



## City Council - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee

**Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room**

**MEETING TO BE HELD IN PERSON AT 645 PINE ST FRONT CONFERENCE ROOM AND VIA ZOOM**

**When: Oct 8, 2025 04:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Topic: PACC meeting**

**<https://zoom.us/j/93519051644>**

**Phone one-tap:**

**+16469313860,,93519051644# US**

**+19292056099,,93519051644# US (New York)**

**Join via audio:**

**+1 646 931 3860 US**

**+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)**

**+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)**

**Webinar ID: 935 1905 1644**

**International numbers available: <https://zoom.us/u/adUHRldpNz>**

### 1. Call to Order

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>1.1. Call to Order</b>
Meeting	October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room
Category	1. Call to Order
Department	
Type	

### 2. Approve Agenda & Minutes

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- 2.1. Motion to amend/adopt agenda**
- 2.2. Motion to adopt previous meeting's minutes**

### 3. Public Forum

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>3.1. PUBLIC FORUM - Verbal Comments</b>
Meeting	October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room
Category	3. Public Forum
Department	

Type

## 4. Agenda

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>4.1. Update on Public Art - Chief Greylock Statue - Doreen Kraft</b>
Meeting	October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room
Category	4. Agenda
Department	Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront
Type	
Recommended Action	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>4.2. Violent Crime and Quality of Life Enforcement - Chief Shawn Burke</b>
Meeting	October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room
Category	4. Agenda
Department	Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront
Type	
Recommended Action	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>4.3. Library Strategic Directions - Mary Danko</b>
Meeting	October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room
Category	4. Agenda
Department	Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront
Type	
Recommended Action	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>4.4. BPRW Ordinance Updates</b>
Meeting	October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room
Category	4. Agenda
Department	Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront
Type	
Recommended Action	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>4.5. BPRW Staffing Challenges memo</b>
Meeting	October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room

Category 4. Agenda  
Department Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront  
Type  
Recommended Action

## 5. Adjournment

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**Subject** 5.1. Motion to adjourn  
Meeting October 8, 2025 - Parks, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 4:00 PM, 645 Pine St., Front Conference Room  
Category 5. Adjournment  
Department Council and Board  
Type  
Recommended Action

## 6. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

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The City of Burlington will not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, race, color, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, disability, HIV positive status, crime victim status or genetic information. The City is also committed to providing proper access to services, facilities and employment opportunities. The programs and services of the City of Burlington are accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals who require special arrangements, auxiliary aid, service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the City of Burlington, should contact the office of the Title II Burlington ADA Coordinator at 802-865-7000 as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

CITY OF BURLINGTON

ORDINANCE \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor: Parks, Arts & Culture  
Committee (PACC)  
Public Hearing Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

First reading: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred to: \_\_\_\_\_

Rules suspended and placed in all  
stages of passage: \_\_\_\_\_

Second reading: \_\_\_\_\_

Action: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

Published: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective: \_\_\_\_\_

In the Year Two Thousand Twenty-Five

An Ordinance in Relation to

An Amendment to Appendix D, Sections 2 and 5, Updating Parks  
Rules and Regulations

It is hereby Ordained by the City Council of the City of Burlington as follows:

1 That Appendix D, Rules and Regulations of the Burlington Parks and Recreation Department, of the Code of  
2 Ordinances of the City of Burlington hereby is amended by amending Section 2 and Section 5, thereof to  
3 read as follows:

4 | **2 Perkins Pier Marina, Waterfront Park and Community Boathouse.**

5 (A) *Safety and Courtesy:*

6 (1) Motorists shall not operate any motor vehicle within the land area of Perkins Pier or Waterfront Park  
7 at a speed in excess of five (5) miles per hour.

8 (2) Motorists shall park automobiles and boat trailers only in areas designated for that purpose and shall  
9 ensure that said vehicles and/or trailers do not block or impede pedestrian and bicycle access along  
10 designated pedestrian and bicycle paths. Persons wishing to use launching facilities may do so only after  
11 purchase of an appropriate ~~daily vehicle entrance ticket~~ permit or season's vehicle and trailer vehicle  
12 entrance pass.

13 (B) *Season and Transient Docking Permits:*

14 (1) No ~~seasonal boater person~~ shall tie up overnight to any slip or bulkhead without first having acquired  
15 a contract transient permit signed by the Marina Manager ~~Dock Master~~ or having paid a transient fee.

16 (2) Transient ~~V~~vessels within the approved docking or mooring areas are presumed to be overnight if they  
17 remain after 7:00 p.m. E.D.T. All Transient Boaters are required to check in with the Dockmaster upon  
18 arrival and acquire an overnight permit and pay an overnight fee.

19 (23) Vessel oOwner must provide adequate line and feneders and maintain them in proper condition and  
20 arrangement. In the interest of safety, the DockmMaster may require that dock lines and feneders be  
21 changed or altered. ~~In~~ in an emergency situation threatening damage to the owner's vessel, another vessel  
22 or property of the City of Burlington. The DockmMaster may cause appropriate lines and feneders to be  
23 attached to the owner's vessel and do other necessary work and the cost of so doing shall be charged to  
24 the vessel owner.

**An Ordinance in Relation to An Amendment to Appendix D sections 2 and 5, Rules and Regulations of City Park**

25 (34) The City of Burlington ~~can~~ will provide docking assistance and will maintain reasonable surveillance  
26 during regular hours but will not be held responsible for the security and/or safe-keeping of vessels moored  
27 or docked at the facility.

28 (45) ~~Theis~~ seasonal dock or mooring agreement is not transferable and the City reserves the right to use  
29 accommodations reserved by this agreement during temporary vacancies by owner. Owner shall give the  
30 City advance notice of commencement and duration of such vacancies of 48 hours. There is no  
31 permissible subletting of the slip or mooring by vessel owner at any time or length. The vessel in the  
32 assigned slip must be registered in the vessel owner's name and align with the same name on the  
33 permit/contract.

34 (56) After May 1st no refunds will be given to persons choosing not to use a designated slip or mooring  
35 after having previously made payment to reserve said slip or mooring for the season. The only exception  
36 would be if the Department is able to refill the space at full value by May 15th of the same year.

37 (67) In no case may flame, heating elements, inflammable liquids, explosive gases or other hazardous  
38 materials or equipment be used on the vessel while it remains at the City's facilities, but the use of  
39 contained approved galley stoves, lamps, motors and other equipment shall be allowed in accordance with  
40 manufacturer guidelines.

41 (78) Owner expressly undertakes and agrees to hold the City harmless with respect to damage or loss to  
42 or of the vessel or its outfit, except such damage as may be conclusively attributed to the City's own  
43 negligence, and this undertaking is provided to induce the City to enter into this agreement.

44 (89) Season's docking permit rates shall be set annually by the Harbor Commission, subject to final  
45 approval of the City Council. Persons acquiring a larger or smaller boat during the permit period shall have  
46 their fee altered and prorated on the basis of the amount of the season left. Boats shall not tie up prior to  
47 May 15th or later than October 15th without written permission from the ~~Harborm~~ Master or Deputy  
48 Harbormaster. Season's slips remaining open after July 1 may, after due notice ~~by the Harbor Commission,~~  
49 be reclaimed and reallocated by the Harbormaster or Deputy Harbormaster Commission.

50 (910) Permit holders failing to remove vessel from assigned slip by October 15 are subject to a late fee  
51 and/or towing fee set annually by the Harbor Commission.

52 (11) All permit holders, both seasonal and transient and their guests, are expected to conduct themselves  
53 in a respectful manner. Belligerent behavior, harassment of guests or staff or conduct disruptive to the  
54 operations of the marina will not be tolerated and are reasons for immediate removal. The Harbormaster or  
55 Deputy Harbormaster have the ability to revoke any permit, either temporary or permanent, if behavior is  
56 found to be disruptive.

57 (12) All boaters staying at our docks or moorings are required to provide Vessel insurance in such  
58 coverage types and amounts as recommended by the City's professional insurance consultant.

59 (130) ~~Additionally, rules set annually by the Parks and Recreation Commission and Harbor Commission~~  
60 are in effect and enforceable by ordinance.

61 | **5 Park closings.**

62 (A) Motor vehicles are prohibited at all times within the confines of City Hall Park, Champlain Street Park,  
63 Lakeside Park, Pomeroy Park, Roosevelt Park, Smalley Park and Battery Park.

64 (B) Motor vehicles are permitted to be driven and/or parked within the confines of Waterfront Park, Leddy Park,  
65 ~~South Calahan~~ Park, Oakledge Park, Schmanska Park, Ethan Allen Park, North Beach Park and Perkins Pier,  
66 provided that:

67 (1) Motor vehicles shall be excluded from the confines of Leddy Park between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.,  
68 except that motor vehicles may be driven and/or parked within the confines of Leddy Park during such time  
69 for the purpose of attending scheduled skating events at Gordon H. Paquette Municipal Arena. ~~Motor~~  
70 ~~vehicles shall be excluded from Perkins Pier between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., except that~~  
71 ~~motor vehicles may be driven and/or parked within the confines of Perkins Pier if the person driving and/or~~  
72 ~~parking such vehicles displays on his or her dash board a late parking permit obtained from the attendant~~  
73 ~~upon admission to the Pier.~~

74 (2) Motor vehicles shall be excluded from the confines of Schmanska Park, Ethan Allen Park, ~~Waterfront~~  
75 ~~Park~~ and Oakledge Park between the hours of 9:30 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

76 (3) Motor vehicles shall be excluded from the confines of North Beach ~~Campground~~ Park, unless access  
77 and parking within the campsite area are allowed by reservation permit, between May 15 and October 14.  
78 ~~Saturday at 6:00 a.m. on the last weekend in April and the end of Labor Day in the following manner:~~

79 (a4) Motor vehicles shall be excluded from the "beach parking lot" between May 15 and October  
80 15 from dusk to dawn. as follows:

81 1. ~~Between 9:30 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. or~~

82 2. ~~Within twenty (20) minutes after the time that the lifeguard in charge shall announce that the~~  
83 ~~beach is closed.~~

84 (45) ~~Between midnight on Labor Day and 6:00 a.m. on the last Saturday of April~~ October 15 and May 14  
85 motor vehicles shall be excluded from the confines of North Beach Park, including the campground and the  
86 beach. between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

87 (56) Motor vehicles shall not be parked within the confines of any city park except in those areas properly  
88 designated and marked parking areas. Motor vehicles shall not be parked within the confines of a city park  
89 except by those using the park for recreational purposes.

90 (C) The Director of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront superintendent of parks or tour commander or Chief of the  
91 police department or their designee shall have the authority to close any park to vehicles and/or person on a  
92 temporary basis for the following reasons:

93 (1) Maintenance and/or construction.

**An Ordinance in Relation to** An Amendment to Appendix D sections 2 and 5, Rules and Regulations of City Park

94 (2) For public protection from conditions caused by weather or climate.

95 (3) When there is reason to believe that the closing of such park is necessary for the maintenance of  
96 order, safety and decency in such park and in those areas surrounding such park.

97 (D) The ~~Director of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront~~ ~~superintendent of parks~~ may, as authorized by the Parks  
98 ~~Commission board of parks and recreation commissioners~~, allow vehicles in prohibited areas for special events  
99 occurring in such areas. Additionally, the foregoing restrictions on motor vehicles shall not apply to city vehicles  
100 or personal vehicles while being used for official City business.

101 (E) There shall be stop signs placed at the following locations within the city parks:

102 (1) At the Flynn Avenue exit from Oakledge Park.

103 (2) At the North Avenue exit from Leddy Park.

104 ~~(3) At the North Beach entrance.~~

105 ~~(4) At the entrance to Perkins Pier.~~

106 (F) No person shall park a motor vehicle in any parking space on Perkins Pier which is marked for boat trailers.

107 ~~(FG)~~ *Closing hours for City Hall Park.* City Hall Park shall be closed for public use from 12:00 midnight until  
108 6:00 a.m. on a daily basis. This park closing shall not affect pedestrian crossings through the park.

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112 \* Material stricken out deleted.

113 \*\* Material underlined added.

114

115 em/hm/Ordinances 2025/ An Amendment to Appendix D, Sections 2 and 5 Rules and Regulations of the Burlington Parks and Recreation

116 Department

117 July 14, 2025



**BURLINGTON  
PARKS  
RECREATION  
WATERFRONT**

*MEMO*

**To:** Burlington Parks, Arts and Culture Committee of the Burlington City Council

**From:** Burlington Parks and Recreation Commission

**Date:** September 9, 2025

**Subject: Proposed Update of Section 7 to City Ordinance Appendix D**

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**Background:**

In 1999, the City started plans for the first off-leash fenced dog parks in Burlington at Starr Farm Park and Waterfront Park. These areas were completed in 2001/2002. At that time, the City added a section to Appendix D (Section 7) that allowed for the creation of fenced dog parks, including Starr Farm and Waterfront Park, as well as areas set aside for non-fenced off-leash spaces. This was a pilot and was never finalized or readopted. Despite sunseting 18 months after inclusion within Appendix D, the language from this pilot project is still included in Burlington's Code of Ordinance more than 20 years later.

In order to respond to growing community concern regarding dogs in public spaces, the Burlington City Council formed an ad hoc study committee of community members in 2021, known as the Dog Task Force. With a goal to comprehensively examine city policy towards dogs, their work included recommendations for off-leash use, enforcement, licensing, and related issues. Over the course of two years, this group met regularly, culminating in the release of their final report in December 2023.

The Parks Commission began deliberation on the recommendations in May 2024 by first pursuing to creation of a sub-committee of commissioners and members of the public. The purpose of this process was to determine how the recommendations in the Dog Task Force final report pertain to the work of the Parks Commission, specifically with regards to the off-leash dogs in City parks and the existing language in Appendix D, Section 7.

At this time, the broader commission paused deliberation on the recommendations until the sub-committee could present a plan for next steps. However, largely due to scheduling challenges, this sub-committee was never convened and the work related to off-leash dogs in parks was returned to the entire Parks Commission in April 2025.

Crafting the off-leash dog policy has been a deliberative item on the Parks Commission agenda each month from April to September 2025. The amendments below represent the recommended changes to Appendix D, Section 7, to be replaced entirely by the new language. Additionally, this

document includes the creation of the Burlington Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront (BPRW) Off-Leash Dog Policy (OLDP).

Structurally, Appendix D, Section 7 will dictate rules for off-leash dog areas in city parks, including their establishment and general rules for the public in these designated areas. The OLDP provides further clarification and specificity for BPRW operations pertaining to off-leash dog areas in parks.

### **Proposed amendments to Burlington Code or Ordinance**

Appendix D, Sec. 7.

Off-leash dogs in city parks

A. Off-Leash Dog Policy.

The Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department (PRW) shall maintain an Off-Leash Dog Policy (OLDP) as approved by the Parks Commission. The policy may be modified by PRW with the approval of the Parks Commission. Burlington Code of Ordinance Appendix D Section 7 shall govern the establishment of off-leash dog areas and general rules for the public in these designated areas. The OLDP shall govern PRW operations of off-leash dog opportunities.

B. Designation of Areas.

Areas may be designated for the purpose of allowing dogs to be under control of the guardian owner or guardian's owner's agent by means other than physical restraint. Opportunities, where possible, shall be dispersed across the city.

1. As defined in Burlington Ordinance Section 22-13, dogs shall be leashed or controlled by other similar means of physical restraint at all times within city parks, except in designated off-leash areas
2. Permanent off-leash fenced dog areas shall be located at:
  - i. Oakledge Park
  - ii. Starr Farm Dog Park
  - iii. Urban Reserve
3. There are no areas designated as unfenced off-leash dog areas within the City of Burlington's parks.

C. Public Information.

1. PRW shall provide information about off-leash dog opportunities through onsite signage and through its website, including maps, hours, and references to rules & policies pertinent to off-leash dog areas.
2. If Appendix D Section 7 or the OLDP has been modified, PRW shall conduct an outreach campaign for a period of up to 18 months to educate the community about how the changes impact off-leash dogs in City parks. PRW may conduct additional awareness campaigns about dogs in City parks at the Department's discretion.

D. General Rules for Areas Designated as Off-Leash Dog Areas.

1. A person taking a dog into an off-leash area shall have the dog held on leash when entering and exiting the off-leash area.
2. A person taking a dog into an off-leash area shall maintain voice, hand, or leash control over the dog at all times while the dog is in the off-leash area. Such person shall have a leash in their possession at all times.
3. A person taking a dog into an off-leash area is responsible for all actions of the dog, shall keep the dog within their vision at all times, and shall remove the dog when their

behavior is in violation of the City of Burlington Code of Ordinances, including but not limited to Appendix D Section 7, or the PRW OLDP.

4. The following are prohibited in off-leash dog areas:
  - i. Glass containers.
  - ii. Human food.
  - iii. Female dogs in heat.
  - iv. Excessive barking, howling, or other noise.
  - v. Bullying of other dogs.
  - vi. Failure to remove feces; All feces shall be removed from the off-leash area and placed in the appropriate receptacle.
  - vii. Unlicensed dogs; All dogs shall be licensed and display valid license tags.
  - viii. Dangerous dogs as defined by Burlington Code of Ordinances, Article II, Section 5-13.
  - ix. More than 3 dogs per person.
  - x. Children under 12 years of age unaccompanied by an adult.

E. Enforcement.

1. In addition to the penalties provided for by ordinance, a person or dog that violates the rules of this section is subject to ejection from the off-leash area as defined in the OLDP and may be ejected from park premises.
2. A person who violates any rules or policies applicable to off-leash dog areas on two (2) occasions within a twelve-month period shall be barred from taking any dog into the off-leash areas during the six (6) months subsequent to the second violation. Additional violations may incur additional penalties beyond those described in this section, at the discretion of the PRW Director.
3. In addition to the penalties provided for by ordinance, a duly authorized enforcement officer may impound a dog for a violation of the rules of this section or for activities determined to be a nuisance.
4. In addition to the penalties provided for by ordinance, all violations of Appendix D and the OLDP may include a restorative justice process with the Burlington Community Justice Center.
5. The PRW and the Police Department shall collaborate to educate and enforce the rules and policies applicable to off-leash dog areas.

F. Administration.

1. Commercial Use of Parks. The PRW may issue a permit and charge a fee to allow for commercial use of off-leash dog areas by professional trainers, and for-profit and not-for-profit animal organizations. Portions of the off-leash dog areas shall remain available for unencumbered use by the public as off-leash areas during these events. Fees collected by PRW for commercial use shall be used for the establishment, operations, or improvements of designated off-leash dog areas. Commercial use of off-leash dog areas without a permit shall result in a fine as set for in Chapter 22 section 23 of the Burlington Code of Ordinances. Commercial use of off-leash dog areas may be further defined or modified by the OLDP.
2. Closure of Off-leash areas. The PRW Director may, upon a finding of need at a particular off-leash area, close the area to off-leash use. The reopening of such area is at the discretion of the Director. The Director shall post a notice indicating that the area has been closed for off-leash use at the entrance to the area and at other locations in the area if needed to give notice to the public of the closing.

## OFF-LEASH DOG POLICY

### Purpose:

The Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department (PRW) shall maintain an Off-Leash Dog Policy (OLDP) as approved by the Parks Commission. The policy may be modified by PRW with the approval of the Parks Commission. Burlington Code of Ordinance Appendix D Section 7 shall govern the establishment of off-leash dog areas and general rules for the public in these designated areas. The OLDP shall govern PRW operations of off-leash dog opportunities.

### Areas of Policy

#### A. Designation of Areas and Times of Operations.

The following areas are off-leash areas, as designated herein or on site:

##### 1. Fenced Dog Parks

###### i. Starr Farm Park (year-round).

Times. The designated area may be used year-round from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. or sunset, whichever is earlier.

###### ii. Urban Reserve (year-round).

Times. The designated area is open for off-leash use at any time.

###### iii. Oakledge Park (year-round)

Times. The designated area is open for off-leash use during the hours the parking lot is open for vehicle parking.

##### 2. Unfenced Off-Leash areas

###### i. There are no areas designated as unfenced off-leash dog areas within the City's parks.

###### ii. Off-leash dogs outside of areas designated as fenced dog parks are prohibited in the City's parks.

#### B. Rules for Commercial Use of Off-Leash Fenced areas

##### a. Commercial users are required to be a Program in the Parks participant.

##### b. Commercial users are responsible for creating any boundaries, with temporary fencing or by other temporary means, required to meet their needs and that of the other users.

##### c. Commercial users are limited to twelve days per year exclusive of commercial uses that do not restrict other uses of the area.

##### d. No more than one commercial user may use the same dog park concurrently. Off-leash dogs will be permitted to access any areas of the off-leash area that are not separated by temporary or permanent fencing.

##### e. With the exception of extraordinary circumstances, no more than 33% of an off-leash dog area shall be permitted to be restricted for commercial use.

##### f. Commercial use shall not interfere with standard entrances and exits from the off-leash dog area.

###### i. If any PRW staff time is required for the event, commercial users of the park are responsible for all costs related to the staff time. PRW staff will only be made available with the approval of the PRW Director

###### ii. Commercial users will be responsible for all costs related to set-up, operations, security, and cleanup for all events.

###### iii. Standard PRW Department requirements for reserving parks apply.



**BURLINGTON  
PARKS  
RECREATION  
WATERFRONT**

**MEMO**

**To:** Burlington Parks, Arts and Culture Committee of the Burlington City Council

**From:** Burlington Parks and Recreation Commission

**Date:** September 9, 2025

**Subject:** Overview of current Burlington Parks and Recreation and Waterfront Staffing Challenges

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The purpose of this memo is to summarize some of the challenges facing the Burlington Parks and Recreation and Waterfront (BPRW) Team as summer concludes, to celebrate the accomplishments of BPRW staff in the face of these challenges, and to share information with Burlington leaders in order to collaborate to seek solutions.

In May 2025 the City of Burlington made difficult decisions to close a large budget gap. \$5.4 million in cuts were made to balance the budget, which included a Reduction in Force (RIF) laying off 18 city workers and eliminating seven other vacant positions. We recognize and appreciate the hard work and difficult decisions that went into this budgeting process at all levels of the City.

BPRW had the largest number of layoffs, with eight full-time staff laid off during the RIF, including two division directors. These staffing and budget cuts also coincided with the departure of the outgoing BPRW Director at the end of June, leaving the department without critical leadership during this major transition period.

The three remaining BPRW Division Directors stepped in not only for the departed BPRW Director, but also for the other two division directors whose positions were eliminated during the layoffs. This left three Division Directors to fill six roles during Burlington's busiest recreation season (summer). Other BPRW staff were required to take on the workload of the positions that were eliminated. In many instances, due to existing contracts or conflicting mandates from City administration, staff were required to maintain the high quality of service expected in Burlington's parks and events with less support.

These compounding issues have tangibly impacted morale within BPRW, with the impact of this tumultuous period still unfolding as staff reckon with the future of their programs and careers. From conversations with staff, Commissioners have heard:

- Exhaustion from overwork during their busy season,
- Fear around potential future cuts impacting livelihood,
- Sadness for the way their coworkers were removed,
- Confusion on how they can hire workers in the current City framework to maintain service quality,
- Exasperation over feeling powerless during City decision making that impacts the future of parks,
- Insufficient recognition of their years of dedicated civil service to the city of Burlington.

We would like to recognize the significant efforts of the BPRW staff who have navigated Burlington's busy summer season while understaffed, to recommend the need for a longer-term mending of trust broken between the department and City administration, and to share some details on what the city should seek in a new BPRW Director.

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## Significant BPRW Summer 2025 accomplishments include (among many others!):

### Parks & Facilities:

- During the months of June/July, rangers Noticed and Removed 37 camps in park spaces. During the month of July we connected 10+ of our unhoused community to services and support. The kind efforts of Niel Preston and Jake Payne was featured in [Seven Days](#).
- Active parks construction projects include:
  - Leddy Bike Park
  - Leddy Roller Rink
  - Voices of St. Joseph's Orphanage Memorial Healing Space
- Ongoing maintenance is a large part of BPRW's role. Examples of facilities work, just during this summer period, includes:
  - Ongoing working group meetings for future Public Safety building
  - Additional camera installations at Library, Pine Street, Station 2 and City Hall
  - Completed Bay Floor replacement at Station 2
  - Key core program and office repair projects completed at BCA
  - Phase one of current BPD HVAC project complete...phase 2 is underway
  - Air conditioning condenser repaired at Arena
  - PM service complete for City Hall HVAC
  - Repaired pressure washer at Pine Street
  - Ongoing graffiti removal and clean up
  - Ongoing maintenance of rain gardens and parks landscapes throughout the City
  - Ongoing removal of ash trees throughout the City: [www.burlingtonvt.gov/975/Active-ImprovementProjects](http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/975/Active-ImprovementProjects)
  - Completion of tree work service requests from VueWorks and SeeClickFix as necessary
  - The Fishing Pier lighting has been replaced with new parks standard fixtures.
  - Staff setup and worked the Brew Fest and Dragon Boat events.
  - Staff have started replacing bridge planks on RT 127 Bike Path bridge.

### Recreation:

- Recreation and Nutrition continued to offer over 200 free lunches and 250 free dinners a week for 7 weeks of the Summer across 4 different 'pop-up' style camp sites around the city. Kids enjoyed swimming and other adventurous field trips, crafts, field games, as well as on-site enrichment such as story tellers, 4 Winds Nature Institute, and the Fletcher Free Library. The support and consistency provided by counselors truly made a positive impact on the families in the vulnerable communities BPRW served!
- July and August was filled with many camps: skate camps, tennis camps, soccer camps, ultimate camp, baseball camp, disc golf camp, and waterfront adventures camp. There were also several programs taking place: soccer clinics, track & field, and adult tennis programs.
- Miller has been the site of Champ Camp all summer and will soon be transitioning into becoming the new Recreation Team headquarters.
- Two brand new registration based specialty camps took place in July, Nature Camp, a smashing introduction to hosting youth enrichment at Kieslich Park (Thank you conservation!) and Zach's Magic Camp. The warm reception from families and the enthusiastic good times had by participants provides clear evidence that we will continue to offer these programs in future Summers!
- The CORE has been wrapping up operations in preparation for the lease to end at the end of September. CORE has hosted a number of specialty camps and older adult programming for a very vibrant and fun last summer. The last day of BPRW programming was August 21.

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## Waterfront:

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These are just illustrative examples of accomplishments and ongoing work of our BPRW staff during one of the busiest and most beautiful summers Burlington has seen in a long time. These are a sample of their work to recognize the efforts of the BPRW team in the face of significant adversity. We invite ongoing review of staff achievements monthly in the Director's Report for additional and useful details each month.

BPRW is asked to manage many of the things that make Burlington into the city that residents and visitors expect it to be. They do so with dedication, excitement, grace, and most of all, love for public space and for the City of Burlington. They are the stewards of the public face of the City of Burlington – a strong parks network is one of the most highly visible components of a vibrant and healthy community.

While the unfortunate reality of our current moment requires the City to make strategic cuts, the Parks Commission hopes city leadership will carefully consider the impact of prior cuts to BPRW as the city moves forward. We also recommend that the city consider what options may exist to rebuild trust between department staff and city leaders. While cuts may have been essential to keep the City operational, we must also recognize the RIF caused harm to current city employees that has not been resolved.

To recognize the team that has supported our community through the summer and to set them up for success this Fall and going forward, the Commission also wishes to reflect on several elements we believe are key in the upcoming hire and appointment of a new BPRW Director. The new BPRW Director will need to be willing to lead through change. This individual will need to:

- Lead and make difficult decisions about what recreation services can realistically continue to be offered to operate effectively at current budget and staffing levels;
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Nate Lantieri, Parks Commission Chair, is participating in the hiring panel for the new BPRW Director. He has/will aim to represent these perspectives as he is able during that process.

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Finally, the Parks Commission would like to formally request an agenda slot during an upcoming meeting of the Parks, Arts, and Culture (PAC) Committee, ideally the PAC September meeting to discuss any feedback or questions from PAC.

We hope this memo, which was unanimously approved by the Parks Commission during our September meeting, updates you on the work of BPRW and the hopes of the Commission to rebuild morale within the department.

Nate Lantieri & Kirstin Boehm  
Chair & Vice Chair  
Burlington Parks & Recreation Commission



**BURLINGTON  
PARKS  
RECREATION  
WATERFRONT**

**MEMO**

**To:** Burlington Parks, Arts and Culture Committee of the Burlington City Council

**From:** Burlington Parks and Recreation Commission

**Date:** September 9, 2025

**Subject:** Overview of current Burlington Parks and Recreation and Waterfront Staffing Challenges

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The purpose of this memo is to summarize some of the challenges facing the Burlington Parks and Recreation and Waterfront (BPRW) Team as summer concludes, to celebrate the accomplishments of BPRW staff in the face of these challenges, and to share information with Burlington leaders in order to collaborate to seek solutions.

In May 2025 the City of Burlington made difficult decisions to close a large budget gap. \$5.4 million in cuts were made to balance the budget, which included a Reduction in Force (RIF) laying off 18 city workers and eliminating seven other vacant positions. We recognize and appreciate the hard work and difficult decisions that went into this budgeting process at all levels of the City.

BPRW had the largest number of layoffs, with eight full-time staff laid off during the RIF, including two division directors. These staffing and budget cuts also coincided with the departure of the outgoing BPRW Director at the end of June, leaving the department without critical leadership during this major transition period.

The three remaining BPRW Division Directors stepped in not only for the departed BPRW Director, but also for the other two division directors whose positions were eliminated during the layoffs. This left three Division Directors to fill six roles during Burlington's busiest recreation season (summer). Other BPRW staff were required to take on the workload of the positions that were eliminated. In many instances, due to existing contracts or conflicting mandates from City administration, staff were required to maintain the high quality of service expected in Burlington's parks and events with less support.

These compounding issues have tangibly impacted morale within BPRW, with the impact of this tumultuous period still unfolding as staff reckon with the future of their programs and careers. From conversations with staff, Commissioners have heard:

- Exhaustion from overwork during their busy season,
- Fear around potential future cuts impacting livelihood,
- Sadness for the way their coworkers were removed,
- Confusion on how they can hire workers in the current City framework to maintain service quality,
- Exasperation over feeling powerless during City decision making that impacts the future of parks,
- Insufficient recognition of their years of dedicated civil service to the city of Burlington.

We would like to recognize the significant efforts of the BPRW staff who have navigated Burlington's busy summer season while understaffed, to recommend the need for a longer-term mending of trust broken between the department and City administration, and to share some details on what the city should seek in a new BPRW Director.

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## Significant BPRW Summer 2025 accomplishments include (among many others!):

### Parks & Facilities:

- During the months of June/July, rangers Noticed and Removed 37 camps in park spaces. During the month of July we connected 10+ of our unhoused community to services and support. The kind efforts of Niel Preston and Jake Payne was featured in [Seven Days](#).
- Active parks construction projects include:
  - Leddy Bike Park
  - Leddy Roller Rink
  - Voices of St. Joseph's Orphanage Memorial Healing Space
- Ongoing maintenance is a large part of BPRW's role. Examples of facilities work, just during this summer period, includes:
  - Ongoing working group meetings for future Public Safety building
  - Additional camera installations at Library, Pine Street, Station 2 and City Hall
  - Completed Bay Floor replacement at Station 2
  - Key core program and office repair projects completed at BCA
  - Phase one of current BPD HVAC project complete...phase 2 is underway
  - Air conditioning condenser repaired at Arena
  - PM service complete for City Hall HVAC
  - Repaired pressure washer at Pine Street
  - Ongoing graffiti removal and clean up
  - Ongoing maintenance of rain gardens and parks landscapes throughout the City
  - Ongoing removal of ash trees throughout the City: [www.burlingtonvt.gov/975/Active-ImprovementProjects](http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/975/Active-ImprovementProjects)
  - Completion of tree work service requests from VueWorks and SeeClickFix as necessary
  - The Fishing Pier lighting has been replaced with new parks standard fixtures.
  - Staff setup and worked the Brew Fest and Dragon Boat events.
  - Staff have started replacing bridge planks on RT 127 Bike Path bridge.

### Recreation:

- Recreation and Nutrition continued to offer over 200 free lunches and 250 free dinners a week for 7 weeks of the Summer across 4 different 'pop-up' style camp sites around the city. Kids enjoyed swimming and other adventurous field trips, crafts, field games, as well as on-site enrichment such as story tellers, 4 Winds Nature Institute, and the Fletcher Free Library. The support and consistency provided by counselors truly made a positive impact on the families in the vulnerable communities BPRW served!
- July and August was filled with many camps: skate camps, tennis camps, soccer camps, ultimate camp, baseball camp, disc golf camp, and waterfront adventures camp. There were also several programs taking place: soccer clinics, track & field, and adult tennis programs.
- Miller has been the site of Champ Camp all summer and will soon be transitioning into becoming the new Recreation Team headquarters.
- Two brand new registration based specialty camps took place in July, Nature Camp, a smashing introduction to hosting youth enrichment at Kieslich Park (Thank you conservation!) and Zach's Magic Camp. The warm reception from families and the enthusiastic good times had by participants provides clear evidence that we will continue to offer these programs in future Summers!
- The CORE has been wrapping up operations in preparation for the lease to end at the end of September. CORE has hosted a number of specialty camps and older adult programming for a very vibrant and fun last summer. The last day of BPRW programming was August 21.

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