



# Haverhill

License Commission, Room 118  
Phone: 978-420-3630 Fax: 978-373-8490  
nflynn@haverhillma.gov

## LICENSE COMMISSION MINUTES Thursday March 5, 2026, at 6 PM – Room 202 Virtual and In-Person Meeting

*Attending: Chairperson Laura Angus, Commissioner Linda Koutoulas, Commissioner Patrick Driscoll, City Solicitor Associate Alexander Castro (remotely), Lt. Kevin Lynch – Haverhill Police Department, and License Commission Clerk Nicholas K. Flynn*

### 1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Before proceeding with the agenda, Chairperson Angus requested a moment of silence in honor of Joseph C. Edwards, former License Commissioner and Chairman, who passed away on February 21, 2026. The Chairperson noted he was a well-respected attorney and dedicated community member, having invested great efforts into promoting community development and safety. Mr. Edwards served on the Haverhill License Commission for 22 years.

### 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

#### 2.1 Approval of the minutes of the March 5, 2026 meeting

*Motion:* Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the minutes from the February 5, 2026 meeting.

*Second:* Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

### 3. CONTINUED BUSINESS

### 4. MISCELLANEOUS APPLICATIONS/REQUESTS

### 5. ONE DAY APPLICATIONS

### 6. ENTERTAINMENT APPLICATIONS

#### 6.1 Michelle Bechard, Proposed Manager

**Giri Haverhill, LLC**

**d/b/a TownePlace Suites / Fairfield Inn**

**401 Lowell Avenue**

**-Application for new Entertainment license for Monday – Sunday 12AM-12PM for Amplified Music, Radio, and Television**

**-Has Police Department and Entertainment Zoning approval**

Items 6.1 & 7.1 were heard together. Motions were made separately.

Catherine Stevens, Regional Director of Operations, was present for these applications. Chairperson Angus stated that the Commission had spoken to Ms. Stevens prior to the



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meeting and would amend the Entertainment license hours to 24/7, with the stipulation that music and TV be in the lobby only. The Chairperson remarked that the business had been under construction for a while – Ms. Stevens agreed and said they planned to open on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Chairperson reminded the director that the Occupancy Certificate and Food/Milk Permit were still pending, and mentioned the Commission would give “wiggle-room” with the Common Victualler hours to allow for early morning breakfast.

*Motion:* Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the new Entertainment license for Amplified Music, Radio, and Television, 24/7, in the lobby only.

*Second:* Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

## 7. COMMON VICTUALLER APPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Michelle Bechard, Proposed Manager

**Giri Haverhill, LLC**

**d/b/a TownePlace Suites / Fairfield Inn**

**401 Lowell Avenue**

**-Application for new Common Victualler license for Monday – Sunday**

**12AM-12PM**

**-Pending Certificate of Business Occupancy and Food/Milk Permit**

Items 6.1 & 7.1 were heard together. See Item 6.1

*Motion:* Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the new Common Victualler license for Monday – Sunday 12AM-12PM – pending Certificate of Business Occupancy and Food/Milk Permit.

*Second:* Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

### 7.2 Cesar Francisco Varas, Applicant

**David’s Coffee and Grill LLC**

**d/b/a David’s House Cafe and Grill**

**620 Primrose St. Unit 5**

**-Application for new Common Victualler license for Monday – Sunday 6AM-2AM**

Items 7.2 & 9.1 were heard together. Motions were made separately.



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Cesar Francisco Varas, applicant, and accountant Gary Ortiz were both present for these applications. Mr. Ortiz stated that his client had been in business for about a year and was looking for new opportunities by acquiring a liquor license. Chairperson Angus noted that the Common Victualler application had the hours of 6AM-9PM and asked for clarification on what hours the cafe would be open. Mr. Varas replied 6AM-2PM daily. The Chairperson verified that the applicant was aware that alcohol could not be served until 8AM or 10AM on Sundays – Mr. Varas confirmed so. Regarding the hours discrepancy, Mr. Ortiz clarified that Mr. Varas may be interested in extending his business hours in the future. The Commission advised that the applicant could return in the future and amend his hours but that they would approve a 2PM ending time for now. The applicant party agreed. Chairperson Angus verified if the business had any televisions or radios – Mr. Varas said no. The Chairperson advised that he would need to apply for an Entertainment license if he ever changed his mind.

Chairperson Angus asked Clerk Flynn if he had complete bank statements from the business through January – the Clerk advised he did. The Chairperson advised that the first page of the application needed to list two floors since the basement would be used for storage; she did remark its Floor Plan had been submitted. She then advised that alcohol must be purchased from an authorized MA wholesaler and reminded Mr. Varas that he could not serve alcohol until his license had been fully approved. Mr. Ortiz stated that Mr. Varas would be taking an Alcohol Service Training this week.

Commissioner Koutoulas asked Clerk Flynn about the pending requirements – he advised that Liquor Liability and TIPS certificates were still missing. Mr. Ortiz stated he would wait until the liquor license was approved to acquire the liability insurance. The Commission advised the license could not be issued until insurance is obtained.

*Motion:* Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the new Common Victualler license for Monday – Sunday 6AM-2PM.

*Second:* Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

## 8. OUTDOOR DINING APPLICATIONS



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## 9. ALCOHOL/ABCC APPLICATIONS

### 9.1 Cesar Francisco Varas, Applicant

David's Coffee and Grill LLC  
d/b/a David's House Cafe and Grill  
620 Primrose St. Unit 5

**-Application for new §12 Restaurant All-Alcoholic Beverages license for Monday – Thursday & Saturday 8AM-1AM, Friday 8AM-2AM, and Sunday 10AM-1AM**  
**-Pending Basement Floor Plan and ABCC approval**  
**-Pending Liquor Liability Insurance, Safe Service of Alcohol certificate(s), and final requirements of Abutters Notification Affidavit**

Items 7.2 & 9.1 were heard together. See Item 7.2

*Motion:* Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the new §12 Restaurant All-Alcoholic Beverages license for *Monday – Saturday 8AM-2PM* and *Sunday 10AM-2PM* – pending corrected Description of Premises & ABCC approval, Liquor Liability Insurance, Safe Service of Alcohol certificate(s), and final requirements of Abutters Notification Affidavit.

*Second:* Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

### 9.2 Michael Fields, Applicant

Kenoza Variety LLC  
d/b/a Kenoza Variety  
68 Kenoza Avenue

**-Application for Transfer of §15 Package Store Wine and Malt Beverages license from Sandra L Sarbanis, 68 Kenoza Ave, for Monday – Saturday 8AM-9PM and Sunday 10AM-9PM**  
**-Pending ABCC approval**  
**-Pending Certificate of Business Occupancy, Workers' Compensation Insurance and/or Affidavit, and Safe Service of Alcohol certificate(s)**

Michael Fields, applicant, was present for this application. Chairperson Angus asked about the applicant's experience – Mr. Fields replied he has been helping his in-laws, which includes the current license-holder, run the store for the last 10 years. The Chairperson verified if Mr. Fields was aware of MA alcohol laws and purchasing inventory from authorized sources and he said he was. She then noted that the



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application would need slight corrections regarding the Description of Premises and Financial Statement. No further comments or questions.

*Motion:* Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the Transfer of §15 Package Store Wine and Malt Beverages license for Monday – Saturday 8AM-9PM and Sunday 10AM-9PM – pending application corrections & ABCC approval, Certificate of Business Occupancy, Workers’ Compensation Insurance and/or Affidavit, and Safe Service of Alcohol certificate(s).

*Second:* Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

### **9.3 Hariohm M. Patel, Proposed Manager**

**Patel's Liquors, LLC**

**d/b/a Harrys Liquors**

**239 Lincoln Avenue**

**-Application for Change of Manager from Ankit H Patel to Hariohm M. Patel**

**-Pending ABCC approval**

**-Pending outstanding Personal Property Tax payment**

Hariohm M. Patel, proposed manager, was present for this application. Mr. Patel advised that the tax payment was deducted from his bank account the night before – Clerk Flynn said he would verify with the Treasurer’s office the following day. Chairperson Angus asked about Mr. Patel’s experience – he stated he owned the business since 2009 and Ankit Patel was his partner and nephew. No further questions.

*Motion:* Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the Change of Manager amendment to Hariohm M. Patel, pending ABCC approval and tax payment confirmation.

*Second:* Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

### **10. MOTOR VEHICLE APPLICATIONS**

### **11. CARRY IN LICENSE APPLICATIONS**



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## 12. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

### 12.1 Evan Phillips

**Adamson Industries, Corp.**  
**d/b/a Adamson Industries, Corp.**  
**45 Research Drive**

#### **-Item for Discussion: Status of Motor Vehicle Dealer License**

Brad Patnaude, corporation Treasurer, was present for this discussion. Atty. Alexander Castro, City Solicitor associate, appeared remotely on behalf of the Commission. Chairperson Angus said there was confusion regarding current business operations, noting that the business had changed ownership in 2023 and the current owners continued to sell vehicles under the Class I license originally issued to the former owners. Mr. Patnaude stated that they “acquired the existing equity [and] it was not an asset purchase agreement, so the existing business stayed in place”. Commissioner Koutoulas noted that the manager did change, and asked if the license was now Class II. Mr. Patnaude said he was not familiar with the difference – Chairperson Angus asked if they were selling new cars or used cars. Mr. Patnaude replied it was a combination of both, that it was not a major part of their business, and they do not sell retail to the general public on a regular basis. The Chairperson asked if they sell new vehicles and take old ones in – Mr. Patnaude said they sell both new and used. Commissioner Driscoll remarked that it seemed to be a matter of determining which Class was necessary.

Atty. Castro interjected to state that what really mattered is what the “principal business” is and that selling new vehicles would need to be the principal business to have a Class I license. Mr. Patnaude said it was “more often” they sell new over used. Chairperson Angus asked who they do business with, Mr. Patnaude said primarily government agencies. Atty. Castro asked if their principal business was selling new vehicles, selling old vehicles, or refurbishing vehicles – Mr. Patnaude stated it was a combination of all three. Atty. Castro advised that the statute clearly delineates the difference between Class I and Class II and either one needed to be the principal business of a licensee. Mr. Patnaude asked which had to be the principal business – Chairperson Angus and Atty. Castro replied this is what the business needed to advise. Mr. Patnaude offered a background: their business has been around for almost 40 years, they upfit and equip vehicles for various law-enforcement agencies across the country, primarily focusing on the New England area. Atty. Castro asked if he could define the term “upfitting” and Mr. Patnaude replied it typically means installing law-enforcement equipment in vehicles. Commissioner Koutoulas asked if this was



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done to both new and used cars, Mr. Patnaude said it “can be”. Atty. Castro inquired if their principal business was then upfitting new and used cars for law enforcement. Mr. Patnaude said he didn’t know if he would “characterize it that way” but said occasionally they sell the equipment together with the vehicle it’s installed in. Commissioner Driscoll commented that typically law-enforcement agencies ship vehicles they own to businesses such as Adamson Industries to be upfitted, and Mr. Patnaude said sometimes that is their business and sometimes it’s selling a vehicle as well. Commissioner Koutoulas asked if Mr. Patnaude could roughly estimate what percentage of their business was selling new cars, selling used cars, or upfitting cars. Mr. Patnaude said it was complicated to explain but offered examples. Occasionally the Haverhill Police Department will order a vehicle with equipment that Adamson will build for them, but sometimes they purchase a vehicle elsewhere and send it to Adamson only to be upfitted. Another scenario was, through “various partnerships” with manufacturers or dealerships, that the business has a vehicle on their property that they put equipment in and then sell the upfitted vehicle as one package, which would technically constitute as selling a new vehicle. Chairperson Angus verified if the used vehicles they purchased was just to remove equipment to install in new vehicles, before disposing of the used vehicle – Mr. Patnaude said that was correct. Atty. Castro asked if they ever sell any new vehicles that were not upfitted. Mr. Patnaude said “typically no” and could not recall a previous occasion. Atty. Castro referred to the comment about “possibly having a new vehicle on the lot” to be upfitted and sold, and asked if that was the “extent of the new vehicle involvement”. Mr. Patnaude said that was a “fair characterization”. Commissioner Koutoulas asked Atty. Castro which license class he believed the company should have. The attorney said he would want a “better breakdown” of the business’ operations but that it was definitely not Class I as the principal business was not selling new vehicles. He added that there was no intent to discredit the business but simply to determine which license was necessary, and that it may even be a Class III. He advised the Commission to acquire more information and documentation about the business’ model before making a determination. Commissioner Driscoll inquired if there was any distinction between classes for dealer plates, such as limitations. Atty. Castro said he was unaware but restated he believed this to be a Class III. Mr. Patnaude said the business had no issue with complying with what the determination would be but added that one of their clientele’s biggest criticisms was that they do not offer as many new vehicles for sale as their competitors, which can hurt their business. He then stated that, irrespective of what class they would operate under, the business would like to look towards selling more new vehicles in the future, if the Commission



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could accommodate it. Commissioner Driscoll said he believed this shouldn't be an issue and restated that they simply wanted to determine which class the business should operate under. Atty. Castro said there were several options available to the Commission to move forward: license suspension, license revocation, or continuing the hearing at a future date. He added that he appreciated Mr. Patnaude attending and answering questions but that an official breakdown of the business was necessary to determine the license necessary. Commissioner Koutoulas told the attorney she did not believe it would be a Class III license as it's a salvage license, and believed it would be a Class II. Atty. Castro said he would look further into the language used in the statute but believed it should be determined what percentage of vehicles upfitted and sold are new or used. Commissioner Driscoll asked if new vehicles were ever sold to the general public – Mr. Patnaude replied they did not and it's "very rare" to sell used vehicles to the public but it "is possible" and they have done so in the past. Commissioner Koutoulas asked if Mr. Patnaude could provide information on many vehicles of each category are sold – Mr. Patnaude agreed but added there was an "additional consideration" with the business being "in care" of some vehicles without owning them and needed dealer plates to move them around to different subcontractors. Atty. Castro restated it was important for the Commission to gather more information to move forward.

Mr. Patnaude inquired what the category of the original license issued was as the nature of the business hadn't "necessarily changed" in 40 years. Clerk Flynn advised that the original application filed in 2010 by the former owners was for a Class I license to specifically sell electric vehicles as an agent of a company called "Zapworld," which no longer exists. Commissioner Koutoulas remarked that the business checked off "Used Cars" on their 2024 Renewal Form. Chairperson Angus asked Atty. Castro if a business could get dealer plates as a Class III but Atty. Castro said he would need to look into it. The Chairperson asked if the attorney leaned towards Class III because the business was selling parts – the attorney explained that since these vehicles were being upfitted that they were not technically new when sold, and Class III licensees typically fix up a vehicle before reselling it. Commissioner Koutoulas said Class II licensees can do this as well. Commissioner Driscoll said that Class III seemed to be more for antique vehicles whereas these vehicles were "brand new". Atty. Castro said this business was a unique situation and that more information and time to review were required to proceed. He advised the Commission to continue the hearing. Chairperson Angus asked the attorney what exact information should be requested. Atty. Castro said there should be an official document stating the purpose of the business, as well as data on the percentages of new vehicles sold, used vehicles



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sold, and vehicles upfitted. He added that the business inherited a Class I license but that the business was no longer selling new vehicles. Mr. Patnaude countered they *were* selling new vehicles but Chairperson Angus said it was not as an agent of a recognized manufacturer. The attorney acknowledged Mr. Patnaude's point but said it did not align with the statute's language. Commissioner Driscoll stated that a Class I was for a traditional dealership such as AutoFair, but that whichever class they would eventually assign to Adamson would not impede its business. Mr. Patnaude asked for advice on how to provide the information requested or who to speak with. Commissioner Koutoulas asked that Mr. Patnaude send information to Clerk Flynn who could forward it to Atty. Castro. Commissioner Driscoll advised that the business could continue its operations for the time being.

*Motion:* Commissioner Koutoulas motions to continue the discussion during the April 2, 2026 meeting, pending receipt of further business operations information.

*Second:* Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

## 13. SHOW CAUSE HEARING

### 13.1 Aleladia Okunzuwa

Multicultural Value LLC

201 Winter Street

**-Show Cause Hearing: Alleged violation of M.G.L. Ch.138 §2 - "No person shall manufacture, with intent to sell, sell or expose or keep for sale, store, transport, import or export alcoholic beverages or alcohol, except as authorized by this chapter"**

**-Incident that occurred on or about February 12, 2026 at approximately 1PM**

Lt. Kevin Lynch presented the facts. On February 12<sup>th</sup>, the lieutenant was advised by the City Clerk's office that Health/Inspectional Services discovered alcoholic beverages on the business' shelves for sale. The lieutenant investigated the following day and confirmed there were 12 bottles of 40% and 20 bottles of 30% proof bitters. Lt. Lynch then advised the store owner that she was not allowed to sell alcohol without a liquor license and inquired where the alcohol was purchased from. The owner told him that it was either imported directly from Africa or from a vendor in New York. Commissioner Koutoulas asked if the alcohol was removed and Lt. Lynch confirmed it was all off the shelves before he left the store.



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Aleladia Okunzuwa, business owner, and Atty. Osborn N. Nzequome were present for this hearing. The attorney stated that the owner was “beside herself” and fearful since the incident, has been in business for four years, and primarily sells African goods such as cosmetics and clothes. He presented photos of said goods to the Commission. Commissioner Koutoulas asked if the party could advise where the alcohol was acquired from. The attorney said Ms. Okunzuwa “never had any intention to sell alcohol” and that in Africa, bitters was “not considered as alcohol” and used as medicine. The Commissioner advised that the bottles were labeled as alcoholic beverages – Atty. Nzequome stated the owner put them out “inadvertently”. Commissioner Driscoll stated this was serious as they did not know if the seller was certified to sell or serve alcohol. Commissioner Koutoulas stated they were concerned the alcohol had been intentionally sold to Ms. Okunzuwa without advising her it was illegal to sell it without a license. Atty. Nzequome stated she purchased it directly from Africa, New York, or from traveling vendors, and purchased it with intent for her husband to consume. He then said “this was the first time” she put alcohol on her store shelves and restated she had no intention to sell alcohol and would never reoffend again. Commissioner Koutoulas said there were many violations: buying and transferring over state lines, vendors who should never have sold to her, and selling alcohol without knowledge of laws and regulations. Atty. Nzequome restated she bought it for her husband and had no intention to sell it, but put it on her shelves after someone expressed interest in purchasing it.

Chairperson Angus interjected to point out that the photos they had received of the alcohol showed multiple bottles, not just one or two, and there was a clear intent to sell alcohol. Atty. Nzequome said he believed his client put them on the shelves without reading the labels and realizing they were alcoholic beverages. Commissioner Koutoulas said she found it hard to believe that there was no intent due to the large quantity on the shelves. The attorney restated he believed his client didn’t read the labels but agreed she was responsible for following the law. The Commissioner said the owner should know what’s on her shelves; Chairperson Angus agreed and stated this was an arrestable offense. The attorney said he and his client understood and she would never reoffend. The Chairperson said if she did, she would not return before this Commission but be arrested. She added that the Commission had no jurisdiction over this business as it does not have a liquor license, but could suggest to the City that it revoke other licenses from it, and brought in Ms. Okunzuwa to make her aware of how serious this offense was. She rhetorically asked if the owner might have sold bottles to minors if she was unaware they contained alcohol, and pointed out the high percentage of alcohol in the bottles. Commissioner Koutoulas pointed out that alcohol



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is heavily regulated and there are many associated regulations and penalties. Chairperson Angus said she might believe it was just a mistake if it were one or two bottles, and that they would have a “real problem” if they were selling them to minors. Ms. Okunzuwa took to the podium and was sworn in. Atty. Nzequome advised his client before speaking – he stated he believed there was no need for her to speak. Ms. Okunzuwa stated it was not intentional to sell the bitters as alcoholic beverages, they’ve taken everything off the shelves, and would abide by regulations going forward. Commissioner Koutoulas advised that no new §15 off-premises liquor licenses are available in Haverhill. She added that she had heard “good things” about the business. Ms. Okunzuwa inquired if there was a separate license for alcoholic beverages for medical purposes. Lt. Lynch stated that any license to sell alcohol would need to be approved by the local board and ABCC, and that any cannabis product needed approval from the Cannabis Commission.

Clerk Flynn inquired if any alcohol had been purchased in bulk from a wholesaler or if it was all purchased privately. Atty. Nzequome stated he believed it was all bought privately or from traveling African vendors. Chairperson Angus stated that the Commission had no intention to hurt the business but needed to ensure the City’s safety and that regulations are being followed, noting it would be unfair to those who were properly licensed to sell alcohol to allow others to sell without a license. She concluded by thanking Ms. Okunzuwa for attending but warned her that any future reoffense would be out of the Commission’s hands.

*Motion:* Commissioner Koutoulas motions to place the matter on file.

*Second:* Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, motion passed.

## **14. COMMUNICATIONS**

## **15. OTHER BUSINESS**



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## 16. ADJOURNMENT

*Motion:* Commissioner Driscoll motions to adjourn.

*Second:* Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

*Vote:* 3-0-0 vote unanimous, meeting adjourned at 7:01 PM.

**No Public Comment.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Nicholas K. Flynn**

**Haverhill License Commission Clerk**