



## **Racial, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)**

Held in the O.N.E. Community Center, Third Floor

OR

via Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96324562039>

Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039

Or Use Phone number: 305-224-1968

Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039

### **1. Call to Order**

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### **2. Adopt the Agenda**

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### **3. Adopt Minutes**

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>3.1. December 2025</b>
Meeting	January 21, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	3. Adopt Minutes
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	

### **4. Public Forum**

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### **5. TCV Updates**

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### **6. Town Meeting Day Education Updates**

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### **7. REIB/HR Collaboration**

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### **8. Adjournment**

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>8.1. Motion to adjourn</b>
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Meeting January 21, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Category 8. Adjournment

Department Council and Board

Type

Recommended Action

## **9. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements**

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**Subject** **9.1. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. For more information on access, call Lori Olberg, Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator (802-865-7136)(TTY 802-865-7142). Persons with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate are encouraged to contact 802-865-7000 (voice) or 802-865-7142 (TTY) at least 72 hours in advance so that proper arrangements can be made. This meeting will also air on Town Meeting TV the Wednesday after the meeting, starting at 8:00 pm and repeating at 1:00 am and 7:00 am the following day. 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.**

Meeting January 21, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Category 9. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

Department Council and Board

Type

### **Minutes taken by Vicky Luciano**

#### **Attendees**

Christian Berry, Communications and Community Engagement Manager REIB (in person)

Katie Greene, Community and Belonging Program Manager REIB (in person)

Vicky Luciano, Administrative and Financial Coordinator REIB (in person)

Alicia Van Dyk (in person)

Jules Wetchi (in person)

Councilor Melo Grant (in person)

Councilor Becca Brown McKnight (virtual)

Councilor Ranjit "Buddy" Singh (virtual)

Mona Tolba (virtual)

Maryan Maalin (virtual)

Michelle Bookless (virtual)

Mary Gannon (virtual)

Emma Wall (virtual)

Lizzy Clements (virtual)

#### **1. Call to Order**

- a. Meeting called to order at 5:34 pm.

#### **2. Adopt the Agenda**

- a. Councilor Singh moved to adopt the agenda. Councilor McKnight seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **3. Adopt Minutes**

- a. Councilor McKnight moved to adopt the minutes. Councilor Singh seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. Public Forum**

- a. Michelle Bookless shared a statement about how crucial the REIB is for the community and City governance. Bookless expressed concern for what would happen if the office is not chartered and added the work the REIB has done has been undermined consistently. Refer to the video.
  - i. Councilor Grant thanked Michelle Bookless for her comments and expressed her concerns for the upcoming Town Meeting Day vote. Councilor Grant talked about the response people have had in regard to the office and the City's budgetary issues. Refer to the video.
    1. Michelle Bookless said the REIB has been undermined and cut repeatedly and could do more if allowed. Refer to the video.
      - a. Councilor Grant agreed it has been difficult. Refer to the video.
- b. Emma Wall gave a shout out to the community members that are living in fear with ICE and expressed that they are on her mind. She expressed the same concerns as Michelle and echoed her comments. Refer to the video.
- c. Councilor McKnight echoed what Michelle Bookless and Emma Wall said. She said this work applies to everyone and encouraged those who believe the Charter change is irrelevant to them to rethink that. Refer to the video.
- d. Lizzy Clements voiced her support for having the REIB in the Charter and expressed gratitude for those that spoke. She shared some reasons why the office important. Refer to the video.
- e. Mary Gannon expressed disappointment in the position the City has taken in regards to racial equity, inclusion, and belonging. Refer to the video.

#### **5. TCV Updates**

- a. Mona Tolba introduced herself as one of the Trusted Community Voices (TCVs). She updated everyone on what is going on in the community. She said people in the community feel helps and scared because they keep hearing about people being snatched by ICE. She talked about the process that people need to go through when they are taken by ICE and expressed how unjust it is and how the community in VT is not talking about it or helping. Refer to the video.
  - i. Councilor McKnight acknowledged and Mona's comment, thanked Mona for sharing, and assured her that the City Councilors are talking about this issue. Councilor McKnight apologized that the community is going through this.
  - ii. Councilor Singh expressed appreciation for Mona sharing this. He spoke about the school district's policies and assured Mona this topic is at top of mind for City Councilors.
  - iii. Christian Berry said these fears are coming up in every community that the TCVs represent. She expressed how important it is for the administration, City Council, or the City to share

information with the community on initiatives or work that is being done behind the scenes so people know work is being done. Refer to the video.

- iv. Councilor Grant expressed appreciation for Mona's bravery in sharing. She shared her concerns about the turn the Country is taking. Refer to the video.
- b. Jules Wetchi shared people in the community are stressed and suggested organizing trainings on how to manage stress and manage mental health issues that may arise. Jules Wetchi said communities were also asking when elections for the Mayor would be. He thanked Christian Berry for the support she has given the TCVs.
  - i. Councilor Grant updated everyone of when elections for the Mayor and Councilors would be. Refer to the video.
- c. Maryan Maalin echoed what everyone had already said and added people are worried about getting arrested by ICE and don't know what to do.
- d. Alicia Van Dyk shared about housing issues that are going around in the community. She said when new refugees come to Vermont they have no support, no food stamps, and no housing. She shared a story about a community member who was struggling with heat at their house and how the City helped. She urged everyone to check on people.
  - i. Councilor Grant mentioned she wanted to talk to Alicia Van Dyk. Councilor Grant shared some beliefs on how to help the community. Refer to the video.
- e. Christian Berry talked about a few things the TCVs talked about in their last meeting. There is a new Congolese community president that was elected (Emmanuel) Some TCVs were talking about businesses refusing to hire or retain people with green cards because the employer doesn't want to risk having ICE raid their place of business.
  - i. Councilor Singh said it is important to have details about the interactions people are having with ICE off the record or anonymous to be able to better help people and spread information.
- f. Mona Tolba added people should be good to their neighbors and suggested leaders put out a call to the community to be nice to each other.
  - i. Christian Berry said she believes this is a tangible goal but everyone will need to be involved.
- g. Mary Gannon asked what Mayor Mulvaney-Stanak's messaging was on what people are facing in terms of ICE. She encouraged people to reach out to the NAACP branches.
  - i. Councilor Grant said we should have statewide presence for NAACP. Asked for Mary to send an email to talk about this. Refer to the video.
- h. Councilor Grant ensured everyone that their concerns are being heard. Grant expressed the importance of having the TCVs at the meetings to touch base. Refer to the video.
- i. Christian Berry reminded the Councilors that the REIB meets with the TCVs monthly and those who can't attend come to the REIB City Council Committee meeting.
  - i. Councilor Grant asked to be added to the meeting alerts. Councilor Grant will reach out to Mayor Mulvaney-Stanak for the BIPOC Stakeholders.

## **6. Town Meeting Day Education Updates**

- a. Grant expressed the importance of TCVs going to the NPA meetings.

## **7. REIB/HR Collaboration**

- a. Councilor Grant pushed agenda item REIB/HR Collaboration to the next meeting and said HR Director Lynn Reagan and Director Perkins should be there.

## **8. Adjournment**

- a. Councilor Grant reminded everyone the next REIB City Council Subcommittee meeting will be on February 10<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Councilor Singh thanked everyone who spoke and expressed appreciation for everything that was said.
- c. Councilor Grant adjourned the meeting at 7:13 pm