

REIB City Council Committee Meeting

September 17, 2024

5:30pm – 7:00pm Sharon Bushor Room, 1st Floor City Hall and Zoom

Attendees:

Christian Berry (REIB)

Phet Keomanyvanh (REIB)

Councilor Melo Grant

Councilor Becca Brown McKnight

Councilor Gene Bergman

Meeting Convened at 5:32pm

Agenda

1. Motion to Approve the agenda

Council Bergman motioned to approve. Councilor McKnight seconded. Unanimous pass.

2. Motion to approve the meeting minutes from 8.28.24

Council Bergman motioned to approve. Councilor McKnight seconded. Unanimous pass.

3. Public Forum

4. REIB Updates

- **Mission and Vision Redesign**

Phet: Importance of revisiting REIB mission and vision due to staff and leadership changes. Outreach plan around mission and vision reset. Struggle with solidifying direction due to leadership and resource changes. Reference to the 2020 City Council resolution on equity.

Phet: Reparations Task Force update. Task force created in Nov 2020. Report delayed due to disagreements. Report completed, but more discussions scheduled for October. Council will consider recommendations. Disagreement over whether to continue the task force.

Phet: REIB work with community centers. Lack of MOU for cultural center, but REIB supporting centers financially. Empowerment Fund has allocated over \$300,000 for Black and Brown community initiatives and is considered the Capital Access Program. This year's funding process used criteria for the first time. REIB trained 700+ city employees on racial equity between 2020-2022, and training continues.

Christian: Focus of current administration on embedding equity values across city departments. Conversations with the Mayor's Office since June. Direct input from communities most impacted (homelessness, opioid crisis, etc.) before making decisions. Plan for public input through discussions.

Councilor Grant: Frustration over lack of strategic plan for BPD engagement position. Disconnect between community engagement and BPD recruitment. Lack of communication with City Council. Concern about Gunfire Task Force resource allocation. Suggests more coordination between REIB and BPD.

Christian: Preliminary discussions underway with BPD, mayor, and engagement manager. Acknowledged the need for better communication with City Council. Reiterated administration's commitment to transparency.

Councilor McKnight: Asked about REIB's role in BPD recruitment efforts. Phet: Limited discussions with BPD, mostly consultative. Need more strategic conversations on recruitment from marginalized neighborhoods.

Councilor Grant: Suggests returning to community policing. Councilor Bergman: Asked if REIB could review draft report before City Council. Requested more frequent updates on REIB's work.

Christian: Ongoing mission and vision engagement with the mayor's office. Direct input from affected communities. Multi-language surveys and outreach efforts with groups like UVM Coalition.

Councilor Bergman: Asked about recording mission and vision sessions. Christian: Finalizing details, aiming for accessibility. Talks with local organizations to ensure participation.

Councilor Grant: Raised concerns about how to involve City of Burlington employees in vision and mission redesign. Christian: Focus on community discussions, awaiting feedback on separate employee sessions.

Councilor Grant: Efficiency study under review, could inform REIB redesign. REIB's role within city framework discussed. Importance of REIB's independence. Discussion of securing charter status for long-term stability.

Phet: REIB involved in developing a data governance committee. Plan to make data accessible through equity dashboards. Councilors Bergman and Grant: Interested in data transparency and health equity efforts.

Councilor McKnight: Emphasized importance of highlighting areas where Black and Brown citizens are thriving. Christian agreed with a focus on celebrating successes.

5. Community Forum

Councilor Grant: Discussed ideas for the next meeting, aiming to secure a speaker. The next meeting is scheduled for October 15th. Reminded attendees about significant events happening this week, including the second of two public safety meetings in the Old North End for community feedback. The Public Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for the morning at 8:15 AM, with the agenda including appealing a trespass order, reviewing current data from the police and fire departments, and an additional discussion, likely involving a data request. The Public Safety Community Forum has been rescheduled for Thursday night.

6. Motion to Adjourn

Council Grant motioned to approve. Councilor Bergman seconded. Unanimous pass.

Adjourned 6:38pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92744162495>

Meeting ID: 927 4416 2495