



NORTHAMPTON LICENSE COMMISSION
City Hall, Office of the Mayor
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Northampton, MA 01060
(413) 587-1212

COMMISSIONERS

Natasha Yakovlev, Chair
Helen Kahn

Executive Assistant

Annie Lesko
alesko@northamptonma.gov

MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 5, 2022
Virtual Meeting
4:00 p.m.

The January 5, 2022, License Commission meeting was held via remote participation.

Join Virtual Meeting

- **Video Conference:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81237284250?pwd=RE1HVnNteWlGU2NidEdkR1BYV1pIU09>

OR

- **Telephone, call:** +1-929-436-2866, Meeting ID: 812 3728 4250, Password: 259132

1. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** by Commissioner Yakovlev at 4:00 p.m.
ROLL CALL - Commissioners Yakovlev and Kahn were both present
ANNOUNCEMENT OF ZOOM RECORDING - made by Commissioner Yakovlev
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT** - None
3. **APPLICATION FOR SHORT TERM LIQUOR LICENSE**
The Academy of Music, Inc., 274 Main St.
Date/Time: Saturday, January 15, 2021, 6:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
Event: Best of the Valley Voices Story Slam
Requested Fee Waiver

The clerk noted that the applicant called prior to the meeting to withdraw the application as the show will be cancelled so there is no need for a license.

4. **APPLICATION FOR A NEW ENTERTAINMENT LICENSE**
Wild Chestnut Cafe, LLC, 22 Chestnut St.
Proposed Entertainment: Live music (mostly acoustic), poetry slams, comedy shows, charity events
Proposed Schedule, Wednesday, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Rosalie Black and Melissia LaCharite were both present for this application. Rosalie noted that they had a soft opening in December and a grand opening will be this coming Saturday. Rosalie stated that she applied for an annual license but that she won't be using the license until things settle down.

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to approve the application for an entertainment license for Wild Chestnut Cafe, LLC for Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Commissioner Kahn seconded. The motion passed unanimously 2-0 by a roll call vote.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF AN AN ANNUAL WINE AND MALT PACKAGE STORE LICENSE**
Transfer from: Pride Stores, LLC

Commissioners moved to open the public hearing at 4:04 p.m. Commissioner Kahn seconded and the public hearing was opened.

There was no public comment.

Nicholas Amanti, attorney for Pride Operating, LLC, was present and stated that Pride Operating, LLC is purchasing the liquor license currently held by Pride Stores. Attorney Amanti noted that the manager will be the same and everything else will be the same. He noted that Marsha Medina and Jim Channing remain working for Pride Operating to continue overseeing operations. Attorney Amanti noted that this transfer is in connection with a larger asset purchase of Pride by Archilight Energy and Pride Operating is a subsidiary created specifically to hold and run the liquor licenses. Christine Miller and Jim Channing who represent Pride Stores, LLC and Cecile Humphrey, the manager of record are all present.

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to close the public hearing at 4:08 p.m. Commissioner Kahn seconded and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Kahn moved to approve the application for transfer of an annual wine and malt package store license to Pride Operating, LLC. Commissioner Yakovlev seconded. The motion passed unanimously 2-0 by a roll call vote.

6. PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPLICATION FOR A NEW SEASONAL WINE AND MALT RESTAURANT LICENSE

Cafe Balagan, 235 Main St., Northampton

Proposed Manager: Gil Sasson

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to open the public hearing at 4:13 p.m. Commissioner Kahn seconded and the public hearing was opened.

There was no public comment.

Rachael Workman from Cafe Balagan was present for this application and stated she is looking to expand her current offerings by opening a members only lounge starting at 7 p.m. and would like to offer beer and wine with live music and light bites to eat. Rachael noted she intends to make beer and wine available during cafe hours as well.

Commissioner Yakovlev inquired about the membership.

Rachael noted that anyone can become a member with monthly dues and the cafe will be available exclusively to those individuals or individuals can pay at the door to gain entry. Rachael noted that it is permitted by law to allow members to consume cannabis on-site, not smoke, but consume. Rachael noted that Gil Sasson operated a food and beverage establishment in Manhattan for 10+ years. Rachael also noted that she will have everyone take the exam to get TIPS certified.

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to close the public hearing at 4:16 p.m. Commissioner Kahn seconded and the public hearing was closed.

Rachael noted that she has done some research and there are people operating as a members only establishment in Boston and Worcester, but nothing in Western Massachusetts yet. Rachael believes it is a good opportunity to see how this will go before social consumption starts.

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to approve the application for the seasonal wine and malt restaurant license for Cafe Balagan, LLC. Commissioner Kahn seconded. The motion passed unanimously 2-0 by a roll call vote.

The clerk noted she heard Rachael mention entertainment and stated she would send over an entertainment license application.

7. **NEW BUSINESS** - None

8. **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Yakovlev moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:21 p.m. Commission Kahn seconded. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously 2-0 by a roll call vote.