

PARKS, ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 PM.

Agenda Approval

The agenda was adopted unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Members had not yet reviewed the last three sets of minutes due to posting issues. Chair will resend them. Approval postponed.

Attendance: Committee Members: Chair Councilor Allie Schachter, Councilor Carter Neubieser (Zoom), Councilor Becca McKnight (Zoom)
City Staff: Samantha McGinnis (Marketplace), Mary Danko (Fletcher Free Library), Phil Lewis (Parks, Recreation & Waterfront), Katie Greene (REIB), Guests:

Fletcher Free Library – Renovation & Capital Project Update

Director Mary Danko provided a comprehensive update:

- The project has officially moved into **design development and construction documents**, approved and funded by Friends of Fletcher Free Library.
- Estimated cost for this phase: **\$3 million**, anticipated timeline of ~9 months.
- RFQ for a **construction manager at risk** is newly posted; process will include RFQ then RFP.
- Only **interior renovation** is planned (no footprint changes) due to the historic building.
- Public input opportunities will occur later in the design phase.
- Work will address program needs, technology upgrades, electrical and deferred maintenance.
- Exterior restoration is complete (~\$2.8 million), including masonry repairs and new gutter installation; landscaping now in place.
- A **public celebration** of the exterior restoration is expected in **late September**. Councilors expressed enthusiasm and support; additional discussion focused on scope refinement due to cost escalation and overall community benefits.

Urban Reserve – Cleanup & Management Update

Phil Lewis (Parks & Recreation) shared:

- Extensive spring/summer cleanup with staff and volunteer groups, noticeable improvements in the area.

- Temporary fencing and signage installed to protect ecologically sensitive areas.
- Conservation team preparing an updated **management/restoration framework**; QR-coded signage to be added.
- Coordination with City Planning on forthcoming community outreach tied to **PlanBTV 2050**. Councilors expressed appreciation for improvements and asked about volunteer efforts, which staff confirmed have been highly beneficial.

E-Motos on Paths – Enforcement & Outreach

Phil Lewis provided a detailed update:

- E-motos (motorized devices without pedals) **are not allowed** on bike paths, parks, or multi-use trails. They are considered **motorized vehicles**, not e-bikes.
- Civil penalties exist for violations, including possible impoundment for repeat offenses (though none have been impounded yet).
- **New signage** has been placed throughout the bike path network. Some signs have been intentionally damaged or stolen; replacements underway.
- Anecdotal reports indicate **reduced e-moto presence** since signage went up.
- Cross-departmental social media and ordinance-update work is underway, including:
 - Possible pathway speed limit (15–20 mph)
 - Possible empowering non-sworn staff (Parks/DPW) to issue citations
- To report unsafe behavior:
 - **SeeClickFix** recommended for non-emergency reporting
 - **911** for immediate safety concerns

Councilors encouraged stronger enforcement and asked about proactive BPD involvement and adding reporting information to signage.

Downtown Events & Summer Programming

Staff from Marketplace, BCA, Parks, and CEDO provided a multi-department update:

- June events saw **strong attendance**: Downtown Jazz, Burlington Watches Together, Juneteenth, BTV Market.
 - Weekly and monthly summer programming includes Passeggiata, Party on the Bricks, Splash Dance, classical concerts, and BTV Market.
 - Additional highlights:
 - Spotlight Vermont 250 celebration
 - Main Street Block Party (July 17–18)
 - Festival of Fools (July 31–Aug 1)
 - Major collaborative effort across departments; interns are playing a key supporting role.
 - “Summer in the City” printed brochures are extremely popular.
- Councilors expressed appreciation and asked for links/resources to attach in Civic Clerk.

Juneteenth Recap

- Strong attendance, good weather, broad collaboration across city departments.
- Highlights included youth art contest, family activities, performances, and community dinner.
- Focus on expanding youth involvement and visibility.

Presentation:

Volunteer Music Venue – Burlington Odd Fellows

Representatives described growth of an all-ages, substance-free volunteer-run concert series:

- 70 shows hosted since May 2025; ~4,000 attendees.
 - Shows run 7–10 PM with suggested donation (\$10–\$20); **no one turned away**.
 - 80% of door proceeds go directly to artists; merch revenue entirely artist-retained.
 - Utilities and supply costs have risen significantly due to increased programming.
 - Lodge requests consideration of **financial support** and/or **city partnership**, including help with security for high-risk shows.
- Councilors expressed strong support and offered to explore funding avenues and promotional assistance.

Budget Memo Requirement – Barriers to Public Programming

Committee briefly discussed an upcoming deliverable:

- PACC must report to Council (by Sept 30) on **barriers to participation** for outside groups wishing to program downtown spaces.
- Members suggested:
 - Convening city departments involved in permitting
 - Reviewing costs, processes, and bottlenecks
 - Inviting external organizations to share experiences
 - Understanding OpenGov workflows
 - Considering fee waivers, clearer guidance, and streamlined processesFurther planning will occur for August and September meetings.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:31 PM.