

Ordinance Committee
Thursday, August 21, 2025
Bushor Conference Room Conference Room
or Remote via Zoom. Burlington, Vermont
DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present: Councilor Bergman (Chair), Councilor Barlow, Councilor Carpenter, Councilor Kane

Staff Present: Kim Sturtevant (Assistant City Attorney), Erik Ramakrishnan (Assistant City Attorney)

Public Present: S. Hakes

Meeting called to order at 4:33 PM.

1. Adopt the Agenda
1.1 Adopt the Agenda

Motion to Adopt Agenda.

Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

2. Adopt Draft Minutes
2.1 Adopt Draft Minutes from July 17

Motion to adopt the draft minutes from July 17 as drafted.

Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

3. Public Forum

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

4. Reporting Incentives Ordinance Discussion

Attorney Ramakrishnan shared the draft ordinance on reporting incentives. The draft ordinance is available in the CivicClerk agenda packet.

Councilor Carpenter said she is supportive of the new City Circle method of resolving issues and not relying on fines. She said this draft ordinance does not align with that restorative approach.

Councilor Barlow said he has reservations about the draft ordinance but would be willing to attempt a pilot project.

Councilor Kane said he does not like how broad the ordinance is. Councilor Bergman agreed.

Attorney Ramakrishnan said that committee members could send him an email with specific changes they would be interested in and he can draft language for review later in the year.

Councilor Bergman said that the Police Department, the Mayor's Office, Permitting, and Parks should all be contacted for any comments. He added that he would like to know how many or what proportion of ordinance violations are not prosecuted because of a lack of information.

All councilors agreed that they needed to hear from the affected departments about this would be an effective tool before taking up the discussion again.

5. Indecent Exposure Ordinance Discussion

Councilor Barlow said he is supportive of the draft ordinance, but had concerns about how the ordinance might apply to certain events like the Naked Bike Ride. He said that he intends for the ordinance to only be applied to the particular issues that have arisen lately and not to innocuous activities.

Councilor Carpenter agreed and said the issues of people being naked downtown are not mistakes or a matter of mental capacity.

Councilor Kane asked if there are different young age criteria in other ordinances and why the age of five years old was picked as the cutoff.

Councilor Bergman said he would like explicit exceptions written into the ordinance for free speech/protests and particular events like the Naked Bike Ride. He added that "public place" needs to be defined.

6. Any Other Committee Business

The next ordinance committee meeting is scheduled for September 5 at 3:00 PM.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM.