

## **Burlington Fire Commission Meeting**

Tuesday June 9, 2026 08:30-09:21

Members Present: Chair Jake Perskinson, Vice Chair Kevin McLaughlin, Linda Sheehey, and Ashley Bond (via Zoom). Chief Curtin, Deputy Chief Stephen Petit, Battalion Chief of EMS Marsha McCombie, Data Analyst Jeff Nicholson, Captain Kyle Blake, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney. Member of public via Zoom Philippe. Trotin.

### **Call to Order** –

The meeting was called to order June 9, 2026 at 08:30 am with quorum.

### **Motion to Amend/Adopt Agenda-**

The chair for a motion to adopt the agenda as submitted. Motion moved by Commissioner McLaughlin and seconded by Commissioner Sheehey. Approved by acclamation.

### **Public Comment** –

No comment from member of public.

### **Accept Minutes from April Meeting-**

Commissioner McLaughlin motioned to accept minutes as written. Commissioner Sheehey seconded the motion. With no objections minutes accepted as written.

### **Commissions** –

Brief commission business included acknowledgments of commissioned individual firefighter Ian McKinnon. Members on shift joined for the commissions.

### **Chief's Oral Report-**

Summary:

**Please reference Agenda Packet for reports that Chief Curtin and BC McCombie provided to Commission**

The following is summary from AI:

- \* Chief Curtin presented operational statistics for May 2026:
  - 956 incidents during May.
  - 4,412 incidents year-to-date through June 1.
  - Significant incident: Blondin Circle structure fire.
  - Overall, call volume approximately 6.5% lower than the same period in 2025.
  - Majority of calls continue to occur during 5pm to 6am hours.
  - 25 confirmed overdose incidents reported in May.
  - Community Response Team (CRT) staffed six days, completed 27 patient contacts, and generated one referral.
  - Arie Van Vuuren resigned to accept employment with another department.
  - Senior Firefighter promotional class completed.

- Firefighter/Paramedic Jason Paul received a UVM Excellence in Trauma Care Award.
- Department staffing remains challenged, with three vacancies and nine members unavailable due to injury, leave, or FMLA. (5 new recruits started 5/26 but will not count towards minimum staffing until October when recruit academy is completed)
- Members completed 969 hours of training and conducted numerous inspections and community outreach events.

## **EMS**

Chief McCombie, Captain Blake, and Jeff presented an extensive review of EMS utilization data.

Topics included:

- Emerging drug trends, including medetomidine and a highly potent synthetic opioid.
- Analysis of EMS call categories and system utilization.
- Identification of high-frequency EMS users.
- Review of call volume involving psychiatric/behavioral issues, substance use, and patients presenting with no significant symptoms.
- Discussion regarding potential system mismatch where EMS may not always be the most appropriate response resource.
- Analysis of housed versus unhoused populations and EMS demand.
- Examination of winter transport patterns, particularly the use of emergency departments as de facto warming shelters.

Department leadership outlined several next steps:

- Improve EMS documentation quality.
- Measure unit utilization hours.
- Expand collaboration with UVM Medical Center and community partners.
- Explore alternative service delivery models.
- Launch a monthly EMS performance and trend report beginning August 2026.
- Add future reporting metrics related to aging populations, language access needs, and community health trends.

Commission discussion focused on resource utilization, emergency department impacts, coordination with police and social service agencies, and opportunities for prevention-focused interventions.

## **Admin**

\* Administrative updates included:

- Facilities updates included:
  - Station 1 window replacement project remains in progress.
  - Planning continues for kitchen renovations at Station 1.
  - Station 2 apparatus floor replacement project completed.
  - Planned replacement of rooftop HVAC components and garage door systems.
  - Parking lot and accessibility improvements planned at Stations 4 and 5.

- Continued planning and feasibility review for Station 3 dormitory and living space improvements.
- Implementation of UKG software for employee evaluations and performance management.
- Continued refinement of onboarding procedures.
- Five recruits currently attending academy training.
- Emphasis on maintaining a diverse hiring pipeline.
- Proposed revisions to the ride-along program, including background checks and administrative fees for certain participants.
- Preliminary discussions regarding shared CAD services with external agencies.

### **Training Division**

- Eight members completed Vermont EMS Academy supported technician certification.
- Three members achieved Rope Rescue Operations certification.
- Completion of live-fire training evolutions.
- Participation by the Mayor in training activities.
- Extension of grant funding allowing additional live-fire training in fall 2026.
- Upcoming train-the-trainer roof rope rescue course involving eight department members.

### **Operations Division**

- Successful staffing and support of the Burlington Marathon through the Emergency Operations Center.
- Ongoing design work related to the future ladder truck replacement project.
- Review of a recent apartment building fire response.
- Recognition of a civilian who assisted in evacuating an autistic resident during the incident, with consideration of a civilian commendation award.

### **Old/New Business-**

- \* Discussed having another facilities tour for the commissioners. Chief Curtin will send an email to determine date possibilities.
- \* Would like to look into fall for date for awards ceremony. Possibly see if Burlington High School is an option for hosting the event.

### **Adjournment-**

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Sheehey and seconded by Commissioner McLaughlin at 09:21.