



**Minutes
Liquor Commission - Regular Session
Tuesday, September 9, 2025 - 4:00 PM**

The Liquor Commission convened in regular session in the Government Center Boardroom at 4:00 PM. Commissioner Brady called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Lindsey Meister	Commissioner	Present
Dan Brady	Commissioner	Present
Sreenivas Poondru	Commissioner	Absent
Michael Jordan	Commissioner	Present, Not-Voting

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

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 Meister made a motion, Seconded by Commissioner Brady, to carry the approval of the August 12, 2025, minutes to the October 14, 2025, Liquor Commission Meeting to allow Commissioner Poondru to be present for voting.

Item 4. A. Consideration and Action on Approving the August 12, 2025, Regular Liquor Commission Meeting Minutes. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

Commissioner Brady directed the clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Meister

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 by Kobe Ramen Pho & Poke, LLC, located at 1505 N. Veteran's Parkway, Suites A & B, Requesting Approval of the Creation of a 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 Brady opened the Public Hearing at 4:08 p.m.

Ryan Martin and Eric Chen, Owners of Kobe Ramen Pho & Poke, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Asst. Corporation Counsel George Boyle asked the applicants to provide details about how a liquor license would fit with their business plan. Mr. Chen noted that their other restaurants with beer and wine licenses have been successful, and they believed this type of license was the best fit for their new noodle and sushi restaurant. He explained they felt that offering beer, wine, and sake would pair well with the cuisine, which would make a full liquor license unnecessary. Mr. Boyle Mr. Chen to describe the experiences they had with their other businesses in town. Mr. Chen stated that he was involved in management with Kobe Hibachi Steakhouse & Sushi as well. Mr. Boyle noted that there had been no issues with that location historically.

Commissioner Meister asked if everyone serving alcohol would be BASSET Certified and confirmed the closing hours requested, which were listed on the application as 8:30 p.m. on Sundays through Thursdays and 9:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Mr. Chen answered yes to both. Commissioner Meister asked what the capacity was and noted. Mr. Chen explained that the total seating capacity was 64 and the total occupancy was about 80, including employees.

Staff had no concerns.

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 4:14 p.m.

Commissioner Meister made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brady, to positively recommend the Item to Council contingent on all owners successfully passing background checks.

Commissioner Brady directed the clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Meister

Motion carried.

The following item was presented:

Item 5. B. Continued Public Hearing and Action on an Application from Nitelife Elements, LLC., d/b/a Wild Oak Social, to be located at 612 N. Main St., Requesting Approval of the Creation of a Class TAS (Tavern, 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 Brady opened the Public Hearing at 4:14 p.m.

Richard Marvel, Attorney of Nitelife Elements, LLC (Applicant), after being sworn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Marvel explained that the liquor license application was continued from a previous hearing due to incomplete financial information, which had since been updated. He described the business location's history of several unsuccessful

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ownerships, and detailed the experience of Eric Dix, the proposed partial owner, who had an extensive background in nightclub management and consulting. He emphasized the owners' commitment to active on-site management and outlined their plans for the new tavern, which included hiring staff and using third-party security, with the goal of running a safe and well-managed establishment. He explained that Mr. Dix worked with Nick Hurley for around 12 years, when the location was called Drifters, and noted that he handled operations and employee management, among other tasks, during that time. He explained that the business hours would be Sunday to Thursday, 4 p.m. to 1 a.m., and Friday and Saturday, 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. He mentioned that the owners worked with the Health and Development Services Departments on inspections. He stated that the business planned to hire 15 to 20 employees and would use a third-party security company to ensure the safety of patrons and proper identification checks. He stressed that the owners would be actively involved in managing the venue on-site, rather than delegating to outside managers, and all staff serving alcohol would be Bassett trained. He expressed confidence in the owners' abilities and noted that based on his experience, they were the most capable group to manage this location safely and effectively in recent years.

Commissioner Meister asked if the numbers of employees mentioned would include the outside security. Mr. Marvel answered yes and mentioned that the security company would be in charge of hiring. Commissioner Meister asked if the security company was based out of Bloomington and if the company had any part in the previous ownership. Mr. Marvel answered yes and explained that there was no commonality of ownership or security between any of the prior three owners up until Mr. Hurley at Drifter's and noted that Mr. Dix was not an owner at that point and only an employee of Nick Hurley.

Mr. Dix and Elizabeth Overholt, owners of Nitelife Elements, LLC., were sworn in by Leslie Yocum, City Clerk.

Commissioner Meister asked what the capacity of the space was. Mr. Dix explained that they had an inspection but were not set up, so the capacity was not determined yet.

Commissioner Meister addressed potential concerns of other downtown bar owners and asked if there would be bottle service or any other business practices that should be considered. Mr. Dix answered that there would be no bottle service.

Chris McAllister, Building Official, noted that in reference to the occupancy, it would be determined once the layout was confirmed and confirmed that it was a work in progress. Assistant Corporation Counsel George Boyle asked if there was a range of occupancy that could be provided. Mr. McAllister stated that the estimate would be less than 300.

Mr. Boyle asked if any type of entertainment would be provided and if so, what kind. Mr. Dix noted that they would look at DJs, live bands, karaoke, and other similar types of entertainment.

Mr. Boyle asked if there would be cameras set up in the establishment. Mr. Dix answered yes.

Mr. Boyle asked Ms. Overholt if she had any experience in the alcohol or bar business. Ms. Overholt answered no and noted that she had worked in operations.

Asst. Police Chief Paul Williams asked about the type of security cameras the new owners planned to install and referenced past problems where previous owners removed cameras and were reluctant to share footage with the police. He noted that the concern was whether the new cameras would be compatible with police systems. Mr. Marvel acknowledged

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concerns about previous difficulties with security cameras and explained that the new owners intended to work closely with the police to ensure the new camera system would be compatible and accessible.

Asst. Chief Williams asked if the back door of the premises would be used for exits and entry or if they planned to use it as an emergency entrance. Mr. Dix stated that it would be used for emergencies only.

Asst. Chief Williams asked if cameras would be installed at the front of the building to monitor lines and prevent altercations outside. Mr. Dix confirmed they would have cameras there.

Asst. Chief Williams asked about how the security staff would be vetted and whether the business would screen them directly or rely on the third-party security company to handle all hiring and training responsibilities. Mr. Dix explained that the company had their own licensing and training that would be done. Asst. Chief Williams asked what the specific roles of the security staff would be. Mr. Dix explained that their approach to security was based on respect and communication and that they aimed to de-escalate situations rather than create conflict.

He noted that security staff were encouraged to talk with patrons, clearly explain the rules, and resolve issues calmly, rather than resorting to force or simply removing people from the premises. Asst. Police Chief Williams asked how many security people would be hired. Mr. Dix stated that currently, there were about four security staff and they planned to hire and train additional team members to assist them. He explained that he intended to train the new staff personally to ensure they followed his approach to handling situations, while they also worked alongside the methods used by the third-party security company.

Asst. Police Chief Williams asked when they planned to open. Mr. Marvel stated that they hoped to be considered for approval by the City Council in the second meeting of September. He explained that they hope to be open in time for upcoming college events, despite ongoing construction. He emphasized their willingness to collaborate with the police department on security procedures and that they would work closely with law enforcement to address any concerns efficiently. Asst. Chief Williams asked the applicants to be in contact with him so they could ensure they provided any updated emergency contact information.

Mr. Boyle asked if camera equipment had been purchased already. Mr. Dix noted that they had some cameras, but they were discussing the purchase of more.

Mr. Boyle asked for the name of the security company. Mr. Dix noted that the company was Brett Sams (*City staff later determined that Mr. Sams runs a company titled Sentinel Protective Services*).

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 4:35 p.m.

Commissioner Meister made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Brady, to positively recommend the Item to Council contingent on all owners successfully passing background checks.

Commissioner Brady directed the clerk to call roll:

AYES: Brady; Meister

Motion carried.

5. C. First Appearance on a Citation Issued to MGN Foods Inc. d/b/a West Market Groceries, located at 301 W. Market St. Unit B, for Violating Chapter 6, Section 26(a) of the Bloomington City Code Relating to Selling Alcohol to a Minor. (Recommended Motion: N/A)

Asst. Corporation Counsel Boyle explained that the business received a citation for selling alcohol to an underage person during a police compliance check. He reported that it was their first violation, they admitted to the offense, paid a \$600 fine, and an agreed order was entered, so no further action was needed.

5. D. First Appearance on a Citation Issued to Mac's Convenience Stores, LLC, d/b/a Circle K #4701210, for Violating Chapter 6, Section 26(a) of the Bloomington City Code Relating to Selling Alcohol to a Minor. (Recommended Motion: N/A)

Asst. Corporation Counsel Boyle explained that the business received its first citation for selling alcohol to a minor during a police compliance check. He reported that the business admitted to the offense, paid a \$600 fine, and an agreed order was entered, so no further action was needed.

5. E. First Appearance on a Citation Issued to MCTH, Inc., d/b/a Lucky Sevens Bar & Grill, located at 1804 S. Hershey Rd., Unit 9, for Violating Chapter 6, Section 26(a) of the Bloomington City Code Relating to Selling Alcohol to a Minor. (Recommended Motion: N/A)

Asst. Corporation Counsel Boyle explained that the business received its first citation for selling alcohol to a minor during a police compliance check. He reported that the business admitted to the offense, paid a \$600 fine, and an agreed order was entered, so no further action was needed.

New Business

No New Business was discussed.

Adjournment

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

AYES: Brady; Meister

Motion carried (viva voce).

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

City of Bloomington



Dan Brady

Dan Brady, Liquor Commissioner

Leslie Smith-Yocum

Leslie Smith-Yocum, City Clerk