**Meeting Date: September 17, 2025**

**Start Time: 1:30 PM**

**Attendees: Commissioner Piepkorn, Mark Doyle, Robert Nelson, Scott Brekke**

1. **Approval of the minutes from the August 20, 2025, regular meeting.**

**Motion: To approve the minutes: Brekke**

**Second: Nelson**

**Vote: The motion carried unanimously**

**2. Review of Liquor Applications**

* No new applications were available for review.

**3. Police Department Monthly Report**

* Captain Troy Hannig from the Professional Standards Division presented the monthly report in Chief Zibolski and Captain Christensen's absence.
* **District 64 Incident (August 3):**
  + Surveillance video from a shooting investigation revealed that a 20-year-old homicide suspect was allowed into District 64 without his ID being checked by the bouncer.
  + The review also showed five to eight other patrons entering without an ID check.
  + Officers attempted to issue citations but were unable to make contact with the owner or bouncer. The bouncer is reportedly no longer employed there. Charges are being pursued via a long-form complaint.
* **Side Street Grill Incident (August 16):**
  + Officers were dispatched to Side Street Grill following a citizen report of a wanted individual.
  + The manager initially denied the person was there but was later observed talking to the individual.
  + The police believe the manager was warning the person. Officers then arrested the individual for their warrants.

**4. Other Items**

**a. To-Go Cocktails Follow-up**

* Steve Sprague reported on his follow-up with "Proof" about to-go cocktails.
* The legal requirements, primarily **federal regulations**, are extensive and highly regulated, making the process complex.
* As a result, the business decided not to move forward with selling to-go cocktails and will instead focus on selling drink mixes in stores. The business owner was understanding and appreciative of the follow-up.

**b. E-Permit Fee Changes**

* A proposal was introduced to change the e-permit fee structure.
* The current fee is $25 plus $10 per day. The proposal is to change this to a flat fee of **$25 per day**.
* This change, which matches the state's cap, is seen as reasonable given the staff time required to route the permits through various departments (police, fire, health).
* A motion to approve the change was made, seconded, and carried. The change will also be presented to the city commission for final approval.

Motion Approve the E-Permit Fee Change: Brekke

Second: Doyle

**Vote: The motion carried unanimously**

**c. Proposal for a Local Permit for State Permittees**

* This discussion concerns out-of-town vendors (e.g., breweries, wineries) with state permits who operate within Fargo.
* The state of North Dakota has refused to share a list of these permit holders with the city of Fargo, creating a gap in oversight for police, fire, and health departments.
* A new local permit is proposed to ensure the city is aware of these events and to create a more equitable system, since local businesses pay fees to operate off-site.
* The proposal is still in its early stages and is part of a larger project to create a unified online application for street closures, tents, and other event needs. The committee agreed this is a good idea and a necessary step for fairness and safety.

**d. Wine Accessory License Proposal**

* This is a new add-on license that would allow businesses with an existing wine license to sell up to **two bottles of wine** per customer for off-premise consumption, as an "accessory" to an on-site purchase (e.g., a meal or retail food items).
* The proposal was debated, with some committee members expressing concern that it blurs the line between on-sale and off-sale licenses and would be difficult to enforce.
* The proposed license would apply to any businesses with a Class F, FA, FARZ, G, I, or W license.
* Entrepreneurs Nikki Berglund and Nicole from Nicole's shared their perspectives, arguing that the license would provide a needed convenience for customers and encourage business growth. They stated that the current workaround of recorking an open bottle is a difficult and cumbersome process.
* The committee agreed that the current proposal is too complex and decided to defer a decision. A smaller group will meet with Steve to try and simplify the proposal before bringing it back to the committee.

#### **E. Charities Owning Liquor Establishments**

* Steve Sprague brought this topic to the board's attention for future consideration.
* He noted that a charity in Grand Forks and one or two in West Fargo have purchased liquor establishments.
* The board expressed concerns that this could be a "slippery slope" with numerous legal and logistical issues, such as who holds the license and how background checks would be conducted for a board of directors.
* It was noted that the state is currently conducting a study on this issue.
* The board requested that Steve gather more information and keep them updated on this topic.

#### **F. Other Items**

* A group of students from NDSU were in attendance.
* A board member shared a story about the use of a forensic ID scanner at a local off-sale establishment. The scanner successfully identified a fraudulent ID from an underage individual, highlighting the tool's effectiveness in preventing underage sales and reducing confrontation.
* The board reminded attendees that the ID scanners are available and free to use.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.