

**Ordinance Committee**  
**Thursday, January 15, 2026**  
**Bushor Conference Room Conference Room**  
**or Remote via Zoom. Burlington, Vermont**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**

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

**Staff Present:** Kim Sturtevant (Assistant City Attorney), Bill Ward (Director of DPI),

**Public Present:** Sharon Bushor, Allie Schachter, Melo Grant, William Rison, Gabby Grzan, Ethan Kieffner, Nic Anderson, Floyd Campbell, Lawrence Saveall, Ben Robke, Isabelle Kriz, Alva Yanowitz, Jackson Stoeber, Marek Broderick, Alicia Estey

Meeting called to order at 4:31 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 December 18<sup>th</sup>.**

*Motion to Adopt the Draft Minutes from 12/18.*

*Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.*

*Final Resolution: Motion Passes*

*Yes: Unanimous*

**3. University Exemption for Periodic Minimum Housing Inspection Ordinance Discussion**  
**3.1 Dormitory Executive Session**

*Move that the Ordinance Committee find that premature general public knowledge of legal advice regarding Agenda Item 3 would clearly place the City at a substantial disadvantage.*

*Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.*

*Final Resolution: Motion Passes*

*Yes: Unanimous*

*Based upon that finding, move that the Ordinance Committee go into executive session to receive confidential attorney-client communications for Agenda Item 3. 1 VSA §313(a)(1)(F).*

*Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.*

*Final Resolution: Motion Passes*

*Yes: Unanimous*

*Motion to come out of Executive Session.*

*Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter*

*Final Resolution: Motion Passes*

### ***3.2 Presentation from Bill Ward (DPI)***

*Bill Ward (Director of DPI) shared a minimum housing checklist and discussed how it is used when inspecting units in the City and how it could be used when inspecting dormitories. This document is available in the agenda packet on CivicClerk.*

Bill Ward recommended changing the ordinance regarding self-certification to simply state that “Self-certification shall be completed using a form provided by the Department of Permitting and Inspections.” He said that then DPI can adjust the form as needed to include more information if necessary. He added that the self-certification process would not negate the City’s ability to inspect after receiving a housing complaint.

Councilor Carpenter asked how quickly a tenant should receive a response from their landlord regarding a complaint. Bill Ward said it depends on the seriousness of the issue. He said that there should be open communication within a few days, but an emergency like the heat being out must be addressed immediately.

### ***3.3 Presentation from UVM Administration***

Wendy Koenig (UVM Director of Government Relations) and Alicia Estey (UVM VP for Finance and Administration) spoke on behalf of the University of Vermont. They said that UVM is already going to be updating their website to make it clear that students in dormitories can make complaints directly to the City. They also shared a letter about making changes to the information on the self-certification and about UVM’s own inspection process. This letter is available in the agenda packet on CivicClerk.

### ***3.4 Presentation from UVM Student Union***

Gabby Grzan and Ethan Kieffner spoke on behalf of the UVM Student Tenant Union. They said they were happy with the progress thus far, but the fundamental issues are still present in the older dorms. They said there is overcrowding and the buildings were not designed for so many residents. They also said that UVM’s own inspections have not been effective.

Councilor Barlow asked if the University’s attempts to make reporting easier and more accessible will improve the process. The students said that the available QR codes are an improvement, but that the PlanOn website itself is not intuitive and is difficult to use.

### ***3.5 University Exemption for Periodic Minimum Housing Inspection Ordinance Discussion***

#### **4. Public Forum regarding University/College Minimum Housing Inspection**

Alva Yanowitz: I am part of the UVM Student Tenant Union and have lived in three different dorm buildings at UVM. I am worried that the issues with the reporting software will overshadow the larger infrastructure issues with UVM's dorms. There are certain buildings that has consistent issues with pests, mold, or temperature and students should not be the ones to have to report on these every time.

Floyd Campbell: I am a first year UVM student. I am hoping for a more cooperative relationship between the UVM administration and the tenants union going forward.

#### **5. Any Other Committee Business**

The next Ordinance Committee meeting is scheduled for February 6<sup>th</sup>. The agenda will include Inclusionary Zoning, Total Demand Management, Fuel Purchase Notice, and Private Parking Lot ordinance discussions.

#### **6. Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn.*

*Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter*

*Final Resolution: Motion Passes*

*Yes: Unanimous*

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 PM.