She explained that staff routinely reviewed any unresolved City matters when evaluating applications and wanted to ensure the Commission was aware of this issue. Mr. Weidman explained that Lutheran Life Communities, the parent company of Luther Oaks, had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on February 4, 2025, but successfully emerged from bankruptcy at the end of March 2026. He noted they were now working with vendors to address any outstanding payments/commitments, and that all residents had been fully reimbursed for any entrance fees owed. He added that they were looking forward to future expansion plans tied to the Lutz Road agreement and were enthusiastic about their ongoing partnership with the City.

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

Commissioner Meister closed the Public Hearing at 4:19 p.m.

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

Commissioner Meister directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Meister; Jordan; Bedeker

Motion carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5. E. Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Four Seasons Association, Inc., d/b/a Four Seasons Legacy Center, located at 904 Four Season Rd., Requesting Approval of a Class CAS (Clubs, All Types of Alcohol, and Sunday Sales) Liquor License. (Recommended Motion: The Public Hearing proceeds to determine whether the Application meets liquor licensure requirements.)

Commissioner Meister opened the Public Hearing at 4:19 p.m.

Tony Maier, President and CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of Four Seasons Association (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission.

Mr. Maier explained that the organization had served the Bloomington-Normal community for over 60 years as a locally owned, community-focused facility dedicated to health, wellness, and meaningful connections. He noted they had recently converted one of their original buildings

into the Legacy Center, intended for community events, family gatherings, and special programs, and that the liquor license request was presented as an extension of this vision, which would enable them to serve alcohol at private and community events while generating additional revenue to reinvest in facilities and programming. He emphasized their commitment to professional, responsible operations, full compliance with local regulations, and maintaining the high standards the community expects.

Commissioner Meister clarified that, as proposed, nothing substantial about the operation was changing—the facility would be used as an event space, and the liquor license was intended to support that use. She then asked what the operating hours were. Mr. Maier stated they were open 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and would open for special events on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Commissioner Meister asked if staff were BASSET Certified. Mr. Maier noted that a few staff were already trained and that they would be getting more trained as well.

Commissioner Bedeker asked for clarification on the location of the establishment. Mr. Maier explained that alcohol service would be centered in the café area, and that, during the application process, staff had him clearly mark in green on the submitted materials all specific areas where alcohol would be allowed, depending on where events are held.

Commissioner Jordan clarified that alcohol would only be used for special events. Mr. Maier confirmed.

Asst. Corporation Counsel George Boyle asked what type of events would be held. Mr. Maier answered that they would have recreational types of events, such as pickleball, basketball, and volleyball. He then noted that they had requests for family reunion types of events as well.

Building Official Chris McAllister explained that the gymnasiums were originally designed and evaluated to be used as gym spaces, which carried a relatively low occupant load. He further explained that large assembly events, such as weddings or big family reunions, could significantly increase the number of people in those spaces, and that higher occupancy had not yet been evaluated. He noted that, as discussed with the Fire Inspector, holding those larger types of events in the gyms would require a formal change-of-use review by his Department to ensure the spaces could safely accommodate the crowd, considering exits, fire suppression systems, and other safety requirements. Mr. Maier noted a fire inspection had been completed.

Mr. McAllister confirmed that a fire inspection had been completed, but only for the current use of the gym, not larger occupancy (headcount) events. He explained that configuring the space for large events, such as weddings, would significantly increase occupancy, and that higher loads have not yet been evaluated. He then recommended that, until a formal change-of-use process could be completed, large assembly-type events should not be held in the gymnasiums. He stated that the café and similar areas appeared acceptable under current use conditions.

Commissioner Meister confirmed that the main concern was not that a fire inspection had not been done, but that the allowable occupancy for the gymnasium areas had not yet been evaluated for larger events. Mr. McAllister agreed and confirmed that, as the Fire Inspector previously explained to the Applicant, they would need to go through a formal change-of-use process if they wanted the gymnasium to be treated and used as an event space with higher occupancy.

Mr. Boyle explained that using the gym for activities like basketball was very different from

using it for banquets or parties and that those larger “assembly” events typically involved many more people, so they required a different type of fire-safety and occupancy analysis than a standard gym use.

Commissioner Bedeker noted that much of the discussion had drifted into hypotheticals about future large events. He acknowledged that, if Four Seasons wanted to host those types of events later, they would need to meet all Code requirements, but clarified that the current application was for serving alcohol in the café area, and that the broader conversation about gym use arose from questions about possible future uses. Mr. Maier confirmed.

Commissioner Meister confirmed that the café area—already clearly identified in the application as the primary alcohol service area—was not in dispute. She asked Mr. McAllister to confirm that if the Applicant later wanted to expand events of larger capacities into the gymnasiums, they could return at that time to have occupancy and safety for those spaces formally evaluated. Mr. McAllister stated that he did not object to alcohol being consumed in the gymnasiums for typical athletic uses—such as people playing basketball or pickleball who may also have drinks in those spaces—as long as it fit within current occupancy loads and safety limits. He explained that his concern was that if large events like weddings or big parties were to be held in the gyms, which significantly increased occupancy and raised safety and Code issues, additional processes were necessary.

Michael Butts, Attorney for Four Seasons Association (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Butts clarified that much of the discussion with Mr. McAllister was not about the liquor license itself, but about ensuring Four Seasons was in full compliance with the Fire Code and noted that while fire safety was important and related to alcohol service, the occupancy and Code-compliance questions were technically a separate issue from the Commission’s decision to grant the liquor license. Mr. McAllister reiterated that he had no objection to alcohol being served or consumed in the gym spaces under their current, lower occupancy uses. He explained that his concern was specifically with alcohol service during large events in those areas, which could create safety and Code issues. He stated that any plans for those larger events could be addressed later through a formal change-of-use process.

Mr. Boyle suggested that, if the license was approved, the City and Four Seasons should clarify in writing which types of events and which spaces were permitted for alcohol use. He noted that Mr. McAllister was comfortable with alcohol in gym spaces for athletic activities, but not for banquet-style events, and proposed working with Mr. Butts to draft language—attached as a condition when the matter goes to Council—that clearly defined allowable uses. He believed this would give the licensee clear guidance on what is permitted and provide the City with a solid basis for enforcement.

Commissioner Meister clarified that, as the application currently stood, alcohol service was specifically outlined in the café area and explained that if the Commission approved the license, it would be based on alcohol being served there. She then stated that if Four Seasons later wanted to host larger events or expand alcohol service beyond the café or the gymnasiums low-capacity limits, they would then work with Mr. McAllister to review occupancy and safety requirements before moving forward. Mr. Boyle responded that he understood the café was defined as the service area on the application, but emphasized that the Commission also needed clarity on where alcohol may be possessed or consumed, not just where it would be served.

Mr. Maier noted that the consumption areas were outlined in the application.

Mr. Boyle confirmed that the approved possession and consumption areas did include

the gymnasiums and stated that having specific, written detail about where alcohol could be possessed and consumed would benefit both the licensee and the City by avoiding confusion in the future.

Ashley Lara, Records & Licensing Specialist, clarified that the alcohol consumption areas identified in the application included the café, the hallway directly adjacent to the café, and all three gymnasium spaces (including the slightly lower-level gym). She noted that, if the license was granted the license, patrons would be allowed to consume alcohol in all of those designated areas.

Mr. Butts noted that, there would be sufficient time before the Council meeting for Four Seasons to meet with Mr. McAllister and his staff to review any issues and ensure all consumption areas were in full compliance with the Fire Code.

Commissioner Meister explained that, as written, the application would allow alcohol consumption in the gymnasiums. She stated that, if the Commission voted to advance the request, a stipulation should be added requiring Four Seasons to work with Mr. McAllister to resolve occupancy and capacity concerns before the item goes to City Council on May 11, 2026.

City Clerk Yocum clarified with Mr. McAllister that the current occupancy allowed in the gyms was low and he explained that as a gym, the space was calculated at about 50 sq. ft. per person, but if it were to be used as a dance floor or similar event space, that standard spacing dropped to about 5 sq. ft. per person. He noted he does not expect Four Seasons to reach those extreme levels with their intended use but emphasized that large events could dramatically increase the number of people in the space and therefore have major safety implications.

City Clerk Yocum stated that the license could proceed based on the gymnasiums' existing, relatively low occupancy limits, so long as Four Seasons understood those limits and if they later decided to use the gyms for higher-capacity events such as banquets or weddings, they would then need to work with Mr. McAllister and his Department on a change-of-use review and have the space re-evaluated. Mr. McAllister agreed.

Commissioner Bedeker noted that the proposed condition stated that the gymnasiums could not be used as larger capacity event spaces until a formal change-of-use was completed with the Building Safety Division. He emphasized he did not want to be misleading and was checking that the language was acceptable to the Applicant.

Mr. Butts explained that while Four Seasons had hosted events like family reunions in the space, larger events such as weddings would create very different occupancy demands and might require different fire suppression, exits, and signage. He emphasized that such high-capacity events were not part of the current plan or application and were only hypothetical future possibilities, likely not occurring within the next 6-12 months. He confirmed that they understood that if they eventually desired to hold events like weddings with formal seating, they would need to ensure the building complied with Fire Code and would need to obtain approval from the Building Safety Division. He noted that the discussion had drifted into future scenarios beyond the immediate request.

Mr. McAllister reiterated that he was comfortable with the license moving forward and with alcohol being used or consumed in the gymnasiums under their current, low occupancy limits. He explained that his recommendation was that any move to use the gyms for larger assembly-type events would require Four Seasons to come back to the Building Safety Division for review and approval.

Mr. Boyle asked how "large events" would be defined so the Applicant clearly understood the limits. He noted that the conversation began with using the gym as an event space, but then shifted to identifying certain types of events that would not be permitted without different occupancy rules, and he wanted a clear standard to distinguish those higher-capacity events. Mr. McAllister responded that, for now, they could use the current gymnasium occupant load as the upper limit. He noted that this still provided a fairly large capacity for short-term use, while clearly marking the threshold beyond which a different review would be required.

Mr. Boyle agreed that using the existing gym occupancy limit as the cap made sense and noted that staff could inform Four Seasons of the exact number. He explained that his goal was to ensure everyone clearly understood what was allowed under the license so the licensee did not inadvertently violate the rules, and so the City can easily determine whether any observed event complies or not.

Mr. Maier assured the Commission that he would contact the City before any big events to gain approval.

Asst. Police Chief Williams noted that the Police would not like to see large parties.

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

Commissioner Meister closed the Public Hearing at 4:43 p.m.

Commissioner Bedeker made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jordan, to positively recommend the Item to Council with the condition that all events meet current occupancy loads unless otherwise approved by the Development Services Department.

Commissioner Meister directed the Clerk to call roll:

AYES: Meister; Jordan; Bedeker

Motion carried.

New Business

No New Business was discussed.

Adjournment

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

AYES: Meister; Jordan; Bedeker

Motion carried (viva voce).

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

ATTEST



Dan Brady, Commissioner



Leslie Smith-Yocum, City Clerk

