



JOCASTA ZAMARRIPA
ALDERWOMAN, 8TH DISTRICT

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIR

- Licenses Committee

VICE-CHAIR

- Community and Economic Development Committee

MEMBER

- Steering and Rules Committee
- Zoning, Neighborhoods, and Development Committee

November 19, 2025

To the Honorable, the Common Council

Honorable Members:

Re: Common Council File Number 251157

Attached are written objections to file number 251157 of the Licenses Committee relative to licenses:

Approval with a 20 (twenty) day suspension of the Class B Tavern and Public Entertainment Premises licenses for Jacob E. Dehne based upon the preponderance of the evidence in the police report and applicant testimony that demonstrates the operation results in a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the public for the failure to comply with the plan of operation, for the premises located at 1044 N MARTIN L KING JR DR.. ("RED WHITE AND BLUE") in the 4th aldermanic district.

This matter will be heard by the full Council at its Tuesday, November 25, 2025 meeting. Pursuant to City Ordinances, a roll call vote will be taken to confirm that all members have read the attached statement and materials.

Sincerely,

JoCasta Zamarripa
Chairperson Licenses Committee

cc: All Council Members
City Attorney's Office
Common Council/City Clerk – License Division
CCF 251157



Date: November 19, 2025
To: Milwaukee Common Council
Cc: jowcza@milwaukee.gov, stasst5@milwaukee.gov
From: Jacob E. Dehne, Agent
MKE Events LLC / Red White and Blue
1044 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53203
jake@sydragroup.com

Written Objection to the Recommendation of a 20-Day Suspension

I am objecting to the Licenses Committee's recommended 20-day suspension of my Class "B" Tavern and Public Entertainment Premises licenses for Red White and Blue.

I, Jake Dehne, have operated in this building and on this street for over 25 years. I currently own three properties on the street, as well as two additional businesses on the street. I serve as a board member for both the Old World Third Street Association and the Westown Association—organizations focused on safety, economic development, and strong community partnerships. Last week, I was honored with the Debra Usinger Community Partnership Award from the Westown Association, recognizing my longstanding commitment to this neighborhood.

I also have a long history of working collaboratively with the Common Council to address concerns as they arise. Over the years, I have implemented numerous changes at the Council's request, including adjusting drink specials, modifying promotional practices, and adding metal-detecting wands to enhance security. Whenever an issue has been raised, I have responded proactively and in good faith to meet the expectations of the Council and the community.

I care deeply about the success, safety, and integrity of downtown Milwaukee, and I would not have invested so heavily here if I did not believe in this neighborhood and its future. It is important to note that throughout this licensing process, not a single neighbor filed a complaint or appeared to oppose my license renewal. Additionally, the Milwaukee Police Department did not appear at the hearing to object, did not testify that the business is a nuisance, and did not assert that we pose a threat to public safety.

Additionally, the Licenses Committee did not acknowledge that we have successfully passed underage tavern checks on five separate occasions in the past.

A 20-day suspension during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season would create a severe loss of income for my staff of over 50 employees. Many of these employees are constituents of the Committee's alderpersons and represent a majority female and minority workforce. Such a suspension would directly eliminate thousands of dollars in wages that they rely on during the holiday season. Further, the City itself would lose a substantial amount of tax revenue at a peak period under the new sales tax structure.

Given these factors, I respectfully ask the Common Council to issue a warning letter instead of a 20-day suspension. I have already demonstrated corrective action by purchasing a top-of-the-line ID scanner, and I am committed to continuing improvement. My entire security team will continue participating in ongoing training and collaboration with the Milwaukee Police Department to stay current on evolving fake ID technology and best practices. We are fully committed to preventing underage admission and maintaining a safe, compliant establishment.

My objections are outlined below.

1. Underage ID Issues Stem From Unprecedented Advances in Fake ID Technology, Not Negligence

My staff did not knowingly admit minors, and we use ID verification tools. However, fake ID production has advanced dramatically; many fraudulent IDs now scan as legitimate and pass visual inspection.

To strengthen compliance even further, I have purchased a top-of-the-line, state-of-the-art ID scanner designed to detect modern, highly sophisticated fraudulent IDs, including those manufactured overseas.

2. The Police Report Does Not Demonstrate That the Operation Poses a Threat to Public Health, Safety, or Welfare

Most of the incidents cited involve:

- Fights occurring outside the premises after bar close,
- Disturbances driven by citywide, high-volume events,

- Situations where my staff proactively contacted MPD for assistance.

These circumstances do not demonstrate unsafe or negligent management within the premises.

3. The Establishment's Location and Capacity Create Unique Crowd Conditions Beyond Any Operator's Control

Red White and Blue has a capacity of 825 and is located next to the Fiserv Forum, the Deer District, and multiple major event venues. On several cited dates, thousands of individuals exited events simultaneously into congested streets or closed roadways.

No operator can control large crowds forming in public right-of-way areas once they have left event venues or other businesses.

4. Staff Frequently Acted Properly and Cooperated Fully With MPD

In multiple incidents:

- Staff called MPD for assistance,
- Staff promptly submitted video to Evidence.com,
- Staff removed disruptive individuals,
- Staff followed MPD directives, including early closure when requested.

These actions reflect responsible and appropriate management.

5. Substantial Corrective Measures Have Already Been Implemented

Since the incidents cited:

- Security staff has been increased and retrained,
- ID scanning technology has been upgraded,
- Coordination has increased with the Westtown Association and MPD,

- Operational procedures have been strengthened for high-traffic nights.

6. A 20-Day Suspension Is Excessive and Inconsistent With Past Council Precedent

Similar cases involving underage access or event-driven disturbances have typically resulted in:

- Warning letters,
- Adjustments to plans of operation,

A 20-day closure during one of the busiest revenue periods of the year is disproportionately severe and would cause significant harm to workers and reduce tax revenue to the City.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Common Council:

1. Reject the 20-day suspension, and
2. Approve renewal of the licenses, or alternatively,
3. Issue a warning letter consistent with past precedent.

I remain committed to operating safely, responsibly, and collaboratively with all city partners. I look forward to presenting oral arguments on November 25.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacob E. Dehne

Agent, MKE Events LLC

Red White and Blue

jake@sydragroup.com

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacob E. Dehne', with a stylized, flowing script.