

UNDERAGE DRINKING TASK FORCE  
June 25, 2009

The meeting of the Underage Drinking Task Force was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Mayor Meyer.

Present: Lisa and Dewy Schutz, Mayor Meyer, Dorothy Chaney, Ed Wagner, Harold Wolfgram, Shawn Becker, Gary Jepson, Joe Stroik, and Frank Baltus.

Absent: John Kruse

Others Present: Amy Krogman and Liz Welter

The purpose of this committee is to look at the City Code to see where it is inadequate regarding the fining of the license holder when they are failing compliance checks. The goal of everyone involved is to prevent the selling of alcohol to an underaged person.

Dorothy Chaney explained to the committee what MACY (Marshfield Area Coalition on Youth) does. MACY has been around for several years, but 2 years ago started working with law enforcement on compliance checks and party checks. The motivation of these checks is not to punish the retailer or bar owners, but not have underage people receiving alcohol from these establishments. These checks are funded by grant money. The Police Department has done approximately 300 – 400 hours of party patrol and 16 hours of compliance checks in a year. Every liquor license holder gets checked at least 2 times a year including the beer gardens, the VFW and the American Legion.

They have recently begun shoulder taps where the underage person asks someone in a parking lot to buy them alcohol. 40% of adults agreed to buy for the underage person. At this point, there were no tickets issued, but in the future they will receive a ticket.

One concern of the retailers and bar owners is if a bartender serves a minor; there is no penalty for the bartender. If the person who sold the alcohol to the minor is fired from the bar or store, they can go to the next establishment to get a job. There is nothing on their record.

Shawn Becker from the Wood County Sheriff's Department explained how Wood County tickets the people who served the underaged person. When a bartender serves the person during the compliance check, the person will walk out of the bar and give a full description of the bartender. Wood County then sends a letter to the bar owners with the description of the bartender asking them to identify the bartender. If the bar owners won't cooperate, they get the ticket. Wood County tickets the bartenders in an establishment twice, then the bar owner receives the 3<sup>rd</sup> ticket.

The committee discussed ways to lesson the punishment on the bar owners. Currently, for a 1<sup>st</sup> offense, there are 25 points assessed, 2<sup>nd</sup> offense 50 points assessed, 3<sup>rd</sup> violation they get referred to the Judiciary, License and Cemetery Committee.

Several ideas were discussed to reduce the number of points assessed:

1. If an establishment fails a compliance check, they are assessed ½ the points. If the Police Department walks in and finds a minor drinking in the bar, they will be assessed the full points.
2. If an establishment gets two successful compliance checks, points could be forgiven.
3. MACY is developing a “Good Neighbor Program”. If an establishment participates in the program, points are reduced.

Currently the ordinances does provide for points reduction for good faith efforts.

At the next meeting Dorothy Chaney will bring the guidelines for compliances checks and Best Practices from La Crosse. Ed Wagner will discuss the point issue with the JLC Committee to see if the points assessed can be lowered if the establishment fails a compliance check. Hap Wolfgram will look into putting restrictions on underage locations.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Krogman  
Mayor’s Secretary