

## Another side to alcohol issue

Written by Steve Walker  
Thursday, 26 May 2011 19:50 -

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After reading the article in the paper last week about the alcohol hours being extended for some businesses I felt it necessary to tell my side of the story as a business owner.

I do not have a Facebook account to read or comment via the "Community Conversations" Facebook account. I have been in business in Gothenburg for the last 36 years and 13 years in selling alcohol.

I went to several city council meetings in regard to the extension of alcohol sales for my business. The need arose for some of the sporting events that are held at my business such as pool league tournaments, poker tournaments, wedding receptions and extra business for the summer with golfers in town. After several meetings the city council decided that the extension was approved.

Some of the reasons for that change was the other businesses in town have been selling alcohol for years at noon on Sundays. We were previously only allowed to sell alcohol at 4 p.m. on Sundays until 10 p.m. This would then make all the businesses in town have the same hours to sell alcohol.

I believe it is every person's choice whether they want to have an alcoholic drink legally. Somehow through all of this decision-making the local church groups have become involved making this an issue of morality instead of equality of all businesses selling alcohol.

I pay taxes, purchase a liquor license every year, have yearly inspections and have rules and regulations that I have to follow to keep my license to sell. Any issues that arise in the inspections I also have to pay for those changes.

In addition, as a business owner with a liquor license I have a responsibility to make sure no one is over served or too drunk to drive. I am trying to meet the needs of my customers and want the city council's decision to stay as it is.

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I believe we have bigger issues in town to worry about and direct our attention to than this. Some would argue that there is a cost to taxpayers for this extension, however, there will also be a cost to the taxpayers for a petition and to add this to the voting ballot. We have a city council in place to make these decisions and we need to respect their decisions.

Let's all work together to do our parts to make this a peaceful transition.

Steve Walker, Gothenburg