



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Danielle Larson, Tax & License Manager, Andy Cherullo, Finance Director
COPY: Government Performance & Finance Committee
PRESENTER: Danielle Larson, Tax & License Manager
SUBJECT: Establishing New After-Hours Club License and Amendments to Tacoma Municipal Code Chapters 6B.70 and 6B.80 – Entertainment Licenses
DATE: June 3, 2025

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Request for Ordinance

SUMMARY:

Staff from Tacoma Police Department (TPD) and Tax & License (T&L) worked in coordination to propose a new license to regulate after-hours social clubs that operate between the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. Additionally, proposed amendments to Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) Chapters 6B.70 – Entertainment with Alcohol and 6B.80 – Entertainment Without Alcohol will help clarify and strengthen current regulations of entertainment establishments.

BACKGROUND:

Staff from TPD requested that T&L create a regulatory framework around after-hours social clubs. Over the past five years there have been 27 offenses including 4 homicides and 12 aggravated assaults with a gun associated with after-hours clubs with dozens of additional calls to TPD regarding noise and disturbance complaints from neighboring residents.

- In July 2020, there was a shooting outside of an after-hours club on 38th and Yakima Ave.
- In February 2021, four people were shot, resulting in one deceased victim at an after-hours club on McKinley Ave.
- In April 2021, two people were shot in the early morning hours outside an after-hours club on South Tacoma Way.

Additionally, some of the after-hours clubs have been found serving alcohol without a valid Washington State Liquor License.

ISSUE:

New License – After-Hours Club

The proposed After-Hours Club License is intended to establish regulations for a business that wants to offer a place for persons 21 and over to socialize after 2 a.m. when nightclubs and bars are closed. Live entertainment and dancing would continue to be prohibited during the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. as outlined in the entertainment licensing regulations; however recorded music could be played.

The new license would require an annual written safety plan to be filed and approved by TPD, video surveillance at each point of entry, employing at least two licensed security personnel during operating hours and taking steps, such as metal detectors, to prevent weapons from entering the premises.



An on-site inspection by TPD and T&L Compliance staff will be required prior to a business operating and prior to the license being approved. If a business denies the initial inspection the license will be denied. Additional follow up inspections can occur at any time. If an inspection is denied the license can be summarily suspended.

The annual fee will be established at \$300 to cover staff time to inspect the premises, conduct criminal background checks on the applicants and review and administer the license application.

Entertainment Licenses (TMC 6B.70 and 6B.80)

Entertainment establishments – those businesses that provide live entertainment such as music performances, DJ's, dances, sporting events, comedy shows or karaoke - have two separate portions of code depending on whether they are licensed to serve alcohol (TMC 6B.70) or not (TMC 6B.80).

Chapter 6B.70 regulates entertainment establishments licensed by State Liquor Cannabis Board (LCB) to serve alcohol such as a nightclub or a bar. Amendments in 6B.70 include:

- Clarifying that areas outside of the building (i.e. parking area), that are in control of the owner, are a part of the regulated establishment.
- Clarifying that entertainment establishments are not allowed to operate between the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.
- Updating the license fees to cover regulation and administration of the license.

Chapter 6B.80 regulates entertainment establishments who are not licensed by LCB to serve alcohol. Events held at the establishment may obtain a Special Occasion permit from LCB to serve alcohol at private events such as a wedding or family birthday party, but the owner of the establishment does not have a liquor license and cannot operate like a nightclub or bar. Amendments in 6B.80 include:

- Strengthening requirements of evidence for private clubs to meet the exemption from the license requirements.
- Updating the license fees to cover regulation and administration of the license.

License Type	Count of 2024 License	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	Increase/Decrease to Fee
ENTERTAIN & DANCE ALCOHOL CLASS A	0	2,400	1500	-900
ENTERTAIN & DANCE ALCOHOL CLASS A RENEWAL	0	600	1000	400
ENTERTAIN & DANCE ALCOHOL CLASS B	5	450	N/A	No Change
ENTERTAIN & DANCE ALCOHOL CLASS B RENEWAL	23	300	N/A	No Change
ENTERTAIN & DANCE ALCOHOL CLASS C	0	180	250	70
ENTERTAIN & DANCE ALCOHOL CLASS C RENEWAL	19	120	150	30
ENTERTAIN & DANCE NO ALCOHOL 0-2999 SQ FT NEW	1	150	250	100
ENTERTAIN & DANCE NO ALCOHOL 0-2999 SQ FT RENEWAL	0	100	150	50
ENTERTAIN & DANCE NO ALCOHOL 3000-6000 SQ FT NEW	0	220	250	30
ENTERTAIN & DANCE NO ALCOHOL 3000-6000 SQ FT RENEWAL	1	170	150	(20)
ENTERTAIN & DANCE NO ALCOHOL 6000+ SQ FT NEW	0	300	250	(50)
ENTERTAIN & DANCE NO ALCOHOL 6000+ SQ FT RENEWAL	0	250	150	(100)
ENTERTAIN & DANCE NO ALCOHOL CHARITABLE ORG	2	25	75	50
ENTERTAIN & DANCE SECURITY PERSONNEL LICENSE	36	50	100	50



ALTERNATIVES:

An alternative is to not create a regulatory structure for after-hours social clubs that want to operate after 2 a.m., however, having regulations established in the TMC will help deter public safety issues from arising in and around after-hours establishments.

FISCAL IMPACT:

These proposed amendments have more to do with public safety than license fees. The proposed amendments to the regulatory license fees will increase general fund revenues by approximately \$3,000 annually.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending City Council approve the proposed new license to regulate after-hours social clubs that operate between the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. and the proposed amendments to Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) Chapters 6B.70 – Entertainment with Alcohol and 6B.80 – Entertainment Without Alcohol licenses to clarify and strength current regulations of entertainment establishments.