

**Ordinance Committee
Tuesday, March 18, 2025
645 Pine St Front Conference Room
or Remote via Zoom. Burlington, Vermont
DRAFT MINUTES**

Members Present: Councilor Shannon (Chair), Councilor Bergman, Councilor Brown McKnight

Staff Present: Kim Sturtevant (Assistant City Attorney), Cassandra Sterling (CSO Manager), Erik Ramakrishnan (Assistant City Attorney)

Public Present: Lori Kettler, Evan Litwin (City Councilor)

Meeting called to order at 10:16 AM.

**1. Adopt the Agenda
1.01 Adopt the Agenda**

Motion to Adopt Agenda.

Motion by Councilor Bergman, Seconded by Councilor Brown McKnight.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

**2. Adopt Draft Minutes
2.1 Adopt Draft Minutes from March 5.**

Motion to adopt the draft minutes from March 5 with an amendment to provide a link to the recording that is available on CivicClerk.

Motion by Councilor Bergman, Seconded by Councilor Brown McKnight

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

3. Public Forum

No members of the public chose to speak in public forum.

4. Animal Ordinance Discussion

Councilor Bergman said he would like Section 5-2 to be clearer in the positions it authorizes to enforce the ordinance. He added he would like changes to Section 5-15 regarding both tags and microchips. He suggested having a cat be microchipped could be an alternative to having a collar. He said he would like more detail in how the City will administer the licensing as proposed in the draft ordinance.

Councilor Brown McKnight said she would also like more detail from City staff about how licensing will work.

Cassandra Sterling (CSO Manager) said that BPD has microchip scanners already.

All councilors agreed to change the requirement of a tag to either having a tag or having a microchip.

Councilor Shannon asked Cassandra Sterling to work with the Clerk's Office to draft a memo on how to license cats.

All councilors agreed to add April 1, 2026 as the effective date for the cat licensure portion of the draft ordinance.

Cassandra Sterling said there isn't any City capacity for kenneling cats currently and the Humane Society does not kennel stray cats.

Motion to change 'shall' to 'may' on line 163.

Motion by Councilor Shannon, Seconded by Councilor Brown McKnight.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

Councilor Brown McKnight clarified that the new Animal Control Committee would have members with professional animal backgrounds rather than just being a subcommittee of the Police Commission.

All councilors agreed to change the language regarding "authorized official" to be whichever employees are authorized by the Judicial Bureau to write municipal tickets.

Cassandra Sterling said an animal license could also have a fillable field for the microchip number so BPD could know immediately who the animal belonged to. The Committee agreed that the Clerk paperwork would have microchip number as a fillable field when registering an animal.

Motion to refer the draft ordinance back to the full City Council with a recommendation for adoption.

Motion by Councilor Brown McKnight, Seconded by Councilor Shannon

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

5. Vacant Buildings Ordinance

Councilor Bergman said he would like line 53 changed to clarify that an abandoned commercial garage would still be subject to the ordinance. Councilor Shannon suggested removing the word 'garage' and leave everything else. All councilors agreed.

Motion to refer the draft ordinance back to the full City Council with a recommendation for adoption.

Motion by Councilor Brown McKnight, Seconded by Councilor Shannon.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

6. Reporting Incentives Ordinance Discussion

Attorney Ramakrishnan gave an overview of the draft of the ordinance. The draft ordinance is available on CivicClerk.

Councilor Bergman said that he and the Progressive Caucus oppose the draft ordinance. He said he would be interested if this incentive program was only for minimum housing code violations.

Councilor Brown McKnight said she wants this ordinance to be a helpful tool for both BPD and DPW.

Councilor Shannon asked for the draft ordinance to be circulated to the departments that could be impacted and hear their thoughts.

7. Any Other Committee Business

No other committee business.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 PM.