



**BURLINGTON BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF VOTERS
CITY HALL, 149 CHURCH STREET, 1ST FLOOR OR REMOTELY VIA ZOOM.**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
June 3, 2025**

1. Call Meeting to Order

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Meeting called to order by Chair Grace Grundhauser at 6:00pm

Present: Alison Harte, Grace Grundhauser, Michelle Lefkowitz, Karen Rowell, Colleen Montgomery, Lesley Gendron, Alex Demoly, Lauren Ebersol, Annie Schneider

Absent: Mike McGarghan, Jeanne Keller, Youth Member Will Cunningham

Also Present: Sarah Montgomery, Assistant City Clerk

2. Agenda

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Colleen Montgomery made a motion to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Michelle Lefkowitz. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Meeting Length

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The meeting length was set to one hour.

4. Adopt Minutes

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Alison Harte made a motion to adopt the minutes. Colleen Montgomery seconded. Passed unanimously.

5. Public Forum

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No members of the public were present.

6. Clerk's Report

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Sarah Montgomery reported that there are currently 29,124 registered voters in Burlington. Out of those, 5,035 are challenged. In May: 140 new voter registrations were processed, 86 voters were removed from the checklist, and 97 voters were transferred out of Burlington into other Vermont towns. Sarah noted that the larger number of purges reflects responses to challenge letters and also a high volume of out-of-state notifications.

Sarah Montgomery reported that the new election management system is now active. The state hasn't made all the anticipated functionality live yet, but all the data has been successfully transferred, and the voter registration is working well. The state is continuing to solicit feedback from clerks and make updates as

necessary. Sarah will ensure that all members receive information to activate their new accounts and will share the voter portal link (vote.vermont.gov).

Sarah Montgomery reported that four residents applied for the four seats that were open for applications on the board. Appointments are expected to take place at the 6/16 City Council meeting. Colleen Montgomery asked if this is the usual level of interest that is received. Sarah answered that sometimes there are more applicants than available seats - it seems to depend on how much advertising the board does for the vacancies. Grace Grundhauser asked if the agenda packet for the 6/16 City Council meeting has been posted yet. Sarah Montgomery answered no, but the appointment selection committee agenda has been posted, which includes the applicants' applications.

7. Approval of Voter Challenges

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Colleen Montgomery asked if one of the names on the challenge list was the voter the board discussed at the prior meeting. Sarah Montgomery answered no and that the board had already voted to challenge him at the last meeting. The Clerk's office has not received a response to that challenge letter. Alison Harte asked what no response means. Sarah answered that if a voter does not respond to a challenge letter, they will remain challenged on our checklist for two general elections and only after that can the board vote to remove them.

Grace Grundhauser asked if there is a reason there are voters on the list based on the undeliverable Annual City Election ballots, rather than having them included with the large batch last month. Sarah Montgomery answered that these were returned to our office by the USPS within the past month.

Grace Grundhauser asked if it would be helpful to present more data with these challenged voter lists. The board would like the voter's address and ward included in the data. Sarah Montgomery agreed that her office can provide the board with that data moving forward.

Lesley Gendron made a motion to challenge the listed voters. Seconded by Karen Rowell. Passed unanimously.

8. Annual Board report to City Council (Discussion)

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Grace Grundhauser shared the FY24 Annual Report that the board submitted to City Council. She noted that the board would discuss the report at this meeting and approve a final copy at the July meeting. Grace outlined the structure and content of the report as it was submitted last year.

Grace Grundhauser asked for feedback from the board about what should be included in the report for FY25.

Alison Harte noted that since she has been on the board, they haven't done voter registration drives.

Lesley Gendron said there was the poster creation and distribution to encourage voter registration. She added that the creation of the procedural flow chart could be included.

Alison Harte asked if the turnover from the previous fiscal year was unusual. Grace Grundhauser answered that she thought it was.

Lauren Ebersol noted the board's strong training program and strong work around volunteer recruitment.

Colleen Montgomery noted that the polling places on Election Day were quieter than expected, likely due to increased early voting. Alison Harte noted that the decrease of in-person voting has changed the role of BRV members.

Alison Harte suggested including the number of All Legal Resident voters.

Grace Grundhauser noted that in ward 8, she has seen an increased volume in helping homeless voters with registration. She asked other members if they had this same experience. The majority of members have not seen an increase, but agreed sharing information in the report could be helpful.

Lauren Ebersol asked if something should be reported about the student voter population, and the volume of

address changes and registration updates that go along with this.

Grace Grundhauser will draft a revised report and share it with the board for approval next month.

9. Board Member Roles

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The board discussed different roles that members could fill to help alleviate some of the work of the chair.

Suggestions included a parliamentarian (someone to ensure meeting rules), a volunteer coordinator (coordinate volunteers around elections), and an outreach coordinator.

Lesley Gendron suggested someone to manage the guides and procedures; Grace Grundhauser suggested calling it Guidance Authority.

Annie Schneider suggested that the outreach person could coordinate events and ensure a presence at certain events. Colleen Montgomery said this seems like something all members should always be thinking about. Grace Grundhauser agreed that all members should be thinking about it, but it could be helpful to have someone actually do the work. Colleen Montgomery said that some of these roles could be better assigned ad hoc, as events pop up, etc. to cater to specific skills. She noted that, for example, volunteer coordination alone does not seem to necessitate a whole role. Lauren Ebersol suggested that some items could be combined into one position for items that wouldn't necessarily fill a whole role. Annie Schneider said the roles don't need to be formally elected, but having a person/ people assigned specifically might help ensure that attention is specifically given to that item. Colleen Montgomery said outreach seems well suited to a committee. Alison Harte said it could be helpful to add outreach or events as a standing item on the agenda so it is continually discussed. Lauren suggested adding something like a committee report item to the agenda, where assigned members could report on their specialized areas. Grace Grundhauser is leaning toward having the specified roles. It wouldn't bar anything else from working on that item, but it would help provide accountability for those items.

Grace Grundhauser suggested a member doing outreach specifically to residents whose first language is not English. Karen Rowell added that outreach should also be done on platforms besides Front Porch Forum. Lauren Ebersol asked if there is any funding available through the City to help with translation or interpretation. Sarah Montgomery answered that it would likely depend on the project and if existing materials could be used. Alex Demoly suggested working through existing channels to see who we can partner with for language access, such as AALV, the King Street Center, or the state's refugee resettlement offices. Grace added that Michelle Lefkowitz had previously suggested attending naturalization ceremonies for voter registration outreach. Grace added that if a role was created to focus on these specific outreach connections, the person could explore these items further. This role could also be assigned to better understand and educate the board about legal resident voting logistics and implications.

Grace Grundhauser also suggested a student liaison role, to do outreach to college students and increase communications to this population. Lauren Ebersol agreed that this would be important because she has heard scenarios where students are receiving inaccurate information. Lauren suggested the existing UVM community engagement forum as another avenue to make these connections.

Grace Grundhauser suggested that nominations for these roles happen at the next meeting. Lauren Ebersol suggested having a set list of positions. Grace Grundhauser agreed to create a proposed list. The board doesn't need to be limited by the proposed list and the listed positions don't all need to be nominated for, but it will reflect the ideas already generated.

10. New Business

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Colleen Montgomery asked if board expectations would be discussed at the July meeting when new members have come on board. Grace Grundhauser said that if board members want to add an agenda item to the agenda, they should make a motion to add it to a future meeting agenda.

Colleen Montgomery made a motion to add a discussion about board member expectations to the July agenda. Alison Harte seconded. Passed unanimously.

Alex Demoly said it has been a pleasure to serve on the board. He encouraged the board to recruit young

people moving forward - to help young people who are interested in governance, not politics, have this education and experience.

11. Adjournment

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Lesley Genfron made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Lauren Ebersol. Passed unanimously.