Public Safety Advisory Board

Thursday June 18th, 2026 (3:00 PM) - City Council Chambers

Meeting Minutes

Present: Andrew (Drew) Biemer, Bouzned (Moe) Djabelarbi, Steve Edwards, Jessica Eskeland, Councilor and Chair Amanda Grady Sexton, Kate Lipman, Councilor Jim Schlosser, Lisa Brown, Councilor Jeff Foote, Councilor Ali Sekou, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic

Staff Members Present: Fire Chief Chisholm, Deputy Fire Chief Costello, Deputy Police Chief Smagula, Police Chief Moulton, Deputy Police Chief Casey, and City Solicitor John Conforti

Minute Taker: Councilor Amanda Grady Sexton

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from April 16th 2026 was made by Councilor Schlosser and seconded by Drew Biemer. The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

Social District Ordinance Discussion

The Board continued its discussion regarding the creation of social districts in Concord under RSA 178:35.

City Solicitor John Conforti provided an overview of the statutory framework and explained that the state law authorizes municipalities to establish social districts but provides limited guidance on the local process. He explained that the City Council must approve a management and maintenance plan and establish district boundaries, which must then be filed with the Liquor Commission.

He noted that Concord currently has a general prohibition on the consumption of alcohol on City property or in public places, with limited exceptions, including outdoor dining areas and nonprofit alcohol service connected to certain events such as Market Days. A social district ordinance would need to create another exception to allow open containers within approved boundaries.

Two draft ordinance options were reviewed:

Version 1:

Version 1 would require each proposed social district to go through a noticed public hearing before City Council.

Version 2:

Version 2 would allow applications to be reviewed by the Public Safety Advisory Board, which would make a recommendation to City Council. City Council would then consider the item

without requiring a separate public hearing unless a councilor chose to remove it from the consent agenda for discussion.

City Solicitor Conforti clarified that a public hearing is required to adopt the enabling ordinance itself, but state law does not require a public hearing for every future social district application.

Board members discussed whether social district applications should be handled similarly to other City permitting processes, such as street closures or public event permits, where staff review includes input from relevant departments such as Police, Fire, Code Administration, General Services, and other City staff as needed.

Some members expressed concern about maintaining sufficient public input, while others noted that requiring a full public hearing for each temporary event could create delays and make planning difficult for businesses and event organizers. Some members discussed their overall concern with social districts due to safety and environmental concerns.

The Board also discussed whether alcohol within a social district should be limited to beer and wine or whether hard alcohol should be allowed. City Solicitor Conforti explained that such limits could be addressed later through the management and maintenance plan or through administrative policy. He also clarified that existing state liquor laws would continue to apply, including rules regarding over-service, licensed establishments, and Liquor Commission enforcement.

There was discussion about temporary and recurring districts. Members noted that application forms could distinguish between single-event districts and recurring districts. City Solicitor Conforti stated that the application process could include fields identifying whether the request is for a single event or recurring use.

Police and Fire representatives noted that if a social district created public safety concerns, the City would have the ability to act quickly and recommend that the district be shut down immediately. It was also noted that the Liquor Commission had previously indicated a willingness to assist with education and enforcement.

Board members discussed whether the ordinance should include a sunset provision. No sunset provision was added.

Following discussion, a motion was made to recommend Version 2 of the proposed ordinance.

Action: A motion to recommend approval of Version 2 of the proposed social district ordinance was made by Steve Edwards and seconded by Kate Lipman.

The Motion passed 7-2 with Lisa Brown and Mo Djabelarbi voting in opposition.

The Chair thanked the subcommittee, City staff, and City Solicitor Conforti for their work. City Solicitor Conforti stated he would attend the City Council meeting to explain the process and answer questions.

Future Agenda Items/Summer Meeting Schedule

The Board discussed the summer meeting schedule. There were no current referrals before the Board.

Members agreed to cancel the July and August meetings unless a referral is received from City Council requiring Board action.

The Board plans to resume its regular meeting schedule in September on the third Thursday at 3:00 PM.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.