

MEMO

TO: Public Safety & Welfare Committee

FROM: Dana Davis, Chair

DATE: May 6, 2026

RE: Proposed Massage Ordinance

Because there are two new members on the Public Safety & Welfare Committee, I want to provide some historical context on the journey the Massage Ordinance has taken through the committee approval process.

March 4, 2026 – Public Safety & Welfare Committee

A proposed Massage Ordinance draft was presented to the committee for review and action. The PS&W committee unanimously voted to approve the ordinance.

- [Memo from Police Chief Brower](#)
- [Massage Ordinance – Draft #1](#)

March 17, 2026 – Common Council

The Massage Ordinance, unanimously approved by the PS&W committee, was presented to Council.

- Danielle Taylor, owner of a massage establishment, voiced some concerns during public comments.
- The Council asked for more specifics about the application process.
- Council voted to send the ordinance back to the PS&W Committee for revisions.

April 1, 2026 - Public Safety & Welfare Committee

- [Massage Ordinance – Draft #2](#)
- [Meeting Notes](#)

Summary of Changes in Draft #2:

- Reference to “parlor” removed from the ordinance.
- Massage Therapy or Bodywork Therapy definition is identical to the language in the state statute.
- Purpose and Authority section added
- Application – The requirements on the application.

- Hours of operation adjusted from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. – 9 p.m.
- Professional dress clarified
- Allowance for a therapist who is alone with a client to lock the outside door.
- Reference to showers removed.

The committee spoke in favor of the ordinance and changes.

Danielle Taylor, owner of a massage establishment, voiced some concerns.

MOTION: Approve the Ordinance to Amend Chapter 319 Health and Sanitation Article V. Practice of Certain Trades and Professions Requiring State Licensing, Registration or Credentials, Sections 319-35, 319-36 and 319-39 of the City of Watertown General Ordinances. (Moldenhauer/Wetzel/ Unanimous Approval)

April 17, 2026 – Mayor Stocks initiated a meeting with several in the police department to discuss the massage ordinance and concerns he had with the ordinance. The meeting ended with suggested revisions. This draft with suggestions from Mayor Stocks is included in your packet as **Massage Ordinance A – Sponsored by Mayor Stocks.**

April 27, 2026 - When I received the suggested revisions from Mayor Stocks, I met with the City Attorney to discuss and gain her input. The Attorney was not present at the meeting with Mayor Stocks and the Police Dept. Her insights were critical and valuable. The attorney's feedback is incorporated in **Massage Ordinance B – Sponsored by Dana Davis**, also included in your packet. Massage Ordinance B incorporates many of the suggestions from Mayor Stocks into the version previously approved by the PS&W Committee on April 1.

Our goal as a committee is to review and approve EITHER 1) **Massage Ordinance A – Sponsored by Mayor Stocks** OR 2) **Massage Ordinance B – Sponsored by Dana Davis.**