

January 21, 2026 BOH draft minutes

Board members participating: Chair Celia Bird, Jane Seymour Jenny Tomczak, Bianka Cimrin, Dr. Kate Tracy, and Health Officer Bill Ward

Board Chair Celia Bird called the meeting to order at 605 p.m.

Agenda

Jenny made a motion to amend the agenda to add the approval of November and December minutes. 2nd by Bianka. Unanimous in favor.

Jane made a motion to add within the chair report, a discussion about next steps for the public raised issue of water fluoridation. 2nd by Bianka

Jenny made a motion to approve the amended agenda. 2nd by Bianka.

Vote was unanimous in favor.

Draft minutes

November

Jane made a motion to approve the minutes

Jenny seconded the motion. Unanimous vote in favor.

December

Celia noted that the minutes should be amended because the chair report reflected all of the comments being credited to her when she remembered it as more of a group discussion about the City Council selection process. Bill agreed that he would review the video and rephrase the minutes to reflect the discussion rather than only comments by the Chair.

Jenny made a motion to approve the amended minutes.

Bianka seconded the motion. Unanimous vote in favor.

Board Member introductions

Board members and staff introduced themselves to new member, Dr. Kate Tracy and she shared her background and interests in participating as a board member.

Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

Substance Abuse and Syringe Disposal

Jenny noted that she ended up not doing a front porch forum because she found the survey we would have highlighted was ending a few days after our last BOH meeting.

Celia said she had not received any updated requests about the Overdose Prevention Center.

Celia suggested that Bill work on getting an updated heat map of found syringe litter.

Health Equity

Celia will reach out soon to the King Street Youth Center

Bianka suggested we explore new methods to have our messages available in translated format in order to reach more Burlington residents. Celia suggested having someone from REIB department be invited to a board meeting to coordinate our work on this. Bill will make initial outreach on behalf of the board.

Housing Inspection Progress and Challenges

Bill discussed the Mayor's plan for DPI to focus on Burlington's Problem Properties. We are in the midst of a housing crisis so these include Burlington's vacant properties and distressed/underutilized properties with special attention on properties having the most negative impact on the neighborhood and the downtown core. Bill is now hosting department heads for a monthly staff meeting to share updates and coordinate work across departments on problem properties.

Chair Report

Celia brought up the topic of fluoridation in order to determine what board members thought should be the next steps. Jane gave a summary of the previous public forum statements and news articles that were shared with the board. She asked if the board members were interested in having the item on a future agenda in order to have a vote on any next steps. The board members agreed that Jane should create a specific agenda item for the next meeting.

Celia said she had connected with the Mayor's Chief of Staff Jennifer Zakaras about heating and cooling centers. Celia will coordinate with Bill and Jennifer about having city representatives come to a future BOH meeting to discuss the policy and operation of the centers.

The board revisited the selection process for new board members and the importance of working with City Council prior to the process. Jane made a motion to have the chair begin outreach to the President of the City Council on this process. Kate seconded the motion Unanimous Vote in favor.

Jenny made a motion to continue past the 2 hour meeting deadline to finish the agenda. Seconded by Bianka. Unanimous vote in favor.

Emerging Issues/Public outreach

The group agreed they should have a winter safety public outreach message focusing on carbon monoxide awareness and pedestrian safety.

The board discussed possible meeting dates in February and proposed the 11th at 5:30 pm. Bill will send out notices and reserve a meeting room.

Adjournment

Kate made a motion to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Bianka. Unanimous in favor. The meeting was adjourned by Celia at 8:16 p.m.