



NORTHAMPTON LICENSE COMMISSION
City Hall, Office of the Mayor
210 Main St., 2nd Floor
Northampton, MA 01060
(413) 587-1212

COMMISSIONERS

Natasha Yakovlev, Chair
Jennifer Ewers
Amy Cahillane

Mayoral Operations Manager
Annie Lesko
alesko@northamptonma.gov

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
NORTHAMPTON LICENSE COMMISSION**
Wednesday, December 17, 2025 ◆ 4:00 p.m.
Remote Meeting

The City of Northampton does not discriminate based on disability and is committed to hosting accessible meetings. To request a reasonable accommodation to attend any City meeting, please contact the ADA Coordinator at: adacoordinator@northamptonma.gov or call 413-587-1288.

The December 17, 2025, License Commission meeting was held via remote participation.

Join Virtual Meeting

- **Video Conference:**
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88418153511?pwd=qnQJ3PSpp5Gxzf52ObbZdTzuQWnhYM.1>

OR

- **Telephone, call:** +1-305-224-1968, Meeting ID: 884 1815 3511, Passcode: 368763

- 1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER by Commissioner Yakovlev at 4:00 p.m.**
ROLL CALL - Commissioners Yakovlev and Ewers were present. Commissioner Cahillane was absent.
ANNOUNCEMENT OF ZOOM RECORDING made by Commissioner Yakovlev
- 2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None**
- 3. APPLICATIONS FOR SHORT-TERM LIQUOR LICENSES**
Pedigo Services, LLC d/b/a Quonk
Location: 122 Main St.
Type: Wine & Malt

Date/Time: Saturday, January 10, 2026, 6 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.
Event: Tavern Night

Date/Time: Saturday, January 17, 2026, 6 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.
Event: Dance Party

Jake Gibson stated they will host another immersive, medieval-themed role-playing event on January 10th. The following weekend will feature a dance party with a DJ. Attendance is expected to be 35–40 people for each event.

Building Commissioner Kevin Ross asked about attendance and how the space is set up. Jake pointed out that they clear the space out to make room for everyone. The main means of egress is the front door towards Main Street.

Commissioner Ewers moved to approve the short-term liquor licenses for Pedigo Services, LLC d/b/a Quonk for events on Saturday, January 10, 2026, 6 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., and Saturday, January 17, 2026, 6 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Commissioner Yakovlev seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.

4. UPDATE FROM SIRIUS HOSPITALITY GROUP, LLC D/B/A TELLUS AND THE SATELLITE BAR REGARDING A SOUND STUDY TO IDENTIFY SOUND MITIGATION MEASURES

Amanda Riseling stated she had someone assess the space and review the equipment. At this point, they didn't see anything additional that could be done beyond what is already being done. Due to the distance between the building and the apartments, they pointed out that minimal sound carries, especially given that the building is brick. She reported that a vestibule would provide the greatest benefit, however Atlantic Awnings determined that, for ADA compliance, it would need to extend 7 feet from the building, which would interfere with the Tuesday market. Amanda also reached out to Thornes to request use of the downstairs hallway, but wasn't successful. Even if that were allowed, the front door would still need to remain unlocked. Amanda pointed out that she purchased sound-absorbing panels for the walls and hopes to have them installed next week. Additionally, the back door needs a new ceiling, as sound is currently escaping through that area.

Building Commissioner Ross asked Amanda to send him the information on the sound panels before the installation to ensure they are fire-rated.

5. UPDATE, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO SCHEDULE A HEARING IN REGARDS TO NOISE COMPLAINTS AT PEDIGO-WOOD, LLC D/B/A HAZE, 24 MAIN STREET

Building Commissioner Ross stated that his office received photos and videos documenting fire and safety concerns at Haze. The materials show the band blocking the second means of egress and access to both bathrooms. The video also appears to show one or two candles on the bar. From a building code perspective, only one means of egress is required if the occupancy is 49 people or fewer; however, it is unclear how many people were present at the time the video was taken. Additionally, if something were to happen at the main means of egress, people wouldn't know there was another way out. During the liquor license inspection, Haze staff were notified that both exits must remain visible at all times, meaning the curtain must stay open so the exits can be seen clearly from the main bar area.

Commissioner Yakovlev stated that due to these safety concerns and the various noise complaints the Commission has received over the last few months, she'd like to schedule a hearing.

Commissioner Yakolvev moved to schedule a hearing regarding noise and safety complaints at Pedigo-Wood, LLC d/b/a Haze at a date to be determined in the near future. Commissioner Ewers seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.

6. APPLICATION FOR A NEW COMMON VICTUALLER AND ENTERTAINMENT LICENSE

Allyance, LLC d/b/a Blackbird, 27 Pleasant St.

Proposed Entertainment: Musicians, Drag, Theater, and other live performance acts with sound amplified through a PA. Amplification off at 12:00 a.m., NO drum mic'ing and NO bass boosting, per lease agreement.

Proposed Entertainment Hours: Monday through Sunday from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m.

Lauryn Winiarski was present and stated that she is opening a new business, for which she signed a lease in early November. She hopes to open in early January with beer and wine, and mocktails.

The Commission pointed out that she will need a liquor license in order to provide beer and wine.

Building Commissioner Ross pointed out that she'll need to have an entertainment response system installed if one isn't already in place. He advised her to reach out to the Building and Fire Department for help navigating the process.

Lauryn pointed out that she is an engineer by trade and has patents in acoustics. She's done sound tests in the space already because she's aware of the residents upstairs. She has no experience running this type of business but has a lot of people helping her who have experience.

Commissioner Ewers moved to approve the applications for a Common Victualler license and Entertainment license for Allyance, LLC d/b/a Blackbird at 27 Pleasant Street for musicians, drag, theater, and other live performance acts with sound amplified through a PA system and amplification off at 12:00 a.m., with NO drum mic'ing and NO bass boosting, per lease agreement, from Monday through Sunday from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m. Commissioner Yakovlev seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.

7. PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPLICATION FOR A TRANSFER OF AN ANNUAL ALL-ALCOHOL RESTAURANT LICENSE

Transfer from: Mexcalito Taco-Bar, Inc.

Transfer to: ALD NOHO, LLC

271 Main St.

Proposed Manager: Maria Ann Koziol-Guerra

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to open the public hearing at 4:29 p.m. Commissioner Ewers seconded, and the public hearing was opened by a 2-0 roll call vote.

Nick Grimaldi was present and stated that the liquor license was originally held by Mama Iguana's. Maria Guerra and her husband owned the restaurant, and the building is managed by ALD NOHO, LLC, of which Maria is the manager. The license was later transferred to Mexcalito; however, that business ultimately entered bankruptcy. During the bankruptcy proceedings, ALD NOHO purchased the license out of bankruptcy. ALD NOHO's intent is simply to sell the license to a deserving and willing buyer. The license will not be used immediately and will require another transfer in the future.

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to close the public hearing at 4:34 p.m. Commissioner Ewers seconded, and the hearing was closed by a 2-0 roll call vote.

The Commission requested a six-month update once the ABCC has approved the transfer of the license to ALD NOHO to review any progress in identifying a buyer for the license.

Commissioner Ewers moved to approve the application for a transfer of an annual all-alcohol restaurant license from Mexcalito Taco-Bar, Inc. d/b/a ALD NOHO, LLC. Commissioner Yakovlev seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.

8. PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPLICATION FOR A TRANSFER AND CHANGE OF LOCATION OF AN ANNUAL WINE & MALT PACKAGE STORE LICENSE

Transfer from: Oxbow Wines, LLC d/b/a Bottle-O, 166 King St.

Transfer to: Shai, Inc. d/b/a Bird's Store, 81 Maple St.

Proposed Manager: Gaurang Patel

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to open the public hearing at 4:36 p.m. Commissioner Ewers seconded, and the hearing was opened by a 2-0 roll call vote. There was no public comment.

Gaurang Patel was present and stated that he has been operating Bird's for the past 28 years, and it is necessary to make changes to ensure the future of the business. He explained that Bird's plans to move from its current corner location to a new building across the street at 81 Maple Street. The business will remain the same as it has always been, with the addition of beer and wine. Mr. Patel emphasized that all rules and regulations will be strictly followed. The addition of beer and wine is intended to provide a modest economic advantage and support long-term sustainability. The proposed new location is approximately 2,000 square feet.

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to close the public hearing at 4:40 p.m. Commissioner Ewers seconded, and the hearing was closed by a 2-0 roll call vote.

Commissioner Ewers moved to approve the transfer and change of location on an annual wine and malt package store license from Oxbow Wines, LLC d/b/a Bottle-O at 166 King Street to Shai, Inc. d/b/a Bird's Store at 81 Maple St., Florence. Commissioner Yakovlev seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.

9. PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPLICATION FOR A TRANSFER OF AN ANNUAL ALL ALCOHOL RESTAURANT LICENSE AND APPLICATION FOR A COMMON VICTUALLER, ENTERTAINMENT, AND AUTOMATIC AMUSEMENT DEVICE LICENSES

Transfer from: Coots Corner, Inc. d/b/a Ye Ol' Watering Hole

Transfer to: McBrech, Inc. d/b/a Ye Ol' Watering Hole

297 Pleasant St.

Proposed Manager: Dan Brechner

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to open the public hearing at 4:41 p.m. Commissioner Ewers seconded, and the hearing was opened by a 2-0 roll call vote. There was no public comment.

Daniel Brechner was present and noted that he has worked for Ye Ol Watering Hole for 15 years. The plan is to operate it as it has always been run. Part of its charm is its simplicity, and there are no plans to make significant changes.

The address, for the record, is 287 Pleasant Street.

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to close the public hearing at 4:43 p.m. Commissioner Ewers seconded, and the public hearing was closed by a 2-0 roll call vote.

Commissioner Ewers moved to approve the application for a transfer of an annual all alcohol restaurant license from Coot's Corner, Inc. to McBrech, Inc., to include the application for a common victualler, entertainment, and automatic amusement device licenses. Commissioner Yakovlev seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.

10. APPLICATION FOR A NEW ENTERTAINMENT LICENSE

Washut & Ware, Inc. d/b/a Jake's Restaurant, 17 King St.

Proposed Entertainment: Acoustic music with an occasional small amplifier

Proposed Entertainment Hours: Fridays and Saturdays from 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Chris Ware, owner of Jake's, and Sherryla, owner of Ginger Love Café, shared that they are considering adding light ambient music during dinner service, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. This would likely include one or two musicians using a small amplifier for certain instruments. They would also like the option to offer live entertainment for customers who book the space for private events.

Building Commissioner Ross noted that ambient music would be permitted without requiring an entertainment response system. However, for larger or louder events, an entertainment response system would be required.

There was a question about the operation and who should hold the license, especially relating to liquor.

Chris Ware stated that Sherryla is essentially the chef, and the food is her vision, with all of Jake's employees serving alcohol.

Commissioner Ewers moved to approve the application for a new entertainment license for Washut & Ware, Inc. d/b/a Jake's Restaurant at 17 King St. for acoustic music with an occasional small amplifier on Fridays and Saturdays from 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Commissioner Yakovlev seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.

11. UPDATE ON LICENSES FROM RENEWALS

The clerk noted that there were a number of licenses that the Commission asked for an update on at the March 2026 meeting (listed below). The clerk went through each one.

- 41 Strong, LLC d/b/a Bishop's Lounge - This license was surrendered, so it's available for the Commission to reissue it.
- Mexcalito Taco-Bar, Inc. - The transfer of this license was on today's agenda. No update is needed at the March meeting.
- Oxbow Wines, LLC d/b/a Bottle-O - The transfer of this license was on today's agenda. No update is needed at the March meeting.
- Pivaye Noho, LLC d/b/a Wurst Haus - This license was not renewed, so it's another license that the License Commission can decide how to reissue.

The clerk pointed out that the license held by Freedom Post 28, Inc. d/b/a American Legion was renewed, and the owner is aware that the Commission is requesting an update at the March meeting.

The Commission asked for the 41 Strong, LLC d/b/a Bishop's Lounge license and the Pivaye Noho, LLC d/b/a Wurst Haus license to be placed on the January meeting agenda for discussion on how to reissue the licenses.

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- November 19, 2025

This agenda item will be on the January meeting agenda.

13. NEW BUSINESS

The clerk noted that she will send out a notice to all wine and malt license holders informing them that the City Council passed the provision allowing current wine and malt license holders to trade in their license for an all-alcohol license.

14. ADJOURN

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:01 p.m. Commissioner Ewers seconded. The motion passed 2-0 by a roll call vote.