



ABC E-NEWS

A weekly newsletter on North Carolina policy and political news relevant to the North Carolina's ABC Boards

ABC Commission OKs New Stores

The NC ABC Commission held its monthly meeting on Wednesday via WebEx and unanimously approved two store location requests in Concord (Cabarrus County) and Garner (Wake County).

The location requests were made by the NC Association of ABC Boards.

The new ABC store location in Concord will be at 195 George Lyles Parkway NW in Concord. The ABC store location in Garner will be at the corner of Bratton Drive and Son-Lan Parkway.

The next ABC Commission meeting will be on June 10th, and will include a hearing on the proposed tasting rules.

The NC Association of ABC Board attorneys continue to work with stakeholders on tasting rules that works for local ABC Boards, distilleries, and North Carolina consumers.

Any questions about the ABC Commission meetings, including the proposed tasting rules, can be emailed to NC Association of ABC Boards attorney Skye David at skye@new-frame.com. David will be presenting to the ABC Commission on behalf of the Association and its partners on June 10.

General Assembly Returns on Monday

The General Assembly returns to Raleigh on Monday (May 18) to resume its short legislative session two weeks after it adjourned a 6-day COVID-19 relief session. The General Assembly's focus is primarily on passing a budget for the 2020-2021 budget year that begins July 1.



"The subplot to the short session is that the General Assembly failed to come to an agreement with Governor Roy Cooper last summer and much of the state is functioning without an updated budget in this current fiscal year," said NC Association of ABC Boards President Miles Davis. "However, there is optimism that both sides of the political spectrum will come together this summer and pass a budget that works for North Carolina."

Budget writers tell NC Association of ABC Boards lobbyists they are concerned about the state's revenue shortages projected for the 2020-2021 fiscal year with some estimates at \$4 billion. North Carolina's \$25 billion budget is built mainly on two taxes – the income tax and the sales tax – and record unemployment in North Carolina and stay-at-home orders had a negative effect on both.

Local governments' economic numbers also point to an economy that was bludgeoned by the COVID-19 virus and its aftermath, which included 130 convention/meetings/sporting events canceled at a \$59.3 million price tag just in Wake County. Wake County also reports that hotel and lodging tax collections were down 64.3% in March while the food and beverage tax was down 39% during the same period.

Davis said he has instructed the NC Association of ABC Boards' lobbyists to carry a positive message to the General Assembly and to convey that North Carolina's ABC Boards consider themselves partners in the economic recovery both at the state and local level.

"It is important that we communicate to legislators and the public that ABC stores are helping educate children, pave roads, and keep North Carolina safe," said Davis. "We contribute over \$300 million to General Assembly budget writers with another \$100 million going to local governments across North Carolina."