

## City Council – Action Request Form

**Date:** October 21, 2024

**To:** Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

Angel Wright-Lanier, Assistant City Manager

**From:** William H. Penn, Police Chief

Angela I. Carmon, City Attorney

**Council Action Requested:**

Ordinance Approving the Creation of Article IV of Chapter 34 of the City Code Regulating the Operation of Massage and Bodywork Therapy Establishments Within the City

**Strategic Focus Area:** Safe and Secure Community

**Strategic Objective:** Reduce Crime and Fear of Crime

**Strategic Plan Action Item:** N/A

**Key Work Item:** N/A



**Summary of Information:**

It is proposed that an ordinance be created for the regulation and operation of massage and bodywork therapy establishments within the city. This proposal is prompted by an inquiry from Detective Susan Warner with the Winston-Salem Police Department on ways the city can support WSPD efforts to curb sex trafficking, prostitution, and other “illicit massage” activity that may operate under the guise of legitimate massage therapy and bodywork establishments.

This ordinance would establish a process for massage businesses to apply for a permit by submitting: an application, background check, list of all employees performing massage, list of other massage establishments owned or operated by the applicant, and providing a description of any other businesses to be operated on the same premises or on adjoining premises if owned or controlled by the applicant.

Further, this ordinance would require:

- employees of massage practices to have a valid license for massage issued by the State

**Committee Action:**

**Committee** PS- 10/14/2024

Hold in Committee for 12/09/2024

**For**

**Against**

**Remarks:**

- anyone leasing/renting/using the premises of/advertising a massage business to have a valid State massage license
- anyone employed by a massage business to be at least 18 years old
- permittees to notify WSPD in writing of changes in the massage business' ownership, name, or services within 14 days.

There is an exception to the permit requirement for individual massage therapists in possession of a current massage license from the State, as well as any others who would otherwise be exempt from State massage and bodywork therapy licensure requirements. Staff contends that an ordinance establishing a massage and bodywork therapy establishment permitting process would go far towards safeguarding the legitimacy of such establishments within the city.