



**City of Somerville  
Licensing Commission**

**Tuesday  
February 17, 2026  
6:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers and Remote Participation**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the Licensing Commission's Minutes. While reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the date provided, do not rely on this information without first checking with the Secretary of the Licensing Commission.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Joseph Lynch at 6:00 p.m. and adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

**Attendance:**

Chair Joseph Lynch – Present  
Commissioner Christopher Allen – Absent  
Commissioner Jacques Thomas Jr. – Present

**Others present:**

Michael Potere – Assistant City Clerk; Lieutenant Francis Otting – Fire Department; Captain Sean Sheehan – Police Department.

**Communications**

1. Minutes of the Licensing Commission Regular Meeting of 1/20/2026.

**The Licensing Commission accepted the minutes on a voice vote.**

2. Licensing Commission requesting a status report from Somerville City Club Inc., d/b/a Somerville City Club, 20 Inner Belt Road, AL17-000025, regarding the use of their All Forms Alcohol Service License.

*Continued from October 21, 2025, Licensing Commission meeting.*

**Donald Johnson, the licensee, appeared before the Commission and explained that construction for the new location was delayed due to an issue with the parking lot, and that the issue should be resolved within the next month.**

**The Licensing Commission continued this item to the April 2026 meeting by unanimous consent.**



### **Special Alcohol Licenses**

3. Temple B'nai Brith, 201 Central Street, requesting approval of a Special Alcohol License (All Forms) for TBB Music and Part Evenings, to be held indoors at 201 Central Street, on 2/28/2026 and 3/7/2026 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (Alcohol Service) (SAL26-000003)

**Emma Stellman, the applicant, appeared before the Commission and explained that this is for two events, on for a holiday and one to enjoy Jewish music. The applicant added that this is their first application for a Special Alcohol License with the city and that they will be purchasing alcohol from an authorized distributor.**

**The Licensing Commission approved this Special Alcohol License on a voice vote.**

4. Taza Chocolate, 561 Windsor Street, requesting approval of a Special Alcohol License (Wine and Malt) for Taza at Nite, to be held indoors at 561 Windsor Street, on 3/26/2026 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (Alcohol Service) (SAL26-000002)

**Hannah Klales, the applicant, appeared before the Commission and explained that they have hosted this event before, and it is a tour of their business that will include beer service from Notch Beer in Brighton. Chair Lynch asked if the applicant is TIPS certified, which the applicant confirmed.**

**The Licensing Commission approved this Special Alcohol License on a voice vote.**

### **Existing All Forms Restaurant License** **Change of Hours**

5. RCSH Operations Inc d/b/a Ruth's Chris Steak House, 375 Revolution Drive, requesting approval of a change of hours.  
Current Hours (Indoor and Outdoor (Private Patio) Food and Alcohol Service):  
Monday-Friday: 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.  
Sunday: 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Proposed Hours (Indoor and Outdoor (Private Patio) Food and Alcohol Service):  
Monday-Sunday: 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.  
(ALM25-000040, amending AL19-000026)  
*Continued from January 20, 2026, Licensing Commission meeting.*

**Attorney Dawson Cooper, representing the applicant, Scott Swintek, who was also present, stated that this is to extend the licensee's operating hours to 12AM to accommodate traffic from shoppers who prefer to enjoy food and beverages later in**



the evening in Assembly. Attorney Cooper added that no other changes are being made, just an extension of the operating hours, and that Ward One City Councilor Matt McLaughlin was informed of this request and expressed approval.

The Licensing Commission approved this Change of Hours license amendment on a voice vote.

**Existing Common Victualer License**  
**Change of Hours**

6. Mikura Group LLC d/b/a Kokoro Don Café, 66 Summer Street, requesting approval of a change of hours.  
Current Hours:  
Monday-Sunday: 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Proposed Hours:  
Monday-Sunday: 7:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.  
(ALM26-000005, amending AL25-000027)

**Phitinunt Pohnthisomboon, the applicant, appeared before the Commission and stated this request to have later closing hours is a result of requests from customers, who work later and would like to eat their food a little later. Commissioner Thomas asked if the business has had any issues since opening, and the applicant replied that they have not.**

The Licensing Commission approved this Change of Hours license amendment on a voice vote.

**Existing All Forms Restaurant License**  
**Adding Entertainment by Performers**

7. Stainless Teele Inc d/b/a The Hollows, 248 Holland Street, requesting approval of an entertainment by performers license.  
(ALM26-000001, amending AL24-000036)

**Bridget Zelner, the applicant, appeared before the Commission and explained that this is to add a turntable to their bar to be operated by a DJ for various special events in their space, but that there would be no changes to the existing sound system or any increased volume.**

**Chair Lynch opened the public hearing. There being no speakers, Chair Lynch closed the public hearing.**



**The Licensing Commission approved this Entertainment by Performers License on a voice vote.**

**Existing All Forms Restaurant License**  
**Adding Entertainment by Performers and Patrons**

8. K-Bok Korean Fried Chicken LLC d/b/a K-Bok Korean Fried Chicken, 249 Washington Street, requesting approval of entertainment by performers and patrons licenses. (ALM26-000008, amending AL24-000029)

**Attorney Tyler Henseler, representing the applicants, Paul Casserly and Yajaira Casserly, who were also present, appeared before the Commission and explained that this new business is thriving in Union Square and that these additional entertainment licenses will allow them to add various types of events that have been requested by customers and neighbors. Attorney Henseler added that these licenses will not have a negative impact on the area because it is primarily commercially developed, so there would be minimal changes to noise pollution for any residential neighbors. Chair Lynch asked where the dance floor would be, and the applicant replied that they would move tables and chairs when events featuring dancing take place.**

**Chair Lynch opened the public hearing. There being no speakers, Chair Lynch closed the public hearing.**

**The Licensing Commission approved this Entertainment by Performers License Entertainment by Patrons License on a voice vote.**

**New**  
**Common Victualer License**

9. La Cocina Restaurant Corp d/b/a La Cocina Restaurant, 854 Broadway, requesting approval of a common victualer license.  
Hours of Operation:  
Monday-Sunday: 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.  
Indoor Seats: 14  
(AL25-000025)

**Christian Surian, the applicant, appeared before the Commission and stated that this is for a new restaurant with no alcohol beverage service. The Commissioners asked no additional questions.**

**The Licensing Commission approved this Common Victualer License on a voice vote.**



**New**  
**Common Victualer and Entertainment by Devices**

10. Nostalgia Café LLC d/b/a Nostalgia, 322 Somerville Avenue, requesting approval of a common victualer and entertainment by devices license.

Hours of Operation:

Monday-Sunday: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Indoor Seats: 10

(AL25-000041)

**Philip Kahan, the applicant, appeared before the Commission and stated their concept is a retail shop that focuses on vintage clothing and collectibles, and that they also want to have a small coffee shop offering espresso and other beverages as an amenity to the shopping experience. The applicant added that their request for entertainment by devices is to have low-volume background music, but with no performers, DJs, or alcohol service.**

**Chair Lynch opened the public hearing. There being no speakers, Chair Lynch closed the public hearing.**

**The Licensing Commission approved this Common Victualer License and Entertainment by Devices License on a voice vote.**

**New**  
**Common Victualer, Entertainment by Devices, and Public Outdoor Seating**

11. Kupel's Bagels Somerville LLC d/b/a Kupel's Bagels, 54 Elm Street, requesting approval of a common victualer, entertainment by devices, and public outdoor seating license.

Hours of Operation: (Indoor and Outdoor)

Monday-Sunday: 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm.

Indoor Seats: 24

Outdoor Seats: 10

(AL25-000032)

**Attorney Adam Dash, representing applicant Ali Ghorbi, who was also present, appeared before the Commission and explained that this is the second location for the business owner, to compliment a location in Brookline, and that the applicant is eager to reactivate the property, which has been vacant, with a vibrant presence that includes indoor and outdoor dining. Commissioner Thomas asked if the floor plan is ADA compliant and if a wheelchair has enough space to move easily, which Attorney Dash confirmed.**



**Assistant City Clerk Potere stated that a representative from Engineering could not be present due to technical difficulties but conveyed to the Commission a recommendation of approval for this applicant's outdoor dining license application.**

**Chair Lynch opened the public hearing. Neighbor Emma Stelman expressed support for the application, noting that this business will be a welcomed addition to the area. There being no additional speakers, Chair Lynch closed the public hearing.**

**The Licensing Commission approved this new Common Victualer License, Entertainment by Devices License, and Public Outdoor Seating License on a voice vote.**

**Existing Common Victualer License**

**New Wine and Malt Alcohol License and Entertainment by Devices License**

12. Pho & Rice Inc d/b/a Pho N Rice, 289 Beacon Street, requesting approval of a wine and malt alcohol license and entertainment by devices license.  
Hours of Operation: (Indoor Food and Alcohol Service)  
Monday-Thursday: 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Friday-Saturday: 11:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.  
Sunday: 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Indoor Seats: 32  
(AL25-000040)

**Witoon Shotitana, the applicant, appeared before the Commission and stated that they have been in business in the city at this location for 18 years, and that their customers have been requesting that they also serve beer and wine to compliment their food menu. Chair Lynch asked if the applicant is familiar with state and local rules for alcohol service and if they will be TIPS certified, which the applicant confirmed.**

**Chair Lynch opened the public hearing. There being no speakers, Chair Lynch closed the public hearing.**

**The Licensing Commission approved this new Wine and Malt Alcohol License and Entertainment by Devices License on a voice vote.**