

June 4, 2025

City of Appleton
Safety and Licensing Commission and Common Council
100 N. Appleton St.
Appleton, WI 54911

Dear Members,

I am writing in response to the recent recommendation of non-renewal of the licensing for Tandem Wine and Beer. It is understood that all businesses in the municipality in application for provision of alcohol licensing should be reviewed with a focus on the ownership, reputation and history in the community and record of licensure violations. I am the owner and do have a record of 3 OWI convictions in the last 10 years. I am not proud of this and have adjusted my lifestyle to prevent this from happening again. What I am proud of is Tandem and its unique presence within the community.

I opened Tandem in 2015. I didn't know much about running a business but took a leap of faith after removing myself from a 20 year career in social work. The last 10 years of my Social Work career were spent in Appleton directly working with law enforcement and other human service agencies arranged to assist people in crisis.

Tandem has been operating without license demerit since 2015. Tandem has always practiced priority on collaboration with other local small businesses and has a featured role in elevating the local economy. We have been a presence for local artists, Lawrence University students and a cornerstone for food trucks.

Tandem is a blended retail and lounge environment with a strong local country and international customer base. Guests from outside the area often remark they wish they has something similar in their community. Tandem is a "Culture" not what you would ordinarily think of as a "Bar". The business hours are typically 2-8pm. Tandem is designed and offered as a relaxed and quiet meeting space with options to have wine, beer or a cocktail. We have food trucks on a regular basis for those who would like to share a meal. We have strong community partners who host out of town business guests in our environment including AZCO, Lawrence University, Pierce, and Geiger Consulting. We have also hosted fundraisers for LEAVEN and contributed to the ADI annual banquet. Businesses choose our setting for the ease of socializing, quality of experience, unique atmosphere and lack of "common bar culture".

The recommendation for non-renewal includes statements of concern that due to my record I may have poor judgement and may over serve patrons. This, however, does not occur. The licensed agent and operator is now my wife, Karter Thompson. In that role my function of serving has diminished over time as she is absorbing the primary operations of Tandem. I am now dedicating my time within Tandem on 2 exciting projects. I will be signing documents this week on purchase of a new LLC called Timeless Rescue. Timeless Rescue will be located on the upper level within Tandem and operated by me. Timeless Rescue will be offering vintage items and clothing along with small scale architectural salvage pieces.

In addition to Timeless Rescue, I am currently working on a clean drinking water project within Tandem. The equipment has been purchased and is almost ready for installation. This will be coordinated as a separate LLC called Appleton Safe Water. I will be using reverse osmosis equipment to purify city water, introducing alkaline and essential minerals for public purchase and consumption. These efforts have and will require most of my time while present at Tandem as owner, while Karter as agent and operator will continue with responsibility of Tandem operations.

In closing, we would like to remind you that we have been demerit free for the lifespan of our license, without response from EMS or other violations directly related to the license. We are open to any recommendations from you in order to maintain licensure as this would devastate our current financial position and goals within the community.

Sincerely yours,

George Koenig, Owner

Karter Thompson, Agent/Operator











