



Racial, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Held in the Sharon Bushor Conference Room, Ground Floor City Hall

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

2. Adopt the Agenda

3. Adopt Minutes

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|----------------|---|
| Subject | 3.1. February 2026 |
| Meeting | April 21, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB) |
| Category | 3. Adopt Minutes |
| Department | Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB) |
| Type | |

4. Public Forum

5. Councilor Updates

6. TCV Updates

7. Missisquoi Gift

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|----------------|---|
| Subject | 7.1. Authorization to Accept a Work of Public Art from the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi Tribal Council Memo |
| Meeting | April 21, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB) |

Category 7. Missisquoi Gift
Department Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type
Recommended Action

8. REIB Updates

9. Adjournment

Subject 9.1. Motion to adjourn
Meeting April 21, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category 9. Adjournment
Department Council and Board
Type
Recommended Action

10. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

Subject 10.1. 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 April 21, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category 10. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements
Department Council and Board
Type

Attendees:

Kelli Perkins, Director (in person)

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

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

Councilor Sarah Carpenter (in person)

Brian Wiggins (in person)

Robert Richard (in person)

Sophie Sauvé (in person)

Richard Menard (in person)

Chol Dhoor (in person)

David Massell (in person)

Troy Headrick (in person)

Denise L. Watso (in person)

Max Curry (in person)

Mira Fakiranando (in person)

Laura Massell (in person)

Councilor Laura Sanchez-Parkinson (virtual)

Councilor Melo Grant (virtual)

Daniel G. Nolett (virtual)

Rev. Mark Hughes (virtual)

Mona Tolba (virtual)

Liz Curry (virtual)

- **Call To Order**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.
- **Adopt Agenda**
 - Councilor Grant motioned to adopt the agenda. Councilor Carpenter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Adopt Minutes**
 - Councilor Grant motioned to adopt the minutes. Noting this is a new iteration of the committee. Councilor Carpenter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Public Forum**
 - Sophie Sauvé announced an upcoming open house for planBTV 2050, a coordinated planning effort involving Parks, CEDO, City Planning, and the Transportation Division of DPW.

- The municipal plan is due for revision; the parks plan has not been revised since 2015; the transportation plan dates to 2011; there has been no economic development plan.
- The open house will be on Thursday, April 30, 3:30-8:00 PM at Main Street Landing. Food, activities, and consultant engagement will be available to the public.
 - Sophie Sauvé asked for support with outreach
- Reverend Mark Hughes extended a welcome to new Chair Sanchez-Parkinson and expressed appreciation for Director Kelly and the REIB staff.
- **Councilor Updates**
 - Councilor Grant reported on the ongoing review of the 2020 City Council Resolution, tracking items completed and items still outstanding. She noted the recent charter update vote to include the REIB Department in the city charter as an example of completed work. Raised concern that certain obligations from the 2020 resolution have lapsed. Refer to the video
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson thanked Councilor Grant for her leadership as Chair for the Public Safety Committee and the REIB Committee and for her mentorship. She expressed she would be interested in bridging some of the conversations that happen in the Public Safety Committee in the REIB Committee. She updated everyone on what has been happening with the South Burlington Immigration raid. Refer to the video.
 - Councilor Carpenter shared there has been some side work happening to bring back the Aging Council and will bring information back to the REIB Committee when the time comes.
- **TCV Updates**
 - Christian Berry informed everyone none of the TCVs were able to come to the meeting but they are working on disseminating the planBTV 2050 information to their communities.
- **Missisquoi Gift**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson informed everyone the matter of the Missisquoi Gift was referred to the REIB City Council Committee by City Council for further consideration. The Committee was tasked with making a recommendation to City Council on whether to proceed with accepting the gift commissioned by the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi. Refer to the video.
 - Brian Wiggins shared a letter from Chief Brenda Gagne of the Missisquoi Nation. The letter requested the totem be installed at Battery Park; if not, asked that the sculpture be returned to the tribe. Refer to the video.
 - Bob Rickard noted the tribe has received repeated state recognition, with near-unanimous support from Vermont legislators. He clarified the sculpture is not a “gift” in the traditional sense. Burlington funded the project via a grant and awarded those funds to Missisquoi for educational purposes.
 - Christian Berry clarified BCA did not commission the piece. The \$50,000 was gifted to the Missisquoi Nation via the 2022 resolution; the Nation commissioned the sculpture independently. Parks and REIB’s role was to identify a placement location. The original Greylock statue had been removed for safety reasons.
 - Richard Mernard informed everyone he has been storing the sculpture at his property since last July and urged a decision be made. Refer to the video.
 - Troy Headrick framed his concern as procedural, not personal. He stated his role is to amplify voices that have been excluded. He argued that the Vermont state recognition process for Abenaki groups was procedurally and inconsistent with UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Refer to the video.
 - David Massell helped organize three public forums on Indigenous history and identity at UVM since 2022, which prompted press investigations on this issue. Stated that based on research the leadership and Vermont’s recognized Abenaki groups have no traceable Abenaki ancestry. Refer to the video
 - Denise Watso spoke on behalf of the Odanak First Nation and its elected Band Council. She argued the Missisquoi Nation does not represent actual Abenaki people, citing the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs denial of their application. She called the current statue offensive and stereotypical; she urged the

Council to reject the gift and begin engagement with legitimate Abenaki representatives. Refer to the video.

- Max Curry expressed his concern about the educational message the statue would send in Burlington's high-traffic, university-dense public spaces. He noted that descendants of Chief Greylock have said the statue does not represent who he was and urged the Council to listen to those voices.
- Laura Massell cautioned the Council against rushing to a decision due to "momentum" from the existing recognition process and suggested more time for evaluation with new information.
- Mira Fakiranando questioned the motivation of the Odanak's opposition. Refer to the video.
- Daniel G. Nolett stated that as the Nolett family (Waba Nolett/ direct Greylock descendants), Odanak would be glad to collaborate with the City of Burlington to honor Greylock's memory. He asked the Council to decline the gift and return the sculpture to Missisquoi. He framed a collaboration with Odanak as a meaningful act of truth and reconciliation.
- Liz Curry argued the City should not attempt to adjudicate the dispute, and should instead view the statue as an educational tool that can spark community dialogue, including about the current contestation. Liz Curry suggested accepting the gift need not be read as legitimizing any one side of the dispute. Refer to the video.
- Councilor Grant and Councilor Carpenter voted to recommend to proceed with acceptance to City Council. Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson opposed. The motion passed. Refer to the video.
- **REIB Updates**
 - Director Perkins noted no updates requiring extended discussion and invited ongoing email updates from community members and REIB staff.
- **Adjournment**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Carpenter seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.