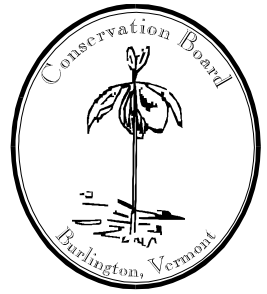


Burlington Conservation Board

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*Rebecca Roman, Chair
Ryan Crehan, Vice Chair
Zoe Richards
Don Meals
Leslie Spencer
Ethan Ely
Dale Azaria
Evan Horne
Kelly Farrell*



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 7, 2025 – 5:30 pm
Remote & In Person Meeting

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Zoe Richards (ZR), Rebecca Roman (RR), Leslie Spencer (LS), Ethan Ely (EE), Ryan Crehan (RC), Don Meals (DM), Dale Azaria (DA), Evan Horne (EH), Kelly Farrell (KF)
- **Absent:**
- **Public:** Sharon Bushor, Nate Lantieri
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Permitting & Inspections), Dan Cahill (Parks & Rec)

RR, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Board Comment

RR introduced herself and mentioned ongoing Board projects, including the Open Space Plan, consideration of deer impacts, and potential changes to the Conservation Legacy Fund.

New and existing Board members introduced themselves.

DM noted development review responsibilities and referenced the natural resource overlays and major impact review. The Board serves in an advisory capacity.

Dan Cahill noted this space is available for strategic and constructive conversations around conservation in Burlington.

Annual Organizational Meeting

DM nominated RR for Chair.

Vote: 8-0-0. RR continues for another year as chair.

RR nominated RC for Vice Chair.

Vote: 8-0-0. RC to serve as Vice Chair.

DM nominated ZR to serve as BCB representative on the LRPARKS COMMISSION.

Vote: 8-0-0. ZR to be BCB representative on the Long Range Planning Committee.

Minutes

June 2, 2025 minutes

A MOTION was made by RC and SECONDED by LS:

Approve the June 2 minutes as written.

Vote: 7-0-1, motion carried.

Public Comment

Sharon Bushor spoke as to the Open Space Plan. Would like to see public meetings for it. She's concerned about the fund balance.

Update & Discussion

1. Dog Task Force

Discussion of task force report and discussion as to further Board action, if any.

Nate Lantieri, Parks Commission Chair, appeared on behalf of this item.

Nate Lantieri said the ad hoc group started in 2021 as the dog task force. They wrote a report following two years and many meetings. The Parks Commission took it up in early 2024. Parks Commission has authority over rules for off-leash dogs. The other recommendations are not within Parks Commission's purview. He noted two memos shared today that came out of the Parks Commission. Its been a standing agenda item for more than a year. Prior to Director Wight's departure, the Parks Commission reviewed various pieces of city charter. Parks Commission's plan is to keep it as a standing item until decisions can be made on the pieces under their jurisdiction.

RC, is this of interest to BCB? The Parks Commission isn't voting until August. RC is concerned that City Council created this task force due to somebody getting bitten. Now, we're considering off-leash dog areas. Off-leash dogs in some areas seem to be inconsistent with making these open spaces available to all. It seems that folks wanting off-leash areas are a primary driver.

Nate Lantieri, the unfenced areas are the biggest sticking point. He can't predict where the Parks Commission will go.

DM, based on his reading of the report, there is a lot more going on than off-leash dog areas.

DA, part of the idea of licensing pertains to confirmation and control of rabies vaccination. Is rabies a problem with pets or wildlife in Burlington? DM, knows rabies exists in wildlife populations. RC said statewide rabies bait vaccinations are done.

ZR, Nate is here because of open questions about off-leash dog areas. The BCB should weigh in on this. There is an education campaign to be done.

Dan Cahill, the cat piece that was done overlaps with our open space designations. There's already city ordinance restricting cats outside, but it is unenforced. There may be certain designated zones where cats should not be present.

DM, will this be another ordinance that is on the books but is unenforced?

KF noted an Ashville, NC ordinance that allows outdoor cats, but they cannot leave your property.

ZR noted open spaces not owned by the city, like WVPD and the Intervale Center.

Dan Cahill, in terms of process, Parks Commission is working through this item step-by-step. After that, a recommendation is made to the Council's Parks, Arts, and Culture Committee.

EE, what is the goal tonight? RC, we can decide not to engage. As advisory, we can advise another Commission or the City Council. We can still make a motion for consideration by the Parks Commission in August. EE, how were the areas selected for off-leash use potential? Nate Lantieri, the list was put together by the dog task force. Dan Cahill said his team was never asked to review the plan and is in charge of managing a number of areas under consideration.

RR would like to see where the conversation lands with Parks Commission after August. DM, put this item on our August meeting agenda as an action item. He's not yet ready to weigh in.

ZR, there's no dog task force now. We'd be commenting on recommendations.

Nate Lantieri encouraged folks to attend the August Parks Commission meeting.

Adjournment

6:48 PM.