



PLANNING, LICENSES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
Council Chambers, Keene City Hall  
July 8, 2026  
6:00 PM

**A. AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Let It Shine - Request for Use of City Property - Keene Pumpkin Festival - October 17, 2026  
Staff Report/Safety Protocol Team – Keene Pumpkin Festival - City Clerk
2. Councilor Ruttle-Miller - Request to Reinstate the College City Commission
3. Councilor Williams – Request to Consider Restricting the Sale of 7-Hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) and Concentrated Kratom Products
4. Councilor Filiault - Request for Consideration of an Ordinance Amendment Regulating Dogs at Downtown Events
5. Mayor Kahn - Potential Expansion of Permitted Uses in Commerce, Industrial, and Industrial Park Zones  
**(Referred to Joint PB/PLD at 05/21/2026 Council Meeting - on PLD in error)**

**B. MORE TIME ITEMS**

1. Relating to Short-term Rental Uses  
Ordinance O-2026-09
2. Relating to the Definition of Short-term Rental  
Ordinance O-2026-10

**NON PUBLIC SESSION**

**ADJOURNMENT**



January 5, 2026

Honorable Mayor Kahn and Keene City Council,

The Let It Shine Board would like to submit its request for a license for the 2026 Keene Pumpkin Festival. Following the massive success of this year's event, we're excited to bring back a nearly identical event in scope and scale, renewing our focus on a safe, family-friendly atmosphere that will help celebrate Keene's tradition, while keeping it local to the region. Last year saw over \$40,000 raised by nonprofits at our festival, and an estimated \$200,000+ boost to the local economy in just one afternoon of festival.

We will begin our planning process soon, and we know this year will be the first of two exceptional years due to the infrastructure work being performed over most of our typical footprint. This is the first time in the 30+ year history of the Keene festival that it has been located off the square, and while we're excited to explore a new layout, we also appreciate any flexibility the city and council will have in our request for road closures this year, as we do not believe the established set of three event footprint options can be used to create a safe, fun pumpkin festival we'd be proud of. We also want to focus our activities on Main St to support downtown businesses in this time of intense strain.

As such, specific road closures, etc will be subject to change based on discussions with and approval of the protocol committee but will certainly encumber the portions of Main Street South of Railroad Square, potentially as far south as the Marlboro Street roundabout, but at least as far as Water Street.

We plan to continue our dialogue with Keene State since we will likely be nearer to their campus this year, and hope to continue to integrate the school into more of the festival activities.

We will continue to update required documentation as protocol moves forward, and if City Council would like these updates, we will happily provide them.

The high-level points from this year's festival are as follows:

- Requested street closure specifics will be discussed in protocol but will include Railroad Street and Main Street from the south edge of the construction zone to Water Street or Marlboro Street on Saturday, October 17.
- No counting of pumpkins will occur, nor will any Guinness attempts be made. We continue to emphasize this is not a competition, but a community.
- All local elementary schools are provided free pumpkins and invited to carve and display them.
- Non-profits will be selling food, and craft vendors will sell their wares.
- Local businesses will be invited to host trick-or-treating for children and make pumpkin specials.

We (and so many in the community), are excited to celebrate this festival downtown once again, and we are looking forward to working with the City of Keene and the City Council to continue our city's great tradition. We hope to continue to support downtown through the challenging construction ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The Let It Shine Board  
Michael Giacomo  
Chairman of the Board, Let It Shine



# CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #

**Meeting Date:** July 8, 2026  
**To:** Planning, Licenses and Development Committee  
**From:** Terri Hood, City Clerk  
**Through:**  
**Subject:** **Staff Report/Safety Protocol Team – Keene Pumpkin Festival - City Clerk**

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**Recommendation:**

Move that the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommend that the City Council grant a revocable license to Let It Shine to use downtown City rights-of-way to conduct the Keene Pumpkin Festival on Saturday, October 17, 2026, subject to the licensing requirements identified in the staff report, including associated road closures and authorization of free parking. All permissions granted herein are subject to compliance with the City-approved safety protocol document, which becomes a part of this license.

**Attachments:**

None

**Background:**

The City of Keene Safety Protocol Team is recommending the issuance of a license to the Let It Shine with said permission, inclusive of the following licensing requirements.

**Code/Legal Requirements:**

1. The signing of a revocable license and indemnification agreement;
2. That the Petitioner submit a certificate of liability insurance with the City of Keene listed as additional insured in the amount of \$1,000,000;
3. That the Petitioner submit signed letter(s) of permission for use of private property;
4. Said license is granted subject to obtainment of any necessary licenses or permits and compliance with all laws.

**Administrative and Event Specific Requirements:**

1. The Petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services over and above any amount of City funding allocated in the FY 27 Community Events Budget. Said payment shall be made within 30-days of the date of invoicing;

2. Approval of the event footprint which includes Main Street on both sides south of the Flag Pole and north of Emerald Street and Eagle Court, as well as Railroad Street, Railroad Square, Church Street, Gilbo Avenue, Commercial Street, and Cypress Street, together with any additional streets as necessary to accommodate detour routes, as determined in coordination with City staff;
3. Approval of the duration of the event which will be held from 2:00 PM to 7:30 PM, with set-up and breakdown times established in coordination with City staff;
4. The Petitioner is permitted to place portable toilets in designated City parking spaces on Gilbo Avenue and Railroad Street from Friday, October 16, 2026 to Monday October 19, 2026, with placement and securing methods subject to City staff approval;
5. That Petitioner is permitted to use portions of Main Street for pumpkin drop-off by area schools and sponsors on Friday, October 16, 2026;
6. The Petitioner is permitted to place one dumpster in designated City parking spaces on Railroad Street;
7. The Petitioner is permitted to run shuttle buses from Optical Avenue to Emerald Street on day of the event from 1:30 PM to 7:30 PM;
8. The Petitioner shall provide event map including locations of vendors, activities, and entertainment venues to City staff at least 14 days prior to the event date and shall provide names of food vendors to Building/Health Official (Richard Wood) at least 14 days prior to event date to allow any necessary permitting and inspections to be coordinated;
9. Free parking is authorized under the City's Free Parking Policy for City parking spaces needed for logistical purposes beginning Thursday, October 15, 2026, at 6:00 AM and extending through Monday, October 19, 2026, and spaces within the event footprint on the day of the event;
10. The Petitioner agrees to place cones or barriers needed to close off Elm Street at Vernon and Mechanic during the timeframe that tower materials are moving from Elm Street Parking lot to Railroad Square on Thursday, October 15, 2026, and will move cones or barriers off to one side on the median once tower setup completed
  - a. Licensee will place cones or barriers for closure of Elm Street from Vernon to Mechanic during tower break-down on Sunday, October 18, 2026 morning and will move cones or barriers off to one side on the median once tower breakdown has been completed
  - b. Licensee will move any traffic cones to the median when road is reopened on Sunday, October 18, 2026;
11. The Petitioner is responsible for full clean-up of the footprint, returning the area to the same condition that it was in prior to the event and allowing the opening of all streets to traffic on Saturday, October 17, 2026 (with the exception of the inner lane around Central Square AND Elm Street from Vernon Street to Mechanic Street, which will remain closed through Sunday, October 18, 2026 afternoon at 4:00 PM to facilitate tower removal)
  - a. A-frames may remain disassembled on Main Street median until Sunday, October 18, 2026 morning removal
  - b. A-frame crossbars may remain on Main Street median until Monday, October 19, 2026 morning removal;
12. The Petitioner agrees to provide a contingent of volunteers and /or personnel from their organization adequate to carry out the setup, operation, and post event clean-up to include one person in charge of each segment of the event, whom will be equipped with communication equipment capable of contacting the overall event coordinator (cell phones);
13. The Petitioner understands that failure to promptly close the event, the lack of adequate personnel and/or volunteers as determined by the Emergency Management Director or his representative, delays in opening the streets to traffic, or failure to complete final clean-up, or

complete the event in the identified timeframe may result in additional costs that will be the responsibility of Licensee;

14. The Petitioner shall advertise that dogs are discouraged from attending by City Ordinance;
15. The Petitioner shall advertise that backpacks are discouraged;
16. The Petitioner shall notify downtown businesses and other affected parties of event;
17. The Petitioner shall notify Keene Housing Authority so they can alert residents of 5 Central Square Terrace of all streets closure details and well as dates and times;
18. The Petitioner shall contact churches in the vicinity/adjacent to the event footprint in advance of the event to let them know when it will be occurring;
19. Any use of drones by the Petitioner will require proper permitting by the operator which will need to be submitted to EMD staff;
20. The Petitioner understands that any vehicle that is connected to a compost trailer that is parked within the event footprint will need to be locked and key control will need to be maintained – additionally any vehicle or trailer within the event footprint should be booted to prevent it from rolling;
21. All permissions granted herein are subject to compliance with the approved safety protocol document, which becomes a part of this license, and any conditions as may be required by City staff.

Laura Ruttle-Miller  
222 West Street  
Unit 219  
Keene, NH 03431

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council,

I would like to respectfully request that the City make an immediate effort to reinstate the now-defunct College City Commission.

At its core, Keene is a college city, and there is an urgent need for the City to partner with Keene State College to identify meaningful ways to support the institution during this tumultuous period in its history. The City's Master Plan recognizes the importance of the partnership between Keene and Keene State College, and reinstating this commission would be directly aligned with those stated goals.

I understand that efforts are being made within the community; however, I wanted to send this communication to help reinvigorate discussion within the Council regarding how the City can actively support these efforts. This region would be fundamentally changed by the continued degradation (or potential loss) of a 117-year-old institution that plays such a critical role in our economic, cultural, and civic identity.

I would be happy to volunteer my time and support in any way that may be helpful.

Respectfully,



June 30, 2026

City of Keene Clerk's Office  
3 Washington Street  
Keene, NH 03431

To the Honorable Mayor and City Council,

I am concerned that products containing 7-OH (7-hydroxymitragynine) and other concentrated psychoactive extracts of kratom leaf are being sold over the counter at gas stations, smoke shops, and convenience stores in Keene.

7-OH is dangerous because it binds to opioid receptors in the brain, and it carries a high risk of addiction, dependency, and overdose. It is one of several new synthetic and semi-synthetic products that are relatively new to the market that have opioid-like properties. Others I would consider in this category include MGM-15 and "Feel Free," which is tonic that contains a mixture of kratom and kava extracts that markets itself as an alcohol alternative and productivity booster.

The FDA has issued repeated warnings about the 7-OH products and has recommended that the DEA classify it as Schedule 1 controlled substance. There has also been an effort to ban synthetic kratom products at the state level, which did not make it through in the most recent legislative session.

The widespread availability of these products suggests that reliance on state and federal mechanisms to protect people in our community from unregulated kratom derivatives has not been sufficient, and I would like the City of Keene to look at what can be done at a local level.

The City of Franklin, NH, has banned the sale and possession of kratom products since 2019. While I would not go so far as to ban possession – a measure that could be counter-productive from a harm-reduction perspective – I do think it would be highly appropriate to restrict the most addictive of these products from being sold in Keene. I believe that opioids should not be sold in the absence of medical supervision.

I ask that the City Council move with expediency in considering how to address this emergent threat to public health.

Sincerely,



Bobby Williams

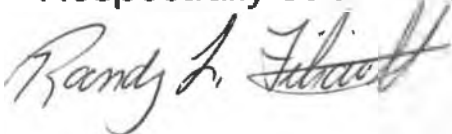
City Councilor, Ward 2

June 17, 2026

To: Mayor Kahn and Keene City Council  
From: City Councilor Randy Filiault  
Subject: Restricting dogs at downtown events

At a recent downtown event, I witnessed several incidents involving dogs that attendees had brought to the event, despite the organizers asking no dogs be allowed. Although the dogs were separated before anything major happened, the situation could've been much worse considering the amount of people gathered in such a limited area. Therefore, in the interest of public safety, I recommend we look into adjusting our city ordinance regulating dogs at such events.

Respectfully submitted,



City Councilor Randy Filiault