

Burlington Fire Commission Meeting

Tuesday August 12, 2025 08:30-08:47

Members Present: Vice Chair Kevin McLaughlin, Linda Sheehey, Monica Chapman, Chief Michael Curtin (via Zoom), Deputy Chief of Operations Troy Ruggles, Deputy Chief of Administration Stephen Petit, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney. Todd Deluca member of public also joined for the meeting.

Call to Order – 08:30 am.

Motion to Amend/Adopt Agenda- Motion to move to accept agenda made by Commissioner Sheehey, seconded by Commissioner Chapman.

Public Comment – No comment from member of public.

Review and Accept Minutes (April and June)- Motion made by Commissioner Sheehey and seconded by Commission Chapman.

Meeting Summary: the following meeting summary minutes have been generated by AI and while they have been reviewed are not guaranteed to be accurate.

Quick recap

The Burlington Fire Department reported an increase in service calls, with July being the busiest month in five years, while also addressing staffing challenges including vacancies and increased overtime amid ongoing hiring processes. The department is enhancing its technical capabilities through training, equipment evaluation, and exploration of drone technology for emergency response, alongside successful recruitment efforts for the upcoming Recruit Academy. Various facility improvements are underway at multiple fire stations, a tentative agreement has been reached with the Union on contract negotiations, and preparations are in progress for October fire safety month, including scheduled live burn training events at the Vermont Fire Academy.

Action Items

- Chief Curtin to follow up on the tentative agreement with the Union on contract negotiations to present to the city.
- Fire Marshal's Office to prepare for October fire safety month, including fire extinguisher training at the farmers market.
- Fire Marshal's Office to join Engine 3 at UVM campus for RA fire safety training.
- Chief Curtin to send formal invites to the Commission, City councilors, and Mayor's office for the live burn trainings on October 8th, 22nd, and November 5th.
- Administration team to close the combined lateral entry-level process on Friday.
- Administration team to continue with preparations for the October 20th start date for Recruit Academy.
- Chief Ruggles to continue work on technical resource capabilities assessment.
- Exploratory team to continue research on drone use for emergency response.
- Administration to complete station maintenance projects.
- Chief Petit to continue updating SOGs and finalizing the first report of injury process update.

Summary

Department Call Volume Report Update

Chief Curtin reports that the department responded to 2,076 calls for service in June and July, which is a 0.09% increase from the same period last year. July was particularly busy with 1,157 runs, making it the busiest July in the past five years. The EMS data presented in the report was extracted from siren reports by Jeff Nicholson and converted into graph form, showing a notable spike in May.

Fire Department Staffing and Equipment Update

Chief Curtin reports the department has 87 members with 8 vacancies, noting an increase in minimum staffing overtime and a 44% increase in mandatory overtime. The department is closing a combined lateral entry level hiring process with 7 lateral and 23 entry level applications, while also acquiring new equipment including a car, ladder truck, and ambulances. Chief Ruggles mentions ongoing collaboration with the US Coast Guard for an August 27th drill at the lakefront and discusses the successful evacuation of the waterfront during a storm before the July fireworks display.

Emergency Response Technology Assessment

The department is evaluating their technical resource capabilities, including training and equipment, to determine current capabilities and needed enhancements. They are exploring drone technology for emergency response, with plans to form an exploratory team to assess benefits, despite challenges like weather conditions and airport proximity limitations. Additionally, the department's recruitment efforts are progressing well with approximately 40 qualified applicants for the October 20th Recruit Academy, and they are using boosted social media posts to track demographics, noting that the majority of applicants are males aged 25-34.

Fire Department Facility and Training Updates

DC Petit provides updates on various fire stations, including apparatus floor resurfacing at Station 1, sprinkler system replacement at Station 2, security door replacements at Station 4, and refinished driveway at Station 3. Chief Curtin announces a tentative agreement with the Union on contract negotiations and shares that the Fire Marshal's office is preparing for October fire safety month with planned training events. The training division has ordered new air packs, and live burns are scheduled for October 8th, October 22nd, and November 5th at the Vermont Fire Academy, with an invitation extended to the commission, city councilors, and the mayor's office to attend.

Old/New Business- No new or old business.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Sheehey and seconded by Chapman. All in favor meeting adjourned at 08:47 am.



BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

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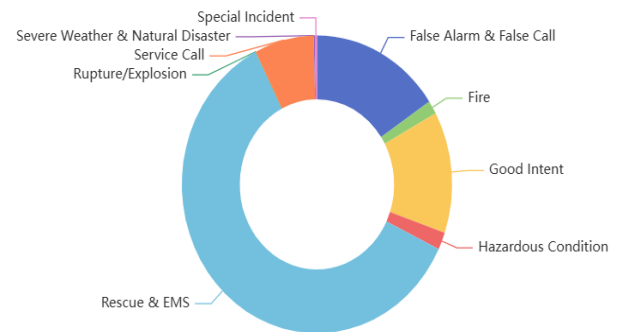
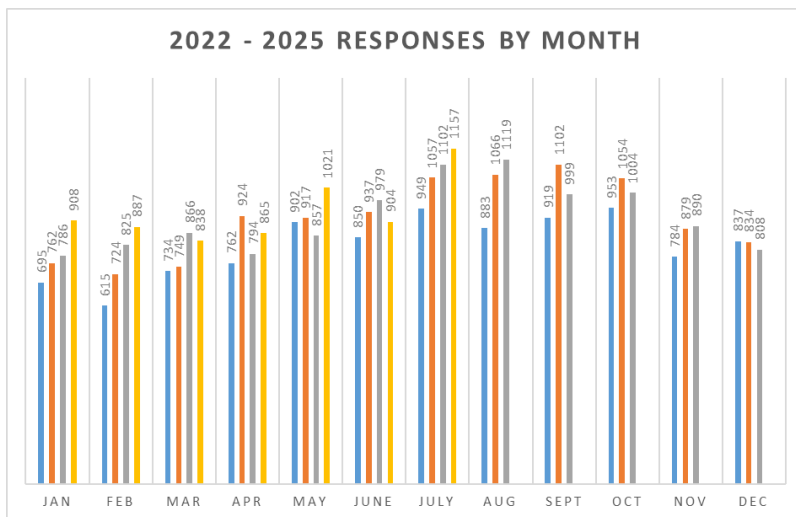
August 12, 2025

Chief's Report to the Burlington Fire Commission

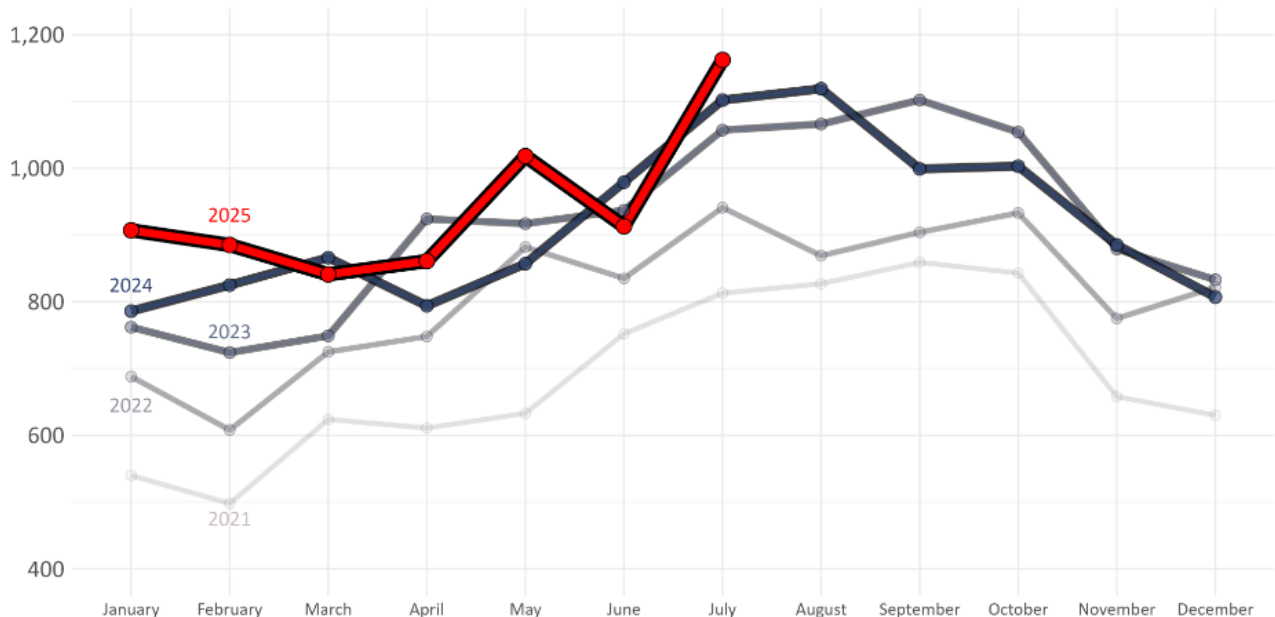
Call Volume & Activity Summary

In June/July of 2025, the fire department has responded to **2076** calls for service. During the same period in 2024, we responded to **2074**, a **.09 %** increase.

Total Incidents YTD: **6639** (As of 7/31/25)



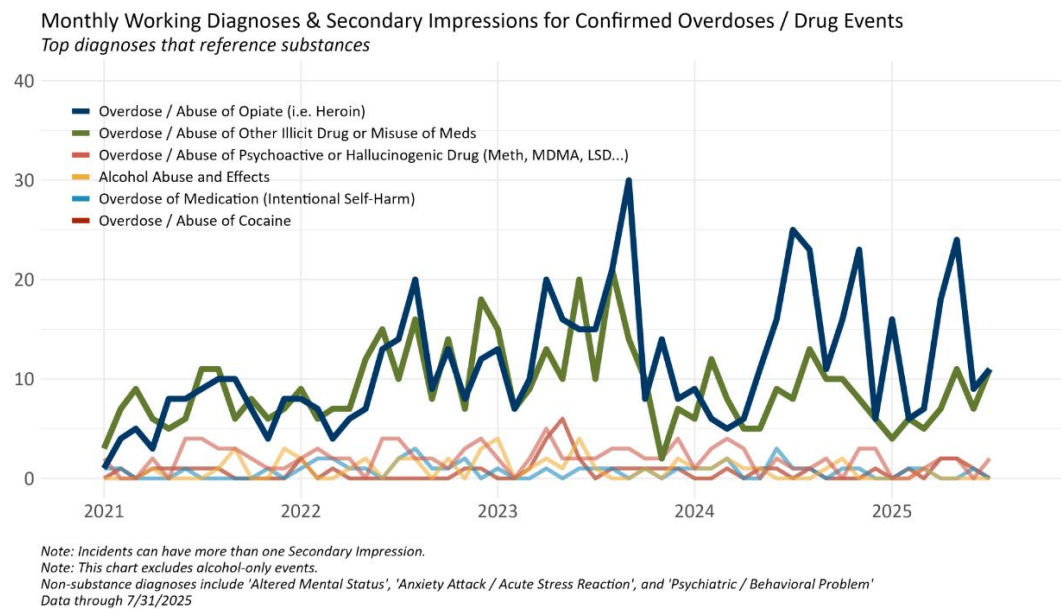
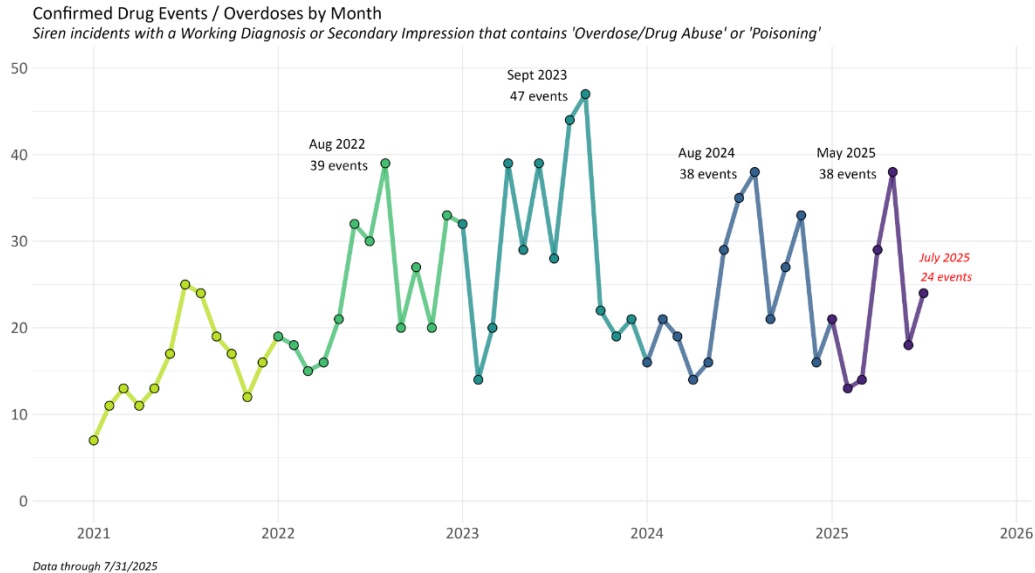
Fire Department Monthly Response Totals, 2021 - 2025
 Source: First Due



Data through 7/31/2025

EMS Data:

The following charts presents monthly data on EMS-confirmed overdose and drug-related incidents in our community from 2021 through July 31, 2025. It categorizes the top types of substances involved, based on working diagnoses and secondary impressions gathered in the field.



- Incidents involving opiate abuse (e.g., heroin, fentanyl) are consistently the highest among all substance types.
- The second most frequent category involves other non-opiate illicit drugs or misuse of medications. These are legal medications being used improperly (e.g., anti-anxiety meds, sleep aids, ADHD stimulants)

Personnel, Staffing, & Equipment

Total Department Staff: Uniformed Members **87** / Authorized **95**

- Minimum Daily Staffing: **22**
- Vacancies: **8**
- June/July Overtime Hours:

| Type of Overtime | 2025 | 2024 | % +/- |
|------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Minimum Staffing | 1207 | 1204.5 | +.2 |
| Mandatory | 210 | 145.5 | +44 |
| CRT | 384 | 271 | +41 |
| Extra Duty | 163 | 239 | -31 |

- Injuries/LOA/FMLA: **3**

Combined lateral and entry level application process closes 8/15. Currently have **7** applications for the lateral position and **23** for the entry level position. (These numbers reflect preliminary criteria evaluation and not total applications.)

Training:

- For the months of June/July the members completed **3,630** hours of department level training. Topics reflect all disciplines of fire and EMS with driver training, water rescue, and building construction having the most hours associated with them.
- October 5, October 22, and November 5 are the shift wide live burns at the Vermont Fire Academy.
- USCG 8/27/25

Fleet:

- New Car 5 has arrived. It is a Ford Explorer Hybrid that is currently being upfitted with lights and radios at Hard Wired Electronics.
- New Ambulances being researched with H-Power idle mitigation to reduce emissions and work towards the citywide climate strategy.

A brief update regarding the availability of EV ambulances, based on recent communications with a couple of our trusted vendors:

- Garth Brooks from Desorcie Emergency Products relayed that Osage is not currently offering any electric ambulance options. Even chassis equipped with EV technology are not yet compatible or ready for EMS specific builds.
- Robert Gleason from Demers Ambulances confirmed that while they previously offered an EV ambulance model, the chassis platform they were using is no longer available, effectively removing that option from their lineup for now.
- Pumping fire apparatus were all successfully tested and passed the NFPA 1911 pump certification test.

Community Engagement

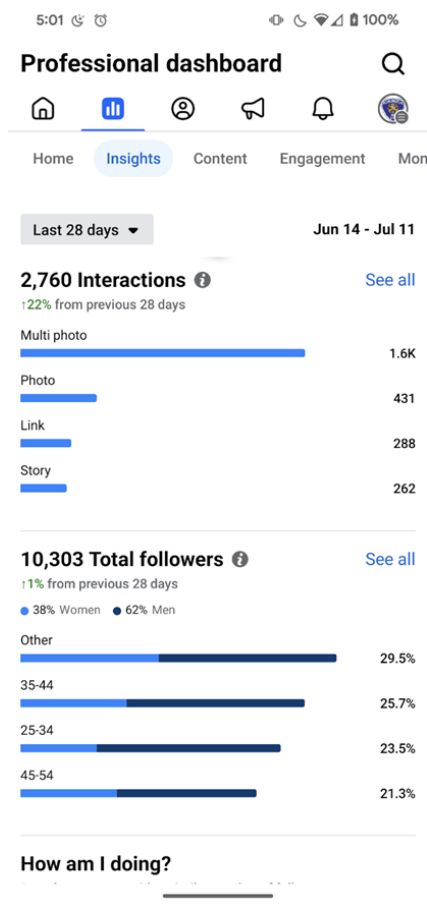
- Schiffiliti Park 75th Anniversary – Members of Ladder 4 and Ambulance 4 attended.
- BHS Students public safety class tour at Central firehouse.
- Fire Extinguisher Training conducted by FMO.
- Lithium Ion Battery Education with Locomotion and Director of City Planning
- ACE Hardware Grand-Reopening Ladder 4 and Ambulance 4 attended

• I also wanted to share something meaningful that speaks directly to the power of community engagement. My wife received a text message from retired Police Lt. Emmet Helrich, who lives in the South End:

“So today was the Babe Ruth summer ball finale. Fall ball starts up in a couple weeks. Anywho...game was at Callahan. FD was on a run at Locust and Pine. After their biz they came up Locust, got out of their rig, sat down on the grassy hill and watched the final inning. We won 11-7.

Anyway, tell your boyfriend that everyone noticed the FF’s on the hill. To me, that is the epitome of community. Kristin was sitting up on the hill too. I love that stuff. Kristin says the FF’s also engaged in a very pleasant way with some of the viewers, hill sitters etc. Good stuff Jules.”

- Social Media :



Division Updates

Administrative Division:

1. Recruitment – (8) vacancies. Currently have (30) qualified applicants (23 – entry level & 7 – lateral) Anticipated academy start date of 10/20/25
2. SOG Updates completed on internal shared drive, as well as on SharePoint. In the process of updating FROI form and SOG.
3. Employee Forms – I will be working to update forms and include instructions to reduce the likelihood of confusion and resulting errors.
4. Employee evaluations – nearly all employees have been trained in new evaluation process. Shift commanders are working with company officers to ensure evaluations are completed in a timely manner. We are seeing progress and will continue to monitor.
5. Station Projects:
 - a. Station 1 – In approximately 3 weeks, Station 1 will have the apparatus bay floor resurfaced, the stairwells repainted, and the apparatus bay/ramp transition repaired to prevent water leakage. The floor finish will take 4-5 days to cure and will need to be completed in phases. This will require T1 to temporarily be relocated to Station 5.
 - b. Station 2 – The apparatus floor replacement has been completed. We are looking into options for better surface finishes for the apparatus floor. The overall project is still ongoing, as there will be upgrades to the sprinkler system, fire alarm system and electrical. An additional security camera was added to provide better coverage of the parking area.
 - c. Station 3 – The driveway and parking area was recently repaired. Exterior lighting and an additional security camera were recently installed.
 - d. Station 4 – The exterior man-doors will be getting replaced on August 11th.
6. Dispatch
 - a. Coordinating between Burlington and South Burlington to improve airport phase responses.
 - b. Coordinating with City IT and BPD to ensure dispatchers have access to a training environment and practice handling low frequency incidents or scenarios.

Operations Division:

- Transition to new position is going well and learning the roles and responsibilities.
- Attended final planning meeting for the USCG exercise to be held on August 27, 2025 at the USCG station on the waterfront. BFD will have a role in the drill, though the primary focus will be USCG and maritime preparedness.
- Future meetings with the USCG regarding asset availability for use by BFD.
- Worked the Emergency Operations Center for the July 3rd fireworks event. At approximately 1735 hrs. +/- a storm came across the lake, NOAA personnel at the EOC had provided real time information and the BFD members at the lake shore parks and beaches recognized the conditions and we ordered the evacuation of the waterfront. People were allowed back to the waterfront at approximately 1915 hrs.
- We will be creating an exploratory team to review the benefits of drone response and use at emergency scenes. Being used by multiple agencies in the state including our own BPD, we will determine the future use of these units for BFD.

- We will be evaluating our technical response capabilities and determining a course of action to solidify our existing capability and response matrix for these incidents.
- Attended day long training on First Due Records Management Software.

Fire Marshal's Office:

- The FMO is gearing up for the Oct. Fire safety month. Meetings are being scheduled with our larger apartment buildings. Dealer.com has agreed to let us use their parking lot on Pine St. for our annual Saturday Fire safety event. This will be on the same day as the farmers market and in the same area.
- The FM will join UVM for the upcoming RA fire safety training and join the RA's for a lunch meet and greet.
- Construction is booming. A new large building seems to break ground every few months. The road construction has made navigating the city very difficult. Weekly meetings are held with SDI about access to buildings. Communication between all parties is difficult and does create access problems at times.

Training Division:

- Thank you to DC Ruggles for a smooth transition process and ongoing support while learning the new position.
- A number of members recently completed Rope Rescue Awareness & Operations as well as Surface Water Rescue Technician with Boat Operations.
- Lt Wilson completed Radio Programming and Template Building training through Motorola
- Lt. Mathieu will be conducting department wide training this month on the new Air Packs.
- GlobalFoundries Fire Department has agreed to allow three of our members to attend Confined Space Rescue Technician Training August 11-15.
- Moving forward with Live Burn Schedule now that grant funds are back on line. First live burn is scheduled for October 8th.
- Working on coordinating times for all crews to do a walk-through of City Place before it is occupied

EMS Division:

- This past week, we wrapped up our continuing education sessions on **sepsis training**. The training incorporated multiple patient scenarios and placed a strong emphasis on both primary and secondary assessments. We also worked on developing a **triple differential**

diagnosis approach to help providers rule out other possible medical conditions that may present with similar symptoms, ensuring more accurate and timely patient care.

- Currently, we are focusing on updating the quizzes for our **Recruit Academy** to reflect the **Vermont Statewide EMS 2025 Protocol** updates. This will ensure our newest members are trained and tested in alignment with the latest state guidelines.

Fire Commission
 Tuesday, August 12, 2025 08:30
 Fire Station #1
 136 South Winooski Avenue
 SIGN-IN SHEET

| NAME | EMAIL |
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