



Haverhill

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

LICENSE COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday July 2, 2026, at 6 PM – Room 202

Virtual and In-Person Meeting

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

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Preceding the regular agenda, Lt. Kevin Lynch announced that, on June 11th, the Haverhill Police Department conducted some underage alcohol-compliance checks on §15 liquor licensees. The lieutenant was pleased to announce that 27 stores were checked and all 27 passed. He encouraged them to keep up the good work. The Commission was pleased to hear this as well.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

2.1 Approval of the minutes of the June 4, 2026 meeting

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2026 meeting.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

2.2 Approval of the minutes of the June 18, 2026 meeting

Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the minutes from the June 18, 2026 meeting.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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

3. CONTINUED BUSINESS

4. MISCELLANEOUS APPLICATIONS/REQUESTS

4.1 Erich J Prinz, President

River Street Petroleum, Inc.

d/b/a Haverhill Sunoco

790 River Street

-Application for KENO Monitor installation with the MA State Lottery Commission



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Erich Prinz, corporation president, was remotely present for this application. Chairperson Laliberty stated she believed everything was in order and all that was left was to approve. Clerk Flynn advised the business was an existing KENO agent and this was just to add the monitor.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the KENO Monitor for Haverhill Sunoco.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

5. ONE DAY APPLICATIONS

5.1 Melissa Cerasuolo, Applicant

L'Arche Boston North, Inc.

53 Wingate Street

-Application for One Day Liquor License - All Alcohol – Longest Table hosted at NECC on 100 Elliott St. on August 20, 2026, for the hours of 5PM to 10PM

-Has Police and Health Departments' approval

-Pending Event Permit

Melissa Cerasuolo, applicant, was present for this application. Lynette McRae was remotely present as well, on behalf of L'Arche. Clerk Flynn announced that the Event Permit had been obtained from City Council on June 30th. Chairperson Laliberty said her only question was regarding the cordoning-off of the alcohol as NECC is a wide-open campus. Ms. Cerasuolo said NECC was providing them with 18 stanchions to secure the site, located under tents in the northern quad area. The Chairperson verified if the site would be monitored and Ms. Cerasuolo confirmed they would have Police Detail. Ms. McRae spoke to advise all attendees would have a 21+ wristband, and there would be a different-colored wristband for any underage volunteers to be identified.

Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the One Day license for 100 Elliott St on August 20, 2026, for the hours of 5PM to 10PM.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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



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5.2 Joseph LeBlanc, Applicant

Team Haverhill Inc

PO Box 5034

-Application for One Day Liquor License – All Alcohol – River Ruckus Festival at Washington St Riverfront Parking Lot on September 12, 2026, for the hours of 12PM to 9PM

-Has Police and Recreation Departments' approval

-Pending Event Permit and City Council & Mayor approval

Kevin Burke, corporation president, was present for this application. Deborah Ingalls, owner of Butlers & Bars and longtime bartender for River Ruckus, was present as well. Clerk Flynn announced that the Event Permit had been obtained from City Council on June 30th. Chairperson Laliberty asked the Clerk if he had everything necessary. The Clerk said he spoke to Ms. Ingalls prior to the meeting to ask for a list of the staff that will be attending this year, which he understood would be the same as the previous year. Ms. Ingalls replied she would send a list the following week.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the One Day license for the Riverfront parking lot on September 12, 2026, for the hours of 12PM to 9PM, pending City Council & Mayor approval.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

5.3 Matthew Vogel, Applicant

Emmaus, Inc.

127 How Street

-Application for One Day Liquor License – Beer & Wine only – Cycle for Shelter Fundraiser at NECC, 100 Elliott St. on September 13, 2026, for the hours of 10AM to 5PM

-Has Police and Health Departments' approval

Eunice Ziegler, VP of Strategic Planning and Administration, was present for this application. Ms. Ziegler said this would be the event's 38th year, that a site plan of the beer tent had been submitted, that they would use Erika DeFeo as the bartender again for the fifth time, and that the tent would be on a closed-off, secure location on NECC campus. No further comments or questions.



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Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the One Day license for 100 Elliott St on September 13, 2026, for the hours of 10AM to 5PM.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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

5.4 Anna Richards, Applicant

**Haverhill Historical Society
d/b/a Buttonwoods Museum
240 Water Street**

-Application for One Day Liquor License – All Alcohol – Exhibit Opening on July 26, 2026, for the hours of 4PM to 7PM

-Has Police Department approval

Anna Richards, applicant, was present for this application. Chairperson Laliberty verified if this was the organization's first time applying for a One Day license and Ms. Richards confirmed so. The Chairperson asked for more details about the event. Ms. Richards stated Buttonwoods Museum was having a small-scale reception for an exhibit opening. The Chairperson verified if the liquor would be stored in one room and Ms. Richards confirmed so. The Chairperson advised it was important to have someone monitoring the entrance, on top of having signs, to ensure patrons would not wander off from the consumption area with alcohol. Commissioner Driscoll verified that the applicant understood that the alcohol could only be consumed in the area it was served in and the applicant confirmed so.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the One Day license for July 26, 2026, for the hours of 4PM to 7PM.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

5.5 Kim Dandurant, Applicant

**Holy Archangels Armenian Church St. Michael and St. Gabriel
1280 Boston Road**

-Application for One Day Liquor License - All Alcohol - Private Quinceañera on August 15, 2026, for the hours of 6PM to 11:30PM

-Has Police Department approval

-Pending renewed Certificate of Business Occupancy



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Kim Dandurant, applicant, was remotely present for this application. Clerk Flynn advised that Inspectional Services had provided a temporary Occupancy Certificate earlier that day, valid until August 2, 2026. Ms. Dandurant explained that the state had cancelled their lift inspection twice and she had been working with Building Commissioner Bridgewater to complete this process within the next two weeks. Chairperson Laliberty concurred this was not the church's fault. Ms. Dandurant added there would be about 175-200 adults and about 45 children at this event.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the One Day license for August 15, 2026, for the hours of 6PM to 11:30PM, pending an extended or renewed Business Occupancy.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

6. ENTERTAINMENT APPLICATIONS

6.1 Farid Abu Ghoush, Manager

**Mediterranean Pizza & Subs Corp
d/b/a Mediterranean Pizza & Subs
61 Kenoza Avenue**

-Application for Amendment of Entertainment license: Change of Corporate Structure from Sole Proprietorship to Corporation
-Pending outstanding Real Estate Taxes payments

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

Farid Abu Ghoush, manager, was remotely present for these applications. Clerk Flynn announced that all the outstanding taxes had been paid off as of July 1st. Chairperson Laliberty remarked the application seemed to be in order. No questions.

Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the Corporate Structure amendment for Mediterranean Pizza & Subs Corp.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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



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6.2 Fayez Abu Ghosh, Applicant

Mediterranean Pizza & Roast Beef LLC

d/b/a Mediterranean Pizza & Roast Beef LLC

124 South Main Street

**-Application for new Entertainment license for Sunday – Thursday 11AM-11PM
and Friday – Saturday 11AM-12AM for Radio and Television**

-Has Police Department approval

Items 6.2 & 7.2 were heard together. Motions were made separately.

Fayez Abu Ghosh, applicant, was remotely present for these applications. No comments or questions from the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the new Entertainment license for Sunday – Thursday 11AM-11PM and Friday – Saturday 11AM-12AM for Radio and Television, for Mediterranean Pizza & Roast Beef LLC.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

7. COMMON VICTUALLER APPLICATIONS

7.1 Farid Abu Ghoush, Manager

Mediterranean Pizza & Subs Corp

d/b/a Mediterranean Pizza & Subs

61 Kenoza Avenue

**-Application for Amendment of Common Victualler license: Change of Corporate
Structure from Sole Proprietorship to Corporation**

-Pending outstanding Real Estate Taxes payments

Items 6.1 & 7.1 were heard together. See Item 6.1

Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the Corporate Structure amendment for Mediterranean Pizza & Subs Corp.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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



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7.2 Fayeze Abu Ghosh, Applicant

Mediterranean Pizza & Roast Beef LLC

d/b/a Mediterranean Pizza & Roast Beef LLC

124 South Main Street

-Application for new Common Victualler license

Items 6.2 & 7.2 were heard together. See Item 6.2

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the new Common Victualler license for Mediterranean Pizza & Roast Beef LLC.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

8. OUTDOOR DINING APPLICATIONS

9. ALCOHOL/ABCC APPLICATIONS

9.1 Jessica LeBoeuf, Manager

Mac Daddies & a Little More LLC

d/b/a Mac Daddies & a Little More

75 South Main Street

-Application for Transfer of \$12 Restaurant All-Alcoholic Beverages license from Big Dawg's Eatery, LLC, 75 South Main St. for Monday-Thursday & Saturday 8AM-1AM, Friday 8AM-2AM, and Sunday 10AM-1AM

-Pending ABCC approval

-Pending 304 Certificate of Occupancy, Liquor Liability Insurance, and Affidavit of Workers' Compensation Insurance

Jessica LeBoeuf, manager, and Atty. Timothy Connors, representing Mac Daddies & a Little More LLC, were present for this application. Clerk Flynn announced that the Liquor Liability Insurance had been received the previous day. He also clarified that he had the Workers' Compensation Insurance itself – it was only the affidavit missing as it could not be completed yet. Chairperson Laliberty remarked that the application had been through some hurdles in the past few months but now seemed to be near completion. No further comments or questions.



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Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to approve the transfer of the §12 liquor license from Big Dawg's Eatery, LLC to Mac Daddies & a Little More LLC – pending ABCC approval, the 304 Certificate of Occupancy, and the affidavit of Workers' Compensation Insurance.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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

9.2 Shiva Prasad Nepal, Manager

Team Gurkhas LLC

d/b/a Himalchuli Bar & Grill

36 Plaistow Road

-Application for new §12 Restaurant All-Alcoholic Beverages license for Saturday – Thursday 10AM-1AM and Friday 10AM-2AM

-Pending ABCC approval

-Pending 304 Certificate of Occupancy, Liquor Liability Insurance, Safe Service of Alcohol Certificate(s), and final requirements of Abutters' Notification Affidavit

Sameer Bhattarai, LLC Manager, was present for this application and advised that Shiva Nepal was in remote attendance. Chairperson Laliberty noted that the application included an affidavit of no connection to the previous licensee at 36 Plaistow Rd. However, Mr. Parshu Bhandari was listed on the previous license. Although he was not listed on this application, he was named as a “strategy advisor” and attended the June meeting for the same business' Entertainment and Common Victualler license applications. Mr. Bhattarai stated that Mr. Bhandari was an employee and not associated with the ownership or management of the company. He also said that the applicant party met Mr. Bhandari through the business' landlord and had never met the prior owner beforehand. The Chairperson noted that the affidavit stated there was “no relationship” with the prior ownership but Mr. Bhandari was listed as a member of the previously licensed entity. Mr. Bhattarai added that Mr. Bhandari had already left the business two to three years before it closed. The Chairperson verified if Mr. Bhandari has not had a relationship with the prior ownership since he left – Mr. Bhattarai confirmed so and said Mr. Bhandari now only served as an advisor to Team Gurkhas LLC. This satisfied the Chairperson.



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Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to approve the new §12 Restaurant All-Alcoholic Beverages license for Saturday – Thursday 10AM-1AM and Friday 10AM-2AM – pending ABCC approval, 304 Certificate of Occupancy, Liquor Liability Insurance, Safe Service of Alcohol Certificate(s), and final requirements of Abutters' Notification Affidavit.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

10. MOTOR VEHICLE APPLICATIONS

11. CARRY IN LICENSE APPLICATIONS

12. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

12.1 Ashley Holt, Manager

B&K LLC

d/b/a The Nerve

101-103 Washington Street

-Item for Discussion: Status of Video System Operationality

Gina N., Ms. Holt's sister-in-law, appeared on behalf of The Nerve. Commissioner Koutoulas asked if Gina was an employee – Gina said she was not and that she was the sister of Phillip Bentham, manager and owner of The Hidden Pig. Lt. Kevin Lynch spoke on the matter. He advised that he did receive camera footage regarding an incident which would be heard later in Item 13.2, but that it was only one Ring camera, which made it "very challenging to watch". The lieutenant stated the business needed to update their camera system. Gina shared that Ms. Holt and Mr. Bentham apologized for their absence and were currently at a contracted event they could not get out of. She then said that they had a video system in place but were having difficulty with the internet service going out constantly, questioning if the previous owners had similar problems. Chairperson Laliberty remarked that this did not seem to be the only issue. Gina said the business was working "diligently" on finding different service providers and were trying to "work within the limits of what they're given". The Chairperson advised that the second issue was there being only one camera and the business would need to get multiple ones. Gina said the business is "fully aware of that." The Chairperson said that there needed to be at least one camera covering the bar and another covering the entrance/exit. Commissioner Koutoulas asked Lt. Lynch if most of other establishments' cameras depended on the internet or if they had an internal system. The lieutenant replied it was usually an internal system with a hard drive that the Police Department could download footage



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from. He also remarked that the previous owners did not have a similar problem as The Nerve. The Commissioner noted the internal system was likely superior and had a problem with the Ring camera as it was of insufficient quality. Gina replied this was meant as a temporary solution. Lt. Lynch advised he had previously requested footage in January but there was no camera at the time. Commissioner Koutoulas recommend having three cameras to each cover the entrance, exit, and the bar, and with a standalone system not reliant on the internet. Gina stated that Ms. Holt and Mr. Bentham were dealing with a variety of concerns but had “every intention of being compliant” and would pursue the Commission’s recommendations.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to require The Nerve to update their camera system within thirty (30) days, with the following requirements:

- Three (3) cameras on premises at the following locations – entrance, exit, and facing the bar
- Camera must have better quality
- Camera system must be a standalone system, not reliant on internet

Proof of updates must be submitted to the Clerk by the deadline.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

12.2 Ashley Holt, Manager

B&K LLC

d/b/a The Nerve

101-103 Washington Street

-Item for Discussion: Financial Responsibility, Financial Interest, and Financial Ability to continue operating licensed business

-Notice received on April 24, 2026

Items 12.2 and 12.3 were heard together.

Gina N., Mr. Bentham’s sister, appeared on behalf of both The Nerve and The Hidden Pig. Atty. Alexander Castro, City Solicitor Associate, was remotely present. Gina stated the two businesses were addressing the Gordon Food financial responsibility and that the amount was currently disputed. Commissioner Koutoulas interjected to state that she did not believe this matter was under the purview of the License Commission but would like to hear what Atty. Castro had to say. Gina concurred this did not seem be appropriate for the situation. Atty. Castro advised,



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though the Commission may wish to consider the matter regarding non-liquor permits, that this matter not be considered as it “fell outside the scope” of M.G.L. Ch138.

Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to place both Items 12.2 & 12.3 on file.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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

12.3 Phillip Charles Bentham II, Manager

Hidden Pig, LLC

d/b/a The Hidden Pig

130 Washington Street

-Item for Discussion: Financial Responsibility, Financial Interest, and Financial Ability to continue operating licensed business

-Notice received on April 24, 2026

Items 12.2 and 12.3 were heard together. See Item 12.2

Remaining Items were heard in the following order: 13.1, 13.2, 12.4, 12.5, 13.3, 13.4

12.4 Jonus Rustani, Manager

The New Lantern Cafe, Inc.

d/b/a New Lantern Cafe

240 Essex Street

-Item for Discussion: Status of Change of Officers/Directors/Shareholders application

-Continued from June 4, 2026 meeting

Jonus Rustani, manager, was present for this discussion. Clerk Flynn attested that he had received all the remaining, required paperwork for this matter on June 26th but could not schedule it for this meeting as it required a legal advertisement to be placed at minimum 10 days prior to a hearing. He added that the new application could be heard at the next available meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to extend this matter to the August 6, 2026 meeting for a final disposition in August.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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



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12.5 Jonus Rustani, Manager

The New Lantern Cafe, Inc.
d/b/a New Lantern Cafe
240 Essex Street

-Item for Discussion: Incident that occurred on or about May 8, 2026 at 8:12PM

Lt. Kevin Lynch presented the facts: on May 8th, an officer noticed a male party on the ground in front of the establishment. The party allegedly suddenly began acting erratically and throwing himself on the ground before exiting the establishment, approximately 15 minutes before the officer arrived. The party assaulted the officer and was transported to the hospital for medical treatment and later summoned to court. The lieutenant said he did review footage of the incident, and was concerned that the establishment never called the police and allowed the patron to leave the bar and be left on the ground outside.

Jonus Rustani was present and asked if no one had really called the police. Lt. Lynch advised that the officer happened to notice the party as he was driving by. Commissioner Koutoulas asked Mr. Rustani if he worked that evening. The manager stated he did and had noticed the patron's erratic behavior, which he described as a "medical episode," and did not remember if he called the police or not but was trying to restrain the party along with the help of patrons. The Commissioner asked if the manager "would have" called the police and the manager said he would have but was concerned about what the patron might do to anyone inside his bar. Commissioner Driscoll reiterated that a police officer was hurt as a result. Commissioner Koutoulas asked if there were two employees working that night since it was a Friday – Mr. Rustani replied he wasn't sure if his brother was there at that time, despite his brother "know[ing] he's supposed to be there," and could "not control him". The Commissioner asked if his brother was a part-owner of the business – Mr. Rustani replied he was not as of January and removed as a trustee. The Commissioner continued saying the manager was the sole owner of the bar and knew that two bartenders are required Thursday-Sunday nights, and that his brother not showing up was not his brother's problem but the owner's responsibility. Mr. Rustani said he understood that but all he could do was tell him when he's supposed to be working. Commissioner Koutoulas countered that he needed a backup plan should he fail to come, and that having two bartenders helps ensure safety. The manager asked what he was supposed to do if he told his brother to come and he did not – the Commissioner replied he should then fire him and hire a new person. Chairperson Laliberty said she had reviewed the business' history and pointed out that these type of issues are



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common for such an establishment – Mr. Rustani interjected that his brother had his own issues. The Chairperson replied that, regardless, the manager is required to have two people working four nights a week and he is ultimately responsible. Commissioner Koutoulas noted that the male party from the incident did not appear to be drinking and Mr. Rustani said he does not “drink at all”. He continued saying that the party appeared to be fine at first but then starting speaking incoherently and rolling around on the floor. A different patron then picked him up and forced him outside; the party attempted to come back inside but the manager and other patrons kept him out. Mr. Rustani said he was concerned that the party would hurt himself or others inside. Commissioner Koutoulas noted that the patron that forced the party outside made themselves potentially liable for injuries, and that it was not any patron’s responsibility to deal with such incidents. Chairperson Laliberty added that this is what the police is for, and the manager is required to call them when such an incident occurs. Mr. Rustani rhetorically asked if he should “pick the phone up” or “try to prevent [harm] first”. Commissioners Koutoulas and Driscoll emphasized this is why the business was mandated to have two staff members four nights a week: one can call while the other intervenes. The manager said he would hand the phone to a second person in the future. Chairperson Laliberty stressed that this other person must be an employee, and that the manager needed to “put together a plan to rectify this situation.” Commissioner Driscoll asked Mr. Rustani if he understood he could not open for business Thursday – Sunday nights if he did not have a second staff member – Mr. Rustani said he did understand.

Discussion followed on whether to place matter on file or hear other incidents first. The following motion was made after the discussion on Items 13.3 & 13.4

Motion: Commissioner Driscoll motions to place this matter on file.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

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

13. SHOW CAUSE HEARING

13.1 Phillip Charles Bentham II, Manager

Hidden Pig, LLC

d/b/a The Hidden Pig

130 Washington Street

-Show Cause Hearing: Alleged Violation of M.G.L. Ch.138 §§ 23 & 25

-Failure to file for Change of Corporate Structure amendment



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Gina N. remained present on behalf of The Hidden Pig. Atty. Castro was remotely present for this matter as well. Gina said Mr. Bentham was working on resolving the corporate filing. She then said that she understood this had been an issue since 2020, that there had been several license renewals since, and believed this to simply be an oversight. She added that Mr. Bentham's accountant had apparently changed the corporate structure without notifying him. Commissioner Koutoulas asked Gina if she knew how long it would take to resolve the matter but Gina did not. Atty. Castro advised that the business be given 21 days to rectify the issue and that if they did not do so by then, they would risk suspension or revocation of their liquor license. Gina asked if the Commission would be willing to also give this matter a 30-day deadline, in consideration of the business' longtime presence in the City. Chairperson Laliberty replied that if Atty. Castro's recommendation was 21 days then this should be an appropriate deadline, and stated that such matters typically don't take so long to rectify. Commissioner Koutoulas asked Clerk Flynn how long he had been "dealing with this particular issue" – the Clerk replied he had simply happened to notice, sometime in April, on the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website that "Hidden Pig, LLC" had been converted to "Hidden Pig, Inc." in 2020, the latter having been dissolved involuntarily in 2023. The Clerk noted there was both the issue with changing the structure without notifying the City and ABCC, and the issue of the current entity not being active. Atty. Castro noted that what really mattered was that the same person(s) is involved with the business, and that since this allegedly seemed to be case that it was simply a matter of completing the paperwork. Gina stated it was indeed the same person and merely an oversight.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to require The Hidden Pig to file a Change of Corporate Structure application with the City Clerk's office within 21 days or risk suspension or revocation of its liquor license.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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



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13.2 Ashley Holt, Manager

B&K LLC

d/b/a The Nerve

101-103 Washington Street

**-Show Cause Hearing: Alleged violation of 204 CMR 2.05 (2) Permitting an
illegality on the licensed premises to wit**

-Possible overserving

-Incident that occurred on or about June 20, 2026, at 10:14PM

Gina N. remained present on behalf of The Nerve. Lt. Kevin Lynch presented the facts: on June 20th, officers were flagged downtown as a female bleeding from the head was found in front of The Nerve. The female advised she had exited the bar, walked backwards, and fell on her head. An officer noticed that she was intoxicated. The lieutenant said he had received footage earlier in the day but that it was challenging to interpret, as previously mentioned.

Chairperson Laliberty inquired if there had been any other such incidents at The Nerve – Lt. Lynch replied there had been one other incident in January but that there was no footage at the time. Commissioner Koutoulas asked Gina if she had any knowledge of this incident. Gina said she only knew about camera footage being sent over earlier, and understood that it was intended to be enlightening but evidently was not. She then asked if there was possibly a different camera outside The Nerve to verify the incident, and said she did not understand The Nerve's responsibility if the incident occurred outside of it. Chairperson Laliberty stated this was the issue with insufficient cameras as there was indeed no way of knowing what occurred inside. Gina replied that the female had hit her head outside but the Chairperson said that if she had been overserved at the bar, there was no way of knowing that, and that having cameras was a protection for the business as well. Gina said she hoped a neighboring business may have footage of the incident but understood that it wouldn't help explain what may have occurred indoors. Commissioner Koutoulas stated that the police report noting intoxication made it "pretty easy...to draw back to The Nerve". Lt. Lynch showed Gina the camera footage he had to demonstrate its insufficiency. Gina asked if anyone who worked that evening could speak on the business' behalf – Chairperson Laliberty stated this would have been the right time to do so. Gina agreed and explained that Ms. Holt and Mr. Bentham were simply unable to neglect their contracted event.



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Chairperson Laliberty asked her colleagues if there was a recommendation. Commissioner Koutoulas noted this was the bar's first recorded incident and suggest a six-month probation. Commissioner Driscoll agreed with a probation but suggested three months – Commissioner Koutoulas was amenable to this.

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to place The Nerve on a three-month probation.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

13.3 Jonus Rustani, Manager

The New Lantern Cafe, Inc.

d/b/a New Lantern Cafe

240 Essex Street

-Show Cause Hearing: Alleged violation of 204 CMR 2.05 (2) Permitting an illegality on the licensed premises to wit

-Possible overserving

-Incident that occurred on or about May 16, 2026, at 10:55PM

Jonus Rustani was sworn in. Lt. Lynch presented the facts: on May 18th, officers conducted a patrol in front of the business and were flagged down. The officers encountered a highly intoxicated female party across the street from the establishment, who could not stand or form a complete sentence. Review of City cameras revealed that the party exited the establishment, walked across the street and fell over. She was transported to the hospital for treatment. Mr. Rustani stated that before crossing the street, the female party allegedly sat in someone's vehicle and consumed a large can of White Claw. Chairperson Laliberty asked how long the party had been inside the bar and the manager replied: "Not that long." Commissioner Koutoulas countered that the police report indicated the party was heavily intoxicated as she exited the establishment, per the camera footage, and that it made no mention of her further drinking in a vehicle. Mr. Rustani insisted that he witnessed this occur. Chairperson Laliberty emphasized that the party had been drinking in his bar and was already heavily intoxicated as she left, making the business responsible. Lt. Lynch added that the manager never notified the police that he witnessed the party drinking inside a motor vehicle. He also noted he was unaware if there were two bartenders working that night – Commissioner Driscoll noted it was a Saturday.



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Discussion continued to Item 13.4

13.4 Jonus Rustani, Manager

The New Lantern Cafe, Inc.

d/b/a New Lantern Cafe

240 Essex Street

**-Show Cause Hearing: Alleged violation of 204 CMR 2.05 (2) Permitting an
illegality on the licensed premises to wit**

-Possible overserving

-Incident that occurred on or about June 19, 2026, at 11:00PM

Jonus Rustani remained present. Lt. Lynch presented the facts: on June 19th, officers were dispatched to 95 Winter St for a two-car motor vehicle crash. The officers spoke with one passenger who advised they and the driver were drinking at New Lantern Cafe. The driver had glossy eyes, slurred speech, and an alcoholic odor emitting. Review of City cameras showed the driver exiting the bar and getting into her vehicle two minutes prior to the crash.

Commissioner Driscoll reviewed facts with Mr. Rustani: a patron was at his bar, drove impaired, injured themselves and damaged property. Commissioner Koutoulas noted the driver drove over the double line and could have killed people. Chairperson Laliberty stated that the Commission existed not to burden businesses but to protect the City of Haverhill and its residents. She added that although she had only been part of the Commission for a couple months, she was aware of this being a long-standing problem for New Lantern Cafe and that Mr. Rustani was not doing anything to rectify it or heeding the Commission's past advice or mandates. The Chairperson and Commissioner Koutoulas further underscored that the business was still on probation and both expressed concern about allowing this to continue. Commissioner Driscoll added it was very serious and "every month it's the same."

Mr. Rustani told the Commission in response: "If you want me to bring my liquor license in the morning, I will. That's all I can say. I understand it's very serious."

Commissioner Driscoll verified if by this "admission," Mr. Rustani was suggesting surrendering his license. Mr. Rustani replied: "Whatever you...recommend."

Commissioner Koutoulas stated she believed the license should be revoked. Mr. Rustani said the situation was very hard on him too. The Commissioner acknowledged that it was very difficult to manage a business alone and could only imagine all the difficulties involved for a bar owner. She added that the situation was "heartbreaking" but also disturbing as a License Commissioner, and that it seemed to be



Haverhill

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too overwhelming for Mr. Rustani. Mr. Rustani expressed he wished to sell the property.

The following motion encompassed both Items 13.3 & 13.4:

Motion: Commissioner Koutoulas motions to permanently revoke The New Lantern Cafe, Inc.'s §12 Common Victualler's Liquor License and Entertainment License, effective immediately, and to provide the Clerk a receipt of sale of all remaining alcohol on the premises back to the vendor, by July 10, 2026.

Second: Commissioner Driscoll seconded.

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

14. COMMUNICATIONS

15. OTHER BUSINESS

16. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Chairperson Laliberty motions to adjourn.

Second: Commissioner Koutoulas seconded.

Vote: 3-0-0 vote unanimous, meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

No Public Comment.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas K. Flynn

Haverhill License Commission Clerk