

# PARKS, ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE

**Meeting Minutes – June 2, 2026 DRAFT**  
**MEETING CONDUCTED IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM**

**Attendance:**

Committee Members: Chair Councilor Allie Schachter, Councilor Carter Neubieser (Zoom)  
City Staff: Samantha McGinnis (Marketplace), Mary Danko (Fletcher Free Library), Phil Lewis (Parks, Recreation & Waterfront), others present in room and on Zoom  
Guest: Jeff Lawson, Lake Champlain Chamber

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## 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **12:02 PM** by Chair Councilor Allie Schachter.

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## 2. Approval of Agenda

Chair Councilor Allie Schachter moved to amend the agenda due to a compressed schedule. The **Lake Champlain Chamber marketing campaign** (originally Item 4.4) was moved to the top of the agenda, immediately following public forum.

Motion to adopt the amended agenda passed unanimously.

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## 3. Approval of Previous Minutes

Chair Councilor Allie Schachter noted that the prior two sets of minutes did not appear in Civic Clerk for all committee members.  
Due to visibility and posting issues, approval of past minutes was **postponed to the next meeting**.

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## 4. Public Forum

Public forum opened at **12:07 PM**.  
No members of the public wished to speak.  
Public forum closed at **12:07 PM**.

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## 5. Lake Champlain Chamber Marketing Campaign Presentation

Guest presenter **Jeff Lawson**, VP for Tourism, Lake Champlain Chamber, shared an overview of the *Hello Burlington* campaign and the new “**Don’t Dream It, Be It**” regional marketing initiative.

Key points included:

- **Tourism significance:** Chittenden County accounts for roughly **25% of statewide visitor spending**.
- **Downward trends:** 2024–2025 saw steep declines in occupancy and visitor activity compared with peer regions.
- **Campaign goals:**
  - Inspire both **visitors and local residents** to re-engage with Burlington.
  - Use a flexible “Be \_\_\_” visual system (e.g., *Be Bold, Be Home, Be Inspired*).
  - Encourage community to serve as **local ambassadors**.
- **Media rollout:**
  - Digital ads, print features, video assets, social media, and expanded regional targeting (NYC, Boston, DC, Chicago, flight-path markets).
- **Local activation:**
  - Posters in welcome centers, collaboration with BTV Airport, window clings for businesses, potential **murals**, and exploration of large public “**B**” **sculptures**.
- Campaign funding is constrained due to occupancy-based revenue declines; collaboration with the City will amplify impact.

Committee members expressed appreciation for the work and emphasized the importance of positive narrative-building for Burlington.

Chair Councilor Allie Schachter requested that campaign links and materials be shared for the minutes and Civic Clerk.

Councilor Neubieser departed slightly early due to a schedule conflict.

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## 6. City Department Updates (Rapid Reports)

### Marketplace / Downtown Events – Samantha McGinnis

- Launch of **Summer in the City**: over **100 free events** downtown this season.
- Program highlights:

- *Passeggiata* (a traditional Italian cultural ritual of an evening stroll through town )  
Wednesday evening strolls with strong business participation.
- Jazz Festival school bands, Top Block Stage, and Opera Block activations.
- BCA summer concerts, Splash Dance, Waterfront performances.
- **Burlington Watches Together** FIFA viewing events.
- Juneteenth, BTV Market, July 3rd fireworks.

### **Fletcher Free Library – Mary Danko**

- Youth Summer Challenge underway with theme “**Unearth A Story.**”
- Outreach with free books and programming across city parks.
- Collaboration with “Summer in the City” for shared promotion.

### **Parks, Recreation & Waterfront – Phil Lewis**

- Summer camps begin **June 22.**
- All waterfront activation sites (Boathouse, Oakledge, North Beach) opened **May 15.**
- Encouragement for residents to enjoy expanded summer programming.

Remaining agenda items (e-bikes and Urban Reserve updates) will be taken up in **July** due to time constraints.

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## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at **12:37 PM.**