Regular City Council Meeting - Monday, September 19, 6:30 pm, Contois Auditorium OR REMOTELY via ZOOM 9/19/2022

BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

CITY HALL, CONTOIS AUDITORIUM *OR*

REMOTE MEETING WITH CALL-IN

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

MINUTES OF MEETING

September 19, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Paul

Joan Shannon

Perri Freeman (via Zoom)

Zoraya Hightower

Mark Barlow

Joe Magee

Gene Bergman

Ben Traverse

OTHERS PRESENT: Miro Weinberger

Katherine Schad

Stephen Ellis

Jordan Redell

Lori Olberg

Scott Barker

Chapin Spencer

Corey Mims

Olivia Darisse

Norm Baldwin

Greg Goyette

Kara Alnasrawi

Jabulani Gamache

Jon Murad

1. CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA

1.01 Motion to amend/adopt agenda

The meeting was called to order by City Council President Paul at 6:40 PM

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by Councilor Shannon, to amend/adopt the agenda as follows:

- **remove from the Deliberative Agenda item 7.04 Fiscal Year 2022 Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report (CAPER) Draft - CEDO and place it on the Consent Agenda as item 6.25 (per City Council President Paul).**

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

2. COMMUNICATION: NETWORK RELOCATION PROJECT (VERBAL) expected executive session 6:30 pm – 7:00 pm**

2.01 Communication: Scot Barker re: Network Relocation Project (verbal) **6:30 pm - 7:00 pm: Expected Executive Session**

MOTION by Councilor Shannon, SECOND by Councilor Traverse, that the Council find that premature general public knowledge of information concerning contract negotiations regarding the relocation of the City's network assets would clearly place the City at a substantial disadvantage with such negotiations.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

MOTION by Councilor Shannon, SECOND by Councilor Barlow, that based upon that finding, the Council go into executive session to receive confidential updates on contract negotiations regarding the network relocation project

pursuant to 1 VSA §313(a)(1)(A) and also to go into executive session for negotiating or securing of real estate lease options pursuant 1 VSA §313(a)(2) and for the City's cybersecurity and public safety pursuant to 1 VSA §313 (a)(5) and (10), to include members of the Mayor's staff, Chief Innovation Officer Scott Barker, and Chief Administrative Officer Katherine Schad.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

3. WORK SESSION: RAILYARD ENTERPRISE PROJECT 7:00 pm – 7:30 pm

3.01 Work Session: Railyard Enterprise Project **7:00 pm - 7:30 pm**

Senior Engineer Mims began by describing various aspects of the Railyard Enterprise Project. He outlined the project team (including City staff as well as consultants). He noted that the general purpose, in addition to multi-modal transportation development, include infrastructure developments to support the economic development of the area and enhance the livability of the surrounding neighborhoods. He provided background, noting that there was an initial scoping study in 2016 and a supplemental scoping study in 2020, and that the City secured federal and State funding for project-eligible costs in 2021. He briefly noted other construction projects in the South End and how they are being sequenced. He spoke briefly about project outreach, noting extensive public and stakeholder engagement, as well as planned future engagement.

Senior Engineer Mims then outlined the three alternatives for construction that City staff are proposing for the Council's consideration (Alternative 1B, Alternative 2, Alternative 5B, and a no-build alternative). He noted that Alternative 1B has a connection between Battery and Pine Streets, as well as a connection to South Champlain Street. He noted that this alternative has the minimal footprint, and that they anticipate it to be the preferred alternative. He said that Alternative 2 has three connections to Pine Street and has significantly more roadway infrastructure and abuts the Barge Canal (which is a Superfund Site). He noted that Alternative 5B has two connections to Pine Street and has a larger footprint and impacts than 1B. He said that for the review process, they looked at criteria such as environmental impacts, historic resource impacts, and general costs of the project. He said that based on the application of these criteria is Alternative 1B. He spoke in more detail about Alternative 1B, outlining its orientation and design and displaying examples of typical road sections. He also outlined the three sub-alternatives within Alternative 1B.

Senior Engineer Mims outlined next steps, which include selection of the preferred alternative at the City Council's October 17th meeting, filing an environmental assessment (EA) and formally selecting the preferred alternative in November, continuing stakeholder engagement and community outreach over winter 2022-23, and continuing project design in winter 2022-23 and beyond.

Senior Engineer Baldwin noted that there are significant property rights issues, as most of the property in the area is owned by the railyard owned by the State of Vermont. He noted that the City does not have combination rights with State property, but that property-owners and the railyard have been willing to collaborate as direct stakeholders on the project.

Councilor Hightower asked about the relative costs and impacts of the other alternatives, relative to Alternative 1B. She also asked if there are disadvantages to selecting Alternative 1B. She also asked how feedback received from stakeholders influenced the selection of Alternative 1B. Senior Mr. Goyette replied that in terms of relative costs, Alternatives 2 and 5B don't have much to gain when compared to how much more they would cost, in addition to some of the risks of proximity to the Barge Canal Superfund Site. Senior Engineer Baldwin emphasized the liabilities and risks around pursuing alternatives near a Superfund Site. Senior Engineer Mims noted that Alternative 1B was the preferred choice for stakeholders and the public, as it would negatively impact the stakeholders and railyard the least. Director Spencer emphasized the work done to engage with community and property-owners in this area. He also said that there is still significant concern among property-owners for even Alternative 1B, but that details about concerns cannot be addressed until one of the alternatives is selected and the City is further along in the design process.

Councilor Shannon noted that when this project began there was an extensive community engagement campaign. She noted that when they began, there were many, many potential options, and she commended City staff for winnowing down the options to a small handful. She said that if this project was being built on a blank canvas, Alternative 2 would be he preference, but because they need to work with the built environment and a Superfund Site, Alternative 2 looks less viable. She asked about the process for selecting the sub-alternatives under 1B, should Alternative 1B be selected as the preferred alternative. Senior Engineer Mims replied that once the preferred alternative is selected, then the City would need to engage in right-of-way acquisition activities with property-owners, which would in part shape the design detail of the more specific sub-alternatives.

Councilor Bergman expressed a preference for Alternative 1B. He said he would like to understand the differences in cost and safety as they relate to the sub-alternatives under Alternative 1B. He said that he would be inclined to the roundabout approach, saying that it would most successfully help with traffic flow.

Councilor Traverse said that currently, Alternative 1B is a good fit, but that as Burlington grows, Alternative 5B and a grid arrangement may be more beneficial. He asked about whether Alternative 1B would prohibit a grid configuration in the future. Senior Engineer Mims replied that if the City wants to extend a grid street further south in future, that could be possible. Councilor Traverse noted that in terms of the sub-alternatives for Alternative 1B, he said he would be interested in seeking advice from traffic experts on the impacts of signalized intersections versus a roundabout arrangement.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

4.01 Verbal Comments

Forum opened at 7:35 PM.

COMMENTS:

Burlington residents (in person):

- James Lockridge spoke about the RFP related to Memorial Auditorium, saying that any successful bidder would need to be 100% committed to the programming vision generated by the public process in 2018, and that the RFP response time should be longer than 1 month, to give bidders the chance to put together thoughtful bids and

pursue high-quality partnerships.
- Todd Lacroix spoke about the concern regarding his treatment by the Burlington Police Department.
- Robert Bristow Johnson spoke about redistricting, noting that no New North End Councilor opposes the 7-Ward, 14-Councilor map. He recommended that all viable plans for options be put back on the table.

Forum closed at 7:45 PM.

5. CLIMATE EMERGENCY REPORTS

5.01 Climate Emergency Reports

Councilor Bergman noted that CATMA is holding a conference on October 18th and emphasized the importance of City staff/Councilor participation, in order to build coalitions for sustainable public transportation.

Mayor Weinberger spoke about the City’s first Net Zero Energy Festival last Saturday and that it went well and had substantial turnout.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

6.01 Motion to adopt the consent agenda (as amended) and take the actions indicated

6.02 Communication: CT Office, re: Accountability List - waive the reading, accept the communication and place it on file.

6.03 Communication: Daniel Gaviria, re: Camping in Callahan Park - waive the reading, accept the communication and place it on file.

6.04 Communication: Craig Jarvis, re: Pine street traffic - waive the reading, accept the communication and place it on file.

6.05 Communication: Martha Gile, Member, BRV, re: Resignation - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file, advertise the vacancy and send a letter of appreciation to Martha Gile thanking her for her time served as a Member of the Board for Registration of Voters.

6.06 VT Center for Crime Victim Services "Victims of Crime Act" (VOCA) grant (Grant #02160-VOCA21-4015508-2023) - CEDO/CJC - approve the acceptance of Grant # :02160-VOCA21-4015508-2023 in the amount of $140,164 for FY23 and to authorize CEDO Director Pine or his designee to sign the grant acceptance and any necessary related documents, after review and approval by the City Attorney’s Office.

6.07 Queen City Park Road (QCPR) Sidepath VTrans Grant Acceptance – DPW - authorize the Director of Public Works to execute the Project Commitments Form from the Vermont Agency of Transportation for the QCPR Sidepath project design and construction, obligating the City to commit a local match of $165,600 and authorizing expenditure of the same, which is (20%) of the total project budget of $993,600 in furtherance of accepting a reimbursable grant amount up to $828,000, and further authorizing the acceptance of such grant and upfront expenditure of grant funds on the condition that such funds are reimbursed pursuant to the grant terms, subject to approval by the City Attorney’s Office.

6.08 Birchcliff Parkway Raised Walks VTrans Grant Acceptance – DPW - authorize the Director of Public Works to execute the Project Commitments Form from the Vermont Agency of Transportation for the Birchcliff Parkway Raised Walks project construction, obligating the City to commit a local match of $75,000 and authorizing expenditure of the same in furtherance of accepting a reimbursable grant amount up to $75,000,and further authorizing the acceptance of such grant and upfront expenditure of grant funds on the condition that such funds are reimbursed pursuant to the grant terms, subject to approval by the City Attorney's Office.

6.09 Acceptance of VTrans Town Highway Class 2 Roadway Program Grant #p02053 for Pearl Street Road Surfacing – DPW - authorize the Director of Public Works to accept and execute the Town Highway Class 2 Roadway Program Grant #P02053 from the Vermont Agency of Transportation, in an amount up to $200,000, and authorize the expenditure of a 20% Local Match, in an amount not to exceed $40,000, subject to review and approval by the City Attorney's Office.

6.10 Creation of a Wastewater Plant Operator Assistant Position - DPW Water Resources/HR - approve the creation of one Wastewater Plant Assistant Operator position, a Regular, Full-time, Non-Exempt, AFSCME position in the Department of Public Works available at two tier levels depending on candidate qualifications and experience: Assistant Operator I, a Grade 15 position and Assistant Operator II, a Grade 16 position.

6.11 Creation of one new position - BPRW/HR - approve the Creation of the Conservation Field Coordinator, a Regular, Full-Time, Non Exempt, AFSCME, Grade 16 position in the Department of Parks Recreation and Waterfront.

6.12 BED Franchise Fee MOU and Agreement - C/T/BED - approve the Chief Administrative Officer to sign Memorandum of Understanding and
Agreements regarding payment of Franchise Fees with the Burlington Electric Department (BED), subject to review and approval by the City Attorney's office.

6.13 Parking Garage Security Contract Extension through FY23 - DPW/Division of Parking and Traffic - authorize the Director of Public Works to execute an amendment to the FY21-FY22 contract with Green Mountain Concert Services for security services at the Marketplace Garage and Downtown Garage, extending the contract through July 1, 2023 for up to an additional $160,000 in authorized expenditure, including $10,000 in retro-approval, for a total authorized contract value not to exceed $369,625.26, subject to review and approval by the City Attorney's Office and approval by the Chief Administrative Office for compliance with the City's procurement and expenditure policies.

6.14 SDI CY22 Sidewalk Contract Amendment – DPW - 1. To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, or her designee, to affect all necessary budget amendments and transfers of funds, as described in the attached project budget, to a total of $1,100,000 for the projected construction costs to complete the CY22 Sidewalk Reconstruction Program; 2. To authorize the Director of Public Works to execute an amendment to the previously executed contract for the Sidewalk Reconstruction Project with SD Ireland Brothers Corporation in order to increase the maximum limiting amount to $1,010,000, including an additional $90,000 in contingency funds, totaling up to $1,100,000 in authorized expenditure, subject to the final review and approval by the Office of the City Attorney.

6.15 Authorization to execute contract for management and operation of the Elmwood Emergency Shelter Community – CEDO - approve and authorize the Director of the Community and Economic Development Office to execute a contract with Champlain Housing Trust for up to a maximum limiting amount of $980,213, for the management and operation of the Elmwood Community Emergency Shelter for the period of September 19, 2022 - September 30, 2023, and subject to the final review and approval by the Office of the City Attorney.

6.16 Authorization to accept Grants and Incentives for the Development of the Elmwood Emergency Shelter Community – CEDO - approve and authorize the Director of the Community and Economic Development Office to: 1. Execute the VLITE Grant Agreement and all documents necessary to accept $50,000 of funding from Vermont Low Income Trust for Electricity, Inc. for the installation of solar at the

Elmwood Emergency Shelter Community; and 2. Execute all documents necessary to accept the $75,000 of incentives from the Burlington
Electric Department for energy efficiency enhancements at the Elmwood Emergency Shelter Community.

6.17 Proposed Budget Amendment for Fletcher Free Library Local Match toward National Endowment for the Humanities Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants for Capital Projects - CT/Library - approve $737,301 from the FY23 Capital GO Bond Premiums as a local match for the NEH Challenge Grant and execution of a budget amendment as described above, and to authorize the City's CAO or their designee to execute such budget amendment.

6.18 Burlington High School Outdoor Classroom and Roof Garden @ the Downtown Garage - DPW/Division of Parking and Traffic - approve and authorize the leasing of 11 current parking spaces as further identified in attached description on the top deck of the Downtown Garage-North to the Burlington School District for use by the Burlington High School to use as an outdoor learning space and Rooftop Garden, including certain lease improvements and installation necessary for safe operations in coordination with the Department of Public Works, for the duration of the 2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025 Burlington School District school year, contingent upon the decommissioning of said 11 parking spaces at the Downtown Garage – North roof deck by the Public Works Commission; and, to authorize the Mayor to execute the lease and any related documents needed to carry out the lease agreement, subject to the review of the City Attorney's Office.

6.19 Work Assignment Agreement #8 with Utility Services Co., Inc. for Construction of Cell Antenna Coral for Redstone Tank and Related Budget Amendments - DPW Water Resources - 1. "To approve executing a work assignment agreement for Construction of a Cell Antenna Corral on the Redstone Tank under the Master Services Agreement executed with Utility Services Co. in Org Set GL AccountAccount Name 460-19-400-000 . 7200_115 Water, Public Works, Water, Administration. Capital Leases - Equipment (170,692) 460-19-400-410 . 9500_100 Water, Public Works, Water, Production. Capital Outlay - Construction 170,692 Increase/(Decrease) Org Set GL AccountAccount Name 460-19-400-000 . 7200_115 Water, Public Works, Water, Administration. Capital Leases - Equipment (390,700) 460-19-400-410 . 9500_100 Water, Public Works, Water, Production, Capital Outlay - Construction 390,700 Increase/(Decrease) July 2019 for maintenance and capital rehabilitation work on the City's two elevated water storage tanks, and to authorize Chapin Spencer, Director of the Department of Public Works, to execute a work assignment agreement with Utility Services Co. Inc. for an amount not to exceed $245,000 subject to the final review and approval of the City Attorney's Office." 2. "To approve budget amendments that move $170,692 of allowable expenses from line 460-19- 400-000.7200_115 to line 460-19-400-410.9500_100 in FY22 and $390,700 of allowable expenses from line 460-19-400 000.7200_115 to line 460-19-400-410.9500_100 in FY23 and to authorize Katherine Schad, Chief Administrative Officer to execute such budget amendments for FY22 and FY23."

6.20 CY22 Street Reconstruction Program Contract Amendment for Additional Water Resources Infrastructure work - DPW Water Resources - authorize Chapin Spencer, the Director of Public Works, to execute an amendment to the previously executed contract with S.D. Ireland for an additional $155,828.73 in base contract value and increasing the contingency by $25,000,resulting in a total contract base value of $2,710,424.79 and a total remaining contingency of $200,931.19, for a total authorized contract expenditure in the amount of $2,911,355.98, provided that all these authorizations are contingent on the contract and any amendment thereto having the prior approval of the City Attorney and Chief Administrative Office.

6.21 Mayor's Office Reclassification of Two Positions: Mayoral Communications and Projects Coordinator and Chief of Staff - Mayor's Office/HR - approve the reclassifications in the Mayor's Office for the Mayoral Communications and Projects Coordinator from a Regular, Full-time, Non-union, Exempt, Grade 18 position to the position of Communications Director, a Regular, Full-time, Non-union, Exempt, Grade 20 position and the Mayoral Chief of Staff from a Regular, Full-Time, Non-union, Exempt, Grade 22 position to a Regular, Full-Time, Nonunion, Exempt, Grade 25 position; and to authorize the City's Chief Administrative Officer to execute a budget amendment in the amount of $18,737 dollars to the City's FY 23 budget in the following manner: • Reduce Mayor's Office Salaries and Wages Seasonal/Temporary line item (101-02-000-5000_115) by $2,500; • Reduce Mayor's Office Overtime line item (101-02-000-5100) by $1,500; • Reduce Non-departmental Contingency line item (101-00-7850) by $14,737; • Increase Mayor's Office Full-time Regular Salaries line item (101-02-000-5000_100) by $18,737

6.22 Resolution: Authorization for Reimbursement from Public Improvement Bonds for Construction of New High School and Technical Center – CT - waive the reading and adopt the resolution.

6.23 Resolution: Authorization for Reimbursement from Public Improvement Bonds for City's Waterfront TIF District – CT - waive the reading and adopt the resolution.

6.24 Resolution: Delegation Of Authority For Budget-Neutral Amendments Within City Departments' Individual Budgets – CT - waive the reading and adopt the resolution.

6.25 Fiscal Year 2022 Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report)CAPER) Draft - CEDO **WAS DELIBERATIVE AGENDA ITEM 7.04** - waive the reading and place the communication on file.

MOTION by Councilor Magee, SECOND by Councilor Traverse, to adopt the consent agenda and take the actions as indicated for items 6.01-6.25.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

7. DELIBERATIVE AGENDA

7.01 Proclamation: Burlington Community Gardens Week

Mayor Weinberger read the proclamation, which emphasized the importance to the community of Burlington's Community Garden program and declared September 11-17th 2022 Burlington Community Garden Week.

7.02 Communication: Mayor Miro Weinberger, re: Aviation Director Appointment

Mayor Weinberger spoke about the recruitment process for Burlington's next Aviation Director and the ultimate selection of Interim Aviation Director Longo as the strongest candidate for the position.

MOTION by Councilor Hightower, SECOND by Councilor Bergman, to confirm Nicolas Longo as the next Aviation Director of the Burlington International Airport.

<u>**DISCUSSION:**</u>

- **Councilor Bergman spoke about Interim Director Longo's commitment to being innovative and adaptable in order to run the Airport in a way that is consistent with protecting affordable housing, as well as his commitment to include aviation emissions in the City's Climate Action Plan.**

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

7.03 Resolution: Reorganization - Update To Staffing Structure Of Office Of Business & Workforce Development And Department Of Church Street Marketplace - Business and Workforce Development Office/CSM/HR (20 mins.)

MOTION by Councilor Traverse, SECOND by Councilor Barlow, to waive the reading and adopt the resolution.

DISCUSSION:

- **Executive Director Alnasrawi noted that the budget for these positions was approved in the Fiscal Year 2023 process. She said that the Office of Business and Workforce Development encompasses the Church Street Marketplace (which has a separate budget), City-wide business development, the Early Learning Initiative, and workforce development. She noted that several of the proposed positions are partially funded by ARPA, and noted that several alternative revenue streams include revenue from the markets that are organized and administered by this department, corporate sponsors, and exploring the use of the Downtown Improvement District (DID) to support the marketplace.**
- **Councilor Bergman requested the development of a longer-term funding plan for this expanded office, citing taxpayer concern for additional positions and their impact on the property tax. He asked how this fits with CEDO's economic development work. Executive Director Alnasrawi replied that she and the Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) director meet weekly and that they are in direct communication and contact if there is project overlap between the two departments. Councilor Bergman requested a joint economic development plan from the Office of Business and Workforce Development and CEDO.**
- **Councilor Magee asked whether the Community Development and Neighborhood Revitalization (CDNR) Committee would be the committee that would oversee this work. Mayor Weinberger replied that the primary oversight of this department will take place through the Marketplace and potentially an expanded DID.**

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

7.04 Fiscal Year 2022 Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report (CAPER) Draft - CEDO (10 mins.) **NOW CONSENT AGENDA ITEM 6.25**

Item moved to consent agenda. No discussion.

7.05 Indoor Entertainment Permit Application (2022-2023): J Brewskis LLC, 247 Main Street

MOTION by Councilor Shannon, SECOND by Councilor Traverse, to approve the 2022-2023 Indoor Entertainment Permit Application for J Brewskis LLC, 247 Main Street with the following conditions: all City Permits need to be closed out and with all standard conditions.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

7.06 Outdoor Entertainment Permit Application (2022-2023): J Brewskis LLC, 247 Main Street

MOTION by Councilor Shannon, SECOND by Councilor Traverse, to approve the 2022-2023 Outdoor Entertainment Permit Application for J Brewskis LLC, 247 Main Street with the following conditions: all City Permits need to be closed out and with all standard conditions.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

7.07 Police Recruitment and Hiring Coordinator - Police/HR (10 mins.)

MOTION by Councilor Barlow, SECOND by Councilor Shannon, to approve hiring the Police Recruitment and Hiring Coordinator,

a Regular, Full-time, Non-exempt, Non-Union, Grade 16 position.

DISCUSSION:

- **Chief Administrative Officer Schad said that this position was created in collaboration with the Council as part of the budget process, and the position has been further developed by the Public Safety Commission. She said that this position would help with recruitment of police officers, CSOs, CSLs, and dispatchers, and would work with the Human Resources and Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Departments.**
- **Councilor Magee said that the process to solicit feedback and input on the job description from the Commission is a good one, and similar processes should be considered for other positions moving forward.**

VOTING: 7-1 (Councilor Freeman dissenting); motion carries.

7.08 Police Commission: Presentation of Annual Report, Jabulani Gamache, Commission Co-chair (15 mins.)

Commissioner Gamache summarized key points from the Police Commission annual report. He noted that the Commission passed a body-worn police camera police and are currently working on updating the policy around the role of the Burlington Police Commission in reviewing complaints against BPD employees, as well as reviewing BPD directives around interacting with persons with disabilities and interacting with persons with diminished capacities. He spoke briefly about resolutions passed within the last year. One of them was to ask the Council and Mayor to hold a Mental Health Summit. Another was to advise the BPD to develop skills to focus on the increase of diversity within BPD so that the department better reflects the composition of the community (and this is pending further dialogue with the Acting Police Chief). An additional resolution that was passed was to recommend that the City Council fund two additional CSL positions and one public information officer position. He spoke briefly about reports that were developed by the commission in the last year.

Councilor Hightower thanked the Police Commission for their efforts to re-envision the role of the Police Commission, as well as the report itself. She asked if City Council could provide support and assistance for some of the Police Commission's work activities that have been stalled. Commissioner Gamache replied that the amount of time needed to devote to the Commission by its members is significant, but that the Commission feels that it is well-supported by the Council and Administration.

Councilor Bergman said that there are requests that have been made, as identified in this report, and it seems that there has been a lack of response from the Administration on some of them. He said that there should be substantive responses to each of them. He specifically noted the request for a group of community advisors, the plan to eliminate missing data, and an explanation of why the Center for Equity and NACOLE training were declined. Mayor Weinberger replied that there has been a significant amount of discussion with the Police Commission on these items, and said that the Administration will be responding in writing to the report. He said that there is a disconnect between this report and the feedback he is hearing from the community, specifically around the significant increase in crime and deterioration of public safety. He said that the report does not address these. He expressed disappointment at the lack of alignment between the Police Commission's stated goals and the desires of the community for increased public safety.

Councilor Magee said that the community has expressed serious concern about racial disparities and policing, and a real desire to move away from status quo policing. He said that the City has moved away from the direction of prevention in policing instead of reverting to the status quo, and that the conversation needs to be restarted.

Councilor Hightower said that to the extent the Police Commission has been allowed to give input, they have gone above and beyond. She said that Burlington is not alone in trying to staff up its Police Department, and that it will be very difficult to do so without public trust. She said that the Police Commission's work to increase transparency and establish trust is one of the most important efforts that can be made in rebuilding the Police Department.

Councilor Shannon asked if the Commission is hearing the public outcry and concern about safety in the Burlington community, and whether the Commission has any ideas or plans to be responsive to that. She also asked if they have good communication channels with Police Department staff or union in order to work together to address concerns and remain updated on staffing levels. Commissioner Gamache acknowledged the concerns about safety downtown and agreed that Burlington is not alone in its experiences. He said that while the Police Commission doesn't actively track resignation of officers, the Acting Chief regularly reports to the Commission about staffing levels.

Councilor Freeman spoke about the importance of having an independent oversight body for the Police Department. They said that the City should not revert to status quo policing and that there is the need for creating new systems moving forward.

Councilor Barlow said that the Police Department is not resourced to respond to the events that are occurring in the City. He said that if there was a bigger presence of public safety officers downtown, they would be able to respond to events more effectively. He said that even staff at designated mental health agencies in the City (such as the Howard Center) have cited a need for more sworn officers in addition to other community supports.

Councilor Bergman said that this Council has done everything it has been asked to do in terms of resourcing the City and its public safety infrastructure. He said that the Police Commission's report includes requests that haven't even been responded to, and said that the Administration and Council need to work together. He said that he hopes that some of the recommendations in the report spark good debate and provide a path forward on comprehensively improving public safety.

Councilor Shannon said that it is difficult to improve policing when there is a severe lack of police officers in the City. She said that this workforce shortage causes stress on officers themselves and makes it more difficult to try and make improvements.

Councilor Traverse thanked Commissioner Gamache and others on the Police Commission for their work.

MOTION by Councilor Bergman, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to waive the reading, accept the communication, and place the communication on file.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.01 Verbal Reports

Councilor Barlow said that the Tax Abatement Committee will hold its organizational meeting tomorrow, September 20, at 5:00 PM, will discuss its mission statement, and will discuss page content related to tax abatement and financial aid programs. He additionally noted that the Redistricting Working Group will be meeting on Wednesday, September 21, at 10:00 AM via Zoom.

9. CITY COUNCIL – GENERAL AFFAIRS

9.01 Verbal Reports

None at this time.

10. CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT – COUNCIL UPDATES

10.01 Verbal Reports

City Council President Paul noted that the Ad Hoc Reappraisal Committee lost a member and now needs to fill a seat with a renter. She invited any members of the public who are renters to apply to participate.

11. MAYOR – GENERAL AFFAIRS

11.01 Verbal Reports

Mayor Weinberger spoke about the contract with Champlain Housing Trust to manage the Elmwood Emergency Shelter (which was on the consent agenda). He expressed appreciation for the Council's approval of this contract to begin this work.

12. ADJOURNMENT

12.01 Motion to Adjourn

MOTION by Councilor Magee, SECOND by Councilor Bergman, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

The City Council meeting adjourned without objection at 9:59 PM.

RScty: AACoonradt