

**BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL
BUSHOR CONFERENCE ROOM 1ST FLOOR, CITY HALL
OR
REMOTE MEETING WITH CALL-IN
BURLINGTON, VERMONT
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 22, 2024
DRAFT**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sarah E Carpenter
Tim Doherty
Ben Traverse
Melo Grant (via Zoom)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Joe McNeil
Jessica Brown
Keaton Knowles

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by City Council President Traverse at 6:06 PM.

2. SECOND PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 5, 2024 SPECIAL CITY MEETING

2.1. Second Public Hearing On Proposed Amendments For November 5, 2024 Special City Meeting

City Council President Traverse began by noting that statute requires two public hearings on this potential charter change prior to it appearing on the November election ballot. He noted that the first public hearing was August 15 and the second is being held tonight. He noted that any amendments that arise based on feedback heard during the public hearings could be brought for consideration to a Special City Council meeting after the second public hearing tonight. He noted that any amendments will also require a revised short-form ballot item description. He further noted that the Council has not received any amendments to date.

City Council President Traverse opened the public hearing.

Councilor Carpenter noted that the charter language was modified slightly to change gendered references to they/them to be more inclusive.

Assisting City Attorney McNeil said that at the last City Council meeting Councilor Shannon had also noted that the short form ballot question language was confusing, and he added the City Attorney's Office has attempted to revise the language to make it more clear by separating the provisions in the short form language into four paragraphs. He also suggested there be a further resolved clause in accordance with the

requirements of the statute to note that a complete copy of the charter change be available at the Clerk's Office and online for inspection. He further noted that there were minor edits that were also made.

Councilor Grant reflected on the fact that the public was previously engaged on police oversight and accountability and had voted on a ballot item around this, and that the number of yea voters was not insignificant, even though it did not pass. She said that this contrasts with the lack of input at these two public hearings, and said that people have become disconnected or discouraged on this issue, and reflects a failure of the City.

Trish O'Kane expressed supports for the amendment and echoed Councilor Grant's frustration on this issue. She said that the City needs police oversight that is as independent as possible and places a strong emphasis on expertise. She spoke about how civilian oversight can build public trust in the City and in the Police Department, will attract better police officers, and will save public money by preventing lawsuits related to police use of force or other misconduct.

City Council President Traverse closed the public hearing.

3. ADJOURNMENT

3.1 Motion to adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:18 PM.

RScty: AACoonradt