

# ALDERPERSON AGENDA ITEM MEMO

To: Government Affairs Committee

From: Andrew Meindl

Date: 02/22/2025

Revised: 04/29/2025

Subject: Ordinance Amendment to Expand Temporary Alcohol License Limits for Nonprofits & Businesses  
Hosting Festivals

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## A. Background/Rationale

Currently, Wauwatosa's Municipal Code §6.08.320 limits organizations to 16 temporary Class "B" beer licenses and two temporary "Class B" wine licenses per year. These limits create challenges for local businesses and nonprofit organizations that host multiple events, fundraisers, and festivals.

Many Wisconsin communities — including Madison, Milwaukee, and Green Bay — have modernized and streamlined their licensing processes to better support economic development, tourism, and community engagement. Some allow multiple event dates under a single application, remove unnecessary local caps, and advocate for broader reform at the state level.

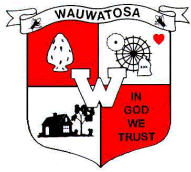
This proposal reflects feedback from city staff and is intended to:

1. Modernize Wauwatosa's online application system (Innergov).
2. Eliminate beer license caps from the city code to match state law.
3. Advocate for state legislative changes to further support local events.

## B. Key Issues for Consideration

Following consultation with city staff, I propose the following actions:

- 1. Support Multiple Date Fields to the Innergov Electronic Form (staff adjustment in electronic system)**  
Allow organizations to list multiple event dates on a single application when applying for temporary alcohol licenses, provided that each date remains a distinct licensed event.
- 2. Amend Wauwatosa Ordinance**
  - Remove the limit on the number of temporary Class "B" beer licenses per organization annually. (There is no state law limit.)
- 3. Advocate for State Legislative Reform**
  - Draft and submit a resolution urging Wauwatosa's legislative delegation to:
    - Remove the state limit of two temporary wine licenses per year per organization under Wis. Stat. §125.51(10).
    - Allow temporary licenses for full alcohol service ("Class B" beer, wine, and liquor) for qualifying nonprofit and festival events.



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## 4. State Law Trigger – Wine License Limit

If the state legislature changes the law to allow more than two temporary wine licenses per year, Wauwatosa would review and update its own ordinance to match. This wouldn't happen automatically, it would still go through the normal City Council approval process, but this proposal signals the city's intent to stay aligned with any future state-level changes.

### C. Fiscal Impact

There is no anticipated negative fiscal impact. Expanding access may slightly increase revenue through additional permit fees and stimulate local economic activity.

### D. Requested Action

1. City staff will lead the process of updating the Innergov electronic application system to allow applicants to enter multiple event dates on a single temporary alcohol license application. This administrative update will streamline the process for both applicants and staff, while maintaining compliance with state law.
2. Amend Section 6.08.320 to remove the beer license cap.
3. Adopt a resolution urging the Wisconsin State Legislature to expand temporary licensing authority statewide.

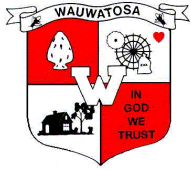
\*Please proceed deliberations on this proposal without memo sponsor present.

### E. Strategic Plan

This proposal supports economic growth, tourism, and community engagement by reducing bureaucratic barriers for event organizers and fostering a more vibrant event culture in Wauwatosa.

#### Economic Development & Financial Resilience

- Promote and support local businesses and anchor institutions.



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## F. Attachments

### **Draft Ordinance Language (Summary)**

**ORDINANCE NO. [#####]**

### **An Ordinance Amending Section 6.08.320 of the Wauwatosa Municipal Code**

#### **Key Changes:**

- Remove the 16-license limit on temporary Class “B” beer licenses.

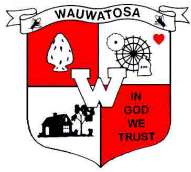
### **Draft Resolution to the Wisconsin Legislature (Summary)**

#### **Request:**

- Amend Wis. Stat. §125.51(10) to eliminate the two-per-year cap on temporary wine licenses.
- Expand temporary licensing to allow nonprofits and qualifying groups to hold temporary "Class B" (beer, wine, and liquor) permits.

### **Draft Trigger Clause – Alignment with State Law on Temporary “Class B” Wine Licenses**

If the Wisconsin State Legislature amends Wis. Stat. §125.51(10) to remove or increase the two-per-year limit on temporary “Class B” wine licenses, the City of Wauwatosa shall, upon such amendment, consider revising its Municipal Code §6.08.320 to align with the new state standard. Any changes to the municipal code will be enacted through the standard legislative process, ensuring compliance with state law and municipal governance procedures.



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## **A RESOLUTION URGING THE WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE TO AMEND WIS. STAT. §125.51(10) TO EXPAND TEMPORARY “CLASS B” ALCOHOL LICENSE AUTHORITY FOR NONPROFIT AND COMMUNITY EVENTS**

WHEREAS, Wisconsin State Statute §125.51(10) currently limits nonprofit organizations and qualifying entities to no more than two temporary “Class B” wine licenses per 12-month period; and

WHEREAS, these limits create administrative barriers for local nonprofit organizations, neighborhood associations, religious institutions, and community groups that host multiple fundraising events or festivals throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no provision under state law allowing municipalities to issue temporary “Class B” licenses for the sale of intoxicating liquor, further restricting flexibility for local event organizers and economic development partners; and

WHEREAS, expanding temporary licensing authority would allow municipalities to support community-based events, stimulate local economic activity, and encourage responsible and well-regulated alcohol service; and

WHEREAS, municipalities across Wisconsin have expressed interest in revisiting these limits in order to accommodate recurring cultural, civic, and fundraising events that contribute to vibrant community life; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Wauwatosa respectfully urges the Wisconsin State Legislature to:

1. **Amend Wis. Stat. §125.51(10)** to remove or increase the cap on temporary “Class B” wine licenses that a qualifying entity may receive in a calendar year; and
2. **Authorize the issuance of temporary “Class B” liquor licenses**, allowing municipalities to grant limited-duration permits for the sale of intoxicating liquor at community events, subject to local oversight.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this resolution to the offices of State Representative [Name], State Senator [Name], and the appropriate committees of the Wisconsin State Legislature for their consideration.