
Common Council President

15th District Alderman



Willie L. Hines, Jr.

City of Milwaukee Common Council

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**Contact: Alex Runner
414-286-3771**

Licenses Committee Unanimously Approves Task Force Reforms

This morning, the City of Milwaukee Licenses Committee unanimously approved an omnibus package of reforms, which were recommended by the Alcohol Beverage Licensing Task Force (ABLTF). The ABLTF was created by Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr., who testified before the committee this morning, to improve public trust in the licensing system and better inform citizens.

Some of the foremost ABLTF recommendations approved at this morning's committee hearing were:

- Ending the aldermanic power to hold license applications indefinitely. (According to the proposed change, license applications would need to be heard by the committee within two full cycles of the Common Council, or approximately 60 days).
- A requirement that residents within 250 feet of a location be notified when a new license application for that location is heard before the Licenses Committee. (Currently, aldermen can choose to notify neighbors or not at their discretion).
- A requirement that public notice of the license hearing be posted on the actual premises of the building for outside viewing purposes. (This is to better inform residents and members of the public who reside nearby a potential licensed location).

In addition to legislative changes, several administrative reforms to the licensing process recommended by the ABLTF have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. For example, new license applicants will soon receive a pamphlet upon completion of their application at the License Division in City Hall. That pamphlet will detail the rights of applicants and direct them to contact law enforcement authorities if due process has been violated in any way. Again, this is an administrative change that did not require legislative action.

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“I am grateful to all of the Alcohol Beverage Licensing Task Force members who volunteered their time to improve our licensing process at the City of Milwaukee,” said President Hines. “In particular, I want to thank former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Louis Butler, who chaired the committee. These recommendations were substantive and will make our system more accountable, transparent and efficient.”