

ITEM#: 22  
DATE: 1-10-23  
DEPT: Police

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL, MICKEY’S IRISH PUB, 109 WELCH AVENUE**

**BACKGROUND:**

Mickey’s Irish Pub, located at 109 Welch Avenue, has applied for renewal of its Class C Liquor License with Outdoor Service privilege. These state licenses and permits must receive approval by the local authority (City Council) before they can be issued by the state.

The Police Department conducts compliance checks on establishments that hold liquor licenses in the City of Ames. These compliance checks are completed by taking an underage person to liquor licenses establishments who then attempts to purchase alcohol. A business passes the check if the employee asks for identification and rightly refuses the purchase. An establishment fails the compliance check if the employee sells to the underage person.

**Mickey’s Irish Pub passed a compliance check conducted by the Police Department on March 25, 2021.** However, in the previous 12 months, Ames officers have cited 24 individuals for being on-premise underage. Of those 24, officers were able to verify 15 used fake IDs. It is worth noting that officers are unable to determine if an individual used a fake ID or gained entrance some other way in all other cases.

While 24 citations in the course of one year is a higher number than staff would like to see, the fact that 15 (or at least 62%), used a fake ID to gain access is a mitigating factor. An establishment must use due diligence to be in compliance with the duties of maintaining a liquor license. It would appear the establishment is checking IDs, but some patrons are taking extraordinary steps to defeat the establishment’s efforts.

Staff spoke with the owner of Mickey’s, Ravinder “Ben” Singh about the violations and what steps could be taken to improve upon the establishment’s performance in this area. The owner said they will be purchasing ID scanners to be used at the door to check the validity of each ID. He also said he will require his staff to attend ID training offered by the Police Department and the Iowa Program for Alcohol Compliance Training (I-PACT) through ABD. The owner also reported he terminated two problem employees, and he would maintain proper staffing at the door to ensure ID checks are being conducted.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the application for a 12-month liquor license renewal.
2. Deny the application for a 12-month liquor license renewal.

**CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Compliance checks are conducted by the Ames Police Department and ABD to ensure liquor license holders are complying with their obligation to ensure underage individuals are not being sold or served alcohol. The applicant, Mickey’s Irish Pub passed this check on March 25, 2022. While 24 on-premises violations is higher than staff would like to see, there is evidence to suggest that the establishment is performing due diligence in its ID-checking practices. Further, the owner is committed to improving on the number of citations with new procedures and equipment.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council take the recommendation of the Chief of Police to adopt Alternative No. 1.

If the City Council opts for Alternative #2, the denial of a liquor license can be appealed, first to the ABD, then to an Administrative Law Judge, and then the District Court. If the applicant files an appeal with ABD, they are allowed to continue to operate. If the appeal(s) are not successful, alcohol may not be sold on the premise for one year, unless or until a new licensee applies for and is granted a new liquor license.