



**Regular City Council Meeting - Tuesday, January 19, 2021, 7:00
pm **VIRTUAL MEETING**
1/19/2021**

BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

REMOTE MEETING WITH CALL-IN NUMBER

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 19, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Paul

Max Tracy

Chip Mason

Joan Shannon

Ali Dieng

Brian Pine

Jack Hanson

Franklin Paulino

Perri Freeman

Jane Stromberg

Sarah E Carpenter

Zoraya Hightower

OTHERS PRESENT: Miro Weinberger

Katherine Schad

Eileen Blackwood

Olivia LaVecchia

Jordan Redell

Lori Olberg



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Amy Bovee

Alina Korsak

Gene Richards

Nic Longo

Meghan O'Rourke

1. CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA

The meeting was called to order by City Council President Tracy at 7:00 PM.

MOTION by Councilor Hanson, SECOND by Councilor Dieng, to amend/adopt agenda as follows:

- **remove from the consent agenda item 4.11 Communication: Katherine Schad, Chief Administrative Officer and Rich Goodwin, Director Financial Operations, re: Updated Debt Load Projections (per CAO Schad, BOF only);**
- **add to the consent agenda item 4.14 Communication: Robert Bristow-Johnson, re: Recommended change to Charter Amendment regarding Ranked-Choice Voting with the motion to "waive the reading, accept the communication and place it on file";**
- **note "draft" CAFR for agenda item 5.05 Resolution: Finalization And Availability Of Annual City Audit For FY20 (Board of Finance)(per DFO Goodwin);**
- **note proposed amendments for agenda item 5.06 Resolution: Ballot Question Authorizing Retail Cannabis Sales While Addressing Systemic Racism & Other Equity Concerns (Revised)(Councilors Hanson, Stromberg, Pine, Tracy, Carpenter)(per Councilor Hanson);**
- **note revised version of agenda item 5.07 Resolution: March 2, 2021 Annual City Meeting - Ballot Question Advising Decrease In Authorized Number Of Police Officerse Only To 84 (Councilor Dieng)(per Councilor Dieng;**
- **note added material titled "BPD Staffing Recommendations BPC" for this agenda item (per City Council President Tracy per BPC);**
- **note proposed amendment for this agenda item (per Councilors Hightower and Hanson);**
- **remove this agenda item from the agenda and place it on the January 25, 2021 City Council Deliberative Agenda (per Councilor Dieng).**

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.





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2. PUBLIC FORUM

2.01 Verbal Comments

Forum opened at 7:30 PM.

COMMENTS:

- Will Keeton expressed concerns about the resolution that would raise the cap on the number of sworn police officers from 74 to 84. He said that this sets a precedent for backpedaling on the Racial Justice Resolution from June.
- Lila Fortunoff spoke about the Police Commission's recommendation to the Council of increasing the number of sworn officers to 82. She said that the narrative at that meeting being portrayed was fearmongering with a disregard for data. She said that the 30% reduction from the June resolution is still above the average ratio of citizens to officers. She said that this issue should definitely be put to the voters but that it warrants additional discussion prior to that.
- Danielle Shaw spoke about the City whitewashing Dr. King's legacy and what he stands for, as well as the hypocrisy of the Council.
- Charlie Messing said that he hopes the Council comes to an agreement around the sworn officer question, he spoke in support of just-cause eviction, and raised continued concerns about the graffiti in the City.
- Zoe Kenninger expressed concern about the pamphlet sent to Burlington residents from the Burlington Police Officers' Associations and that it contained misleading information and that the BPD is spending the time, money, and resources sending out this information while simultaneously saying they are understaffed and under-resourced.
- Steven Margolin spoke about what policing means, saying that it should mean responding to the needs of the community. He said that having police officers out and patrolling at all hours is a risk to the community and especially to the BIPOC members of the community.
- Joseph Smith spoke about his experiences as a Section 8 resident. He said that his landlord frequently visits the building without a mask. He said that the washing machines are full of stagnant water and not safe to use, that the door to the building is not secure, that it took 7 days to repair his toilet, that there seems to be black mold in the building, that the heat runs all year long, posing a health risk to some residents, and that the elevator has been out of operation for days and that the building is supposed to be wheelchair-accessible.
- Christy Delphia spoke with concern about code enforcement in the City. She said that the conditions in her apartment break City and State law. She said that methamphetamine had previously been cooked in the apartment and that the residue continues to linger in the building, causing significant health concerns. She said that the landlords of the City need to be held accountable and that code enforcement needs to do a better job.
- William Eammons spoke about his negative experiences with Burlington Police Department in the community.
- Melo Grant spoke as a member of the Police Commission about the discussion on the number of sworn officers and increasing the cap. She said that she is against raising the cap, saying that the reasons given for wanting the raise it are not backed by data. She expressed concern about the pamphlet mailed to Burlingtonians from the Police Officers' Associations.
- Cora Smith spoke against raising the cap on the number of sworn police officers and that it contradicts the resolution passed by the Council in June of 2020.
- Jessica Laporte spoke about the resolution to raise the cap on the number of sworn police officers. She said that the cap on the number of officers in the June 2020 resolution was balanced and rooted in data and research. She said that this was one of the few items in the resolution that had teeth, and that she is dismayed that this resolution would undo it.
- Robin Lloyd thanked the Parks & Recreation Department on their work on the bike path. She additionally said that as of January 22, nuclear weapons will be illegal in 51 countries through a treaty.
- Amanda S. spoke in support of raising the cap on the number of sworn police officers so that they can police proactively. She spoke about the importance of de-escalating crises and that resources for that be available at all



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times. She said that finding more holistic ways of keeping the community safe are extremely important.

- Erhardt Mahnke urged the Council to stick to its original June 2020 resolution on the cap on police officers and not backslide through a new proposed resolution.
- Pema spoke against raising the police cap through the resolution that had originally been proposed for deliberation tonight.
- Jeffrey Pizzutillo spoke about opting into the retail cannabis market and thanked the Council for its productive work session on Monday January 11th. He said that he is supportive of the City Council bringing more equity to Act 164.
- Dahlia spoke about her support for just-cause eviction and expressed concern about the lack of code enforcement and accountability for landlords and their behavior. She said that residents should not have to live in unsafe homes.
- Sarah Heidrich said that raising the cap on the number of police ignores the needs and safety of the BIPOC community and urged the City Council to listen to all of its constituents.
- Grace Palmer spoke in support of all aspects of the Racial Justice resolution of June 2020, and spoke against raising the cap on the number of sworn police officers.
- Shane Carouth spoke about code enforcement and that some pressure be applied to landlords, the Mayor, and the City to enforce codes and create better living conditions, especially given the fatal fire that occurred on King Street.

Forum closed at 8:15 PM.

3. CLIMATE EMERGENCY REPORTS

3.01 Climate Emergency Reports

Councilor Hanson requested that Director Richards discuss some of the work that the Airport is doing to combat the climate emergency during the discussion for deliberative item 5.03.

Councilor Dieng said he has received comments and questions around the types of road salt being used by the City and whether they were safe for dogs and cats. He asked if the Council could hear an update on this at a future meeting. City Council President Tracy replied that he will take this under advisement as a potential future agenda item.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

4.01 Motion to adopt the consent agenda and take the actions indicated

4.02 Communication: C/T Office, re: Accountability List - waive the reading, accept the communication and place it on file.

4.03 Communication: C/T Office, Draft Minutes for November 23, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes as received at the January 4, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting.

4.04 Communication: C/T Office, Draft Minutes for December 7, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes as received at the January 4, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting.

4.05 Communication: C/T Office, re: Draft Minutes for December 14, 2020 City Council With Mayor Presiding Meeting - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes as received at the January 4, 2021



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4.06 Communication: C/T Office, re: Draft Minutes for Recessed Regular City Council Meeting of December 7, 2020 that occurred on December 14, 2020 - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes as received at the January 4, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting.

4.07 Communication: C/T Office, re: Draft Minutes for December 21, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes as received at the January 4, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting.

4.08 Communication: C/T Office, re: Draft Minutes for December 21, 2020 Full Board of Abatement of Taxes Meeting - waive the reading, accept the communication, place it on file and adopt the minutes as received at the January 4, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting.

4.09 Communication: Burlington International Airport, re: Authorization to Approve an Engineering Design, Bidding, Coordination and Construction Contract for the Airfield Hot Spot Mitigation Project - 1. "To authorize the Director of Aviation to execute a contract with CHA for up to \$317,761.16, plus an additional contingency amount of \$47,664.17 (15%) totaling up to \$365,425.33 for the preparation of design and construction bidding documents related services for the Hot Spot Mitigation Project, subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney's Office," and 2. "To approve a budget amendment to the Fiscal Year 2021 Burlington International Airport budget for the Hot Spot Mitigation Project, by increasing the accounts as set forth above."

4.10 Communication: John Vickery, City Assessor, re: Final Grand List summary, Tax Book Report, TIF Reports, and Error and Omissions List - waive the reading, accept the communication and place it on file.

4.11 Communication: Katherine Schadt, Chief Administrative Officer and Rich Goodwin, Director Financial Operations, re: Updated Debt Load Projections ****AGENDA ITEM REMOVED, FOR BOF ONLY**** - item removed from the agenda.

4.12 FIO Documents – for information only.

4.13 Resolution: Burlington International Airport Supplemental Resolution No. 6 (Board of Finance) – waive the reading and adopt the resolution.

4.14 Communication: Robert Bristow-Johnson, re: Recommended change to Charter Amendment regarding Ranked-Choice Voting – waive the reading, accept the communication, and place it on file.

MOTION by Councilor Stromberg, SECOND by Councilor Pine, to amend/adopt the consent agenda, taking the actions as indicated for items 4.01-4.14.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

5. DELIBERATIVE AGENDA

5.01 First Public Hearing Regarding Charter Changes for March 2, 2021 Annual City Election

City Attorney Blackwood provided a brief summary of each charter change. She said that there are four questions that will appear on the ballot. The first one is to adopt ranked-choice voting for the election of City Councilors—school commissioners and the Mayor will continue to have a runoff election if no voter receives a sufficient amount of votes. If a



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candidate receives a majority of votes on the first round of voting, then they are elected. If no candidate receives over 50% of the vote, then the instant runoff retabulation shall be conducted, and for each round, each voter's ballot is counted once. The lowest-ranking candidate is dropped until only two candidates remain and one of them secures the majority. The next charter change is to change the size of the Board of Airport Commissioners from 5 to 7, adding a representative from the City of Winooski and to add another commissioner from Burlington. The third charter change is for just-cause eviction, which would provide by ordinance protection for residential tenants from evictions without just cause, through a section in the charter under the powers of the City Council that will enable them to enact an ordinance in the future. It provides requirements for that ordinance, and leaves open the possibility of adding other issues to that ordinance. It also details who this applies to and who this does not apply to. It additionally includes provisions for limiting the unintended negative consequences for any ordinance enacted. The fourth and final charter change is to add to the powers of the City Council the ability to regulate thermal energy systems in residential and commercial buildings, as well as the ability to assess a carbon impact or alternative compliance payment.

City Council President Tracy opened the public hearing on the above charter changes.

Robert Bristow-Johnson provided a suggestion for an adjustment to the language in the just-cause charter change. He said that as written, the currently-proposed language, if approved by the voters, would not make it through the legislature and be approved. He added that not having ranked-choice voting for the election of the Mayor is a mistake, since that is the race that is most likely to have three or more candidates (and therefore would benefit the most from a ranked-choice voting method).

Erhardt Mahnke spoke in support of the just-cause eviction charter change question on the ballot. He urged the Council not to change the language in the question, as it is written well already.

P. Johnson spoke about the just-cause eviction charter change and is supportive of the currently-proposed language as well as the proposed ordinance language.

Bob spoke as the owner of a second home in Burlington. He said that he occasionally rents it out when he is not in residence, and asked if the just-cause charter change and ordinance would prevent him from returning to his property if a tenant decides they want to stay there. He said he agreed with the protections in the ordinance but that informal landlords like him should also have protections.

Christy Delphia noted that there seems to be lingering confusion around the just-cause eviction ballot question and charter change, and suggested a website that can help educate on some of those confusion points. She urged City Councilors and others to visit the site and read its literature on just-cause eviction. She also said that this would not change the landlord laws or protections, but would just add more protections for tenants.

City Council President Tracy closed the public hearing. He said that there would be further opportunity for public input on



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these proposed changes at an additional public hearing on January 25, prior to finalizing the language that will appear on the ballot.

5.02 Communication: Meghan O'Rourke, Channel Director, Town Meeting TV, re: Town Meeting TV FY21 Update and Budget Request

Ms. O'Rourke introduced this item, saying that the City of Burlington, along with other towns and municipalities in Chittenden County, makes payments to CCTV and Town Meeting Television in exchange for recording services at events and meetings. She said that most of Town Meeting TV/CCTV's revenue comes primarily from a percentage of cable subscriber revenue that is paid both to Comcast and Burlington Telecom. She noted that that money covers 6 meetings per month, which is a small portion of the meetings that occur. She said that Burlington contributes \$24,000 to Town Meeting TV to help cover the costs of this in addition to cable subscriber revenue. She said that Burlington also contributes \$20,000 CCVT to cover the costs of the other meetings and events that occur. She presented a request to level fund both the \$24,000 to Town Meeting TV and the additional \$20,000 to CCVT for Fiscal Year 2021.

5.03 Communication: Burlington International Airport, re: Request to Approve Acceptance of a Grant with the FAA and Design/Inspection/Construction Related Contracts for the Terminal Integration Project (TIP)

MOTION by Councilor Paul, SECOND by Councilor Dieng, to 1. "Authorize the Director of Aviation to execute an Airport Improvement Program grant with the Federal Aviation Administration and accept up to \$14,498,480.70, plus an additional contingency amount of \$2,147,772.11 (15%), totaling up to \$16,646,252.81, which could be issued in multiple grants, for the Terminal Integration Project, subject to the final review and approval by the City Attorney's Office," 2. "To authorize the Director of Aviation to execute a contract with Jacobs Engineering Group for up to \$1,375,622.00, plus an additional contingency amount of \$206,343.30 (15%), totaling up to \$1,581,965.30 for design assistance and construction inspection related services for the Terminal Integration Project, subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney's Office," and 3. "To authorize the Director of Aviation to execute a contract with Engelberth Construction Inc. for up to \$14,091,303.00, plus an additional contingency amount of \$2,113,695.45 (15%), totaling up to \$16,204,998.45 for design and construction services for the Terminal Integration Project, subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney's Office."

DISCUSSION:

- Director Richards said that the Airport is still in the midst of designing the facility and will be incorporating many green features. He said that there would only be one entry area and one single TSA checkpoint, which will minimize confusion and make the airport more efficient.
- Deputy Director Longo added that the Airport is very fortunate to have been able to secure this grant, with support of Vermont's congressional delegation.
- Councilor Paul said that this project has been a decade in the making in terms of modernizing BTV Airport. She noted that 90% of the grant will come from the federal government and the remaining 10% will come from airline arrangements and facility charges to passengers. She said that the project will utilize green technology to the best of its ability during this project. She noted that the grant was unanimously approved by the Board of Finance.
- Mayor Weinberger said that the airport has been one of Chittenden County's success stories in the last few years. He said that the project funded by this grant will not only improve the airport experience for





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passengers today, but also that the project is being designed and integrated in such a way that it will make future expansion possible.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

5.04 Memorandum Of Understanding Among The City of Burlington, City Of South Burlington, And City of Winooski

MOTION by Councilor Paul, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to waive the reading and authorize the Mayor to execute the MOU between the cities of Burlington, South Burlington, and Winooski.

DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Paul said that there has historically been a challenged relationship between Burlington, which is the owner of the airport, and the cities that are most affected by the airport (South Burlington and Winooski). She said that this MOU represents the cities working on common goals to support each other. She said that the MOU lays out responsibilities for each city, one of which is the shared responsibility around sound mitigation. She said that one of Burlington's obligations in the MOU is to add a seat on the Airport Commission for Winooski through a charter change (and ballot question).
- Councilor Dieng spoke about the federal homebuying program, noting that the options after that are either demolition or converting them into hotels. He asked about the tax aspect of the homebuying program. Deputy Director Longo replied that the previous program, the airport settled on a \$280,000 per acre assessed value on the parcels in question. Since then, he said that they have not yet discussed the property taxes on those particular properties, but the purpose is to purchase them, improve them, and resell them on the open market.
- Mayor Weinberger said that the three cities are now committed in this MOU to a sound mitigation program instead of the current homebuying program.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

5.05 Resolution: Finalization And Availability Of Annual City Audit For FY20 (Board of Finance)

MOTION by Councilor Pine, SECOND by Councilor Paul, that the Council approve the resolution as follows: "WHEREAS, Article 69(a)(3) of the Burlington city charter requires that "[t]he annual audit of the 2 City's financial records shall be finalized at least 30 days before the annual meeting or as the City Council 3 may by resolution prescribe;" and 4 WHEREAS, thirty (30) days before the annual meeting would require the audit for the fiscal year 5 ending June 30, 2020 (FY20 audit) to be completed by January 31, 2021; and 6 WHEREAS, although the audit of all other departments, including the City's general fund, is or will be 7 completed by Jan. 31, it is unclear whether or not the Burlington School District's audit will be finalized by 8 then; and 9 WHEREAS, once the School District audit is completed, it must be submitted to the City's auditors, 10 and the auditors must consider the overall financial





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situation before finalizing the audit; and 11 WHEREAS, it is unclear if those steps will be completed by January 31; and 12 WHEREAS, copies of a draft summary and a draft management letter will be included in the City's 13 printed annual report, with copies of the final audit and management letter to be available at public locations 14 and polling places and published online as soon as they are available; 15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the full annual audit of the City's financial records and 16 final management letter shall be finalized and available to the public by February 16, 2021."

DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Pine noted that this resolution serves to give public notice that there will be a draft summary and management letter available at polling places and other public locations.
- Councilor Dieng asked how many copies have been printed and distributed throughout the community. Mayor Weinberger replied that 1,900 copies were distributed last year and available at polling places and also available at the Clerk/Treasurer's office. He said that fewer people would be going to the polls this year and that his staff will come back with suggestions around how to get this information to voters who will be voting by mail or via other methods.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

5.06 Resolution: Ballot Question Authorizing Retail Cannabis Sales While Addressing Systemic Racism & Other Equity Concerns (Revised)(Councilors Hanson, Stromberg, Pine, Tracy, Carpenter)

MOTION by Councilor Hanson, SECOND by Councilor Hightower, to waive the reading and adopt the resolution as amended.

DISCUSSION:

- Councilor Hanson noted that this amended version has all players entering the Burlington market at the same time, creates a framework to build strong equity measures at the local level, and advocates for further racial equity measures at the State level. He said that he and Councilor Carpenter held a work session with stakeholders and subject matter experts last week and then met with Director Green, after which
- Councilor Mason recused himself from this discussion and voting.
- Councilor Shannon asked if the legislature specifically required municipalities to put a question on the ballot to allow retail sales of cannabis. She asked if the City has the authority from the legislature to put this question on the ballot, which is different than what was envisioned when this legislation was passed. She said that the original question was binding and asked if this different question is binding and whether it satisfies the requirement of the legislation. City Attorney Blackwood replied that the legislation does not specify a question but that they hold a vote to determine whether to allow retail licenses, integrated licenses, or both. She said that many stakeholders feel that retail sales should start simultaneously. She also said the legislation did not specify a date by which the vote needs to occur.
- Councilor Shannon said that allowing integrated businesses to receive licenses first and staggering retail licenses may have unintended consequences if other cities or towns issue retail licenses first, since it would dissuade retailers from establishing themselves in Burlington. She also said that she is unsure how this delay would benefit the BIPOC community.





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- **Councilor Carpenter said that the medical marijuana business will continue as it is today. She said that because medical marijuana is obtained through a prescription, it can be ordered online once that prescription is verified. She said that the resolution would simply delay that one existing dispensary in Burlington from opening a retail shop for 5 months until others are allowed to enter the market.**
- **Councilor Hanson said that this resolution would set an example for this particular aspect of the state policy and that other neighboring communities or the State may consider a similar approach.**
- **Councilor Shannon asked if there are multiple BIPOC entrepreneurs who are ready to start up these businesses in Burlington. Councilor Carpenter replied that that information isn't known. She said that growers have expressed interest in both growing and selling product.**
- **Councilor Dieng asked why both questions are included in the resolution, if only one of them will be going to the voters on the ballot. Councilor Hanson replied that the language is to ensure that the City is remaining committed to racial equity in the industry.**

VOTING (by roll call): Councilor Carpenter. – aye, Councilor Dieng – aye, Councilor Freeman – aye, Councilor Hanson – aye, Councilor Hightower – aye, Councilor Paul – aye, Councilor Paulino – aye, Councilor Pine – aye, Councilor Shannon – aye, Councilor Stromberg – aye, City Council President Tracy – aye (11 ayes, 1 recusal).

5.07 Resolution: March 2, 2021 Annual City Meeting - Ballot Question Advising Decrease In Authorized Number Of Police Officers Only To 84 (Councilor Dieng)

**** this item was removed from the agenda****

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.01 Verbal Reports

Councilor Pine provided an update on the Community Development and Neighborhood Revitalization Committee (CDNR), noting that they are meeting on January 20 at 5:30 PM and will focus on issues referred to them in the past around how the City supports its seniors and how it could provide more support to residents as they age in place.

Councilor Paul provided an update on the Parks, Art, and Culture Committee, noting that they are meeting on January 26 at 5:30 PM and will discuss Parks & Recreation spring plans and winter plans that are underway, as well as hear a presentation on a grant they received for accessibility at Oakledge Park. She said the grant would make Oakledge Park one of very few parks in New England that would be accessible for everyone.

Councilor Hightower said that the Joint Committee of Public Safety and the Police Commission just executed a contract on general public safety visioning and have approved and checked references for the second contract, which should be coming to the Council for approval at the Council's next meeting.

Councilor Dieng said that the Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee had to cancel its January meeting due to a



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conflict with the City Council meeting, and noted that the next meeting will occur on February 17 at 5:30 PM.

Councilor Mason noted that the Joint Committee of the Planning Commission and City Ordinance Committee are continuing discussions around short-term rentals and that they anticipate reporting back and having a work session with the full Council soon.

Councilor Hanson noted that the License and Local Control Subcommittee will be meeting on January 21 at 4:30 PM.

7. CITY COUNCIL – GENERAL AFFAIRS

7.01 Verbal Reports

Councilor Paul said that the next food distribution event at Champlain Elementary School is on Saturday, January 23 at 12:00 PM. She noted that future dates are February 27, March 27, and April 24 at 12:00 PM.

Councilor Pine said that he and Councilor Carpenter will be on Channel 17 on January 20 at 2:00 PM, to speak to ballot questions. He invited community members to call in with questions.

Councilor Dieng spoke in appreciation of Patrick Brown, Executive Director of the Greater Burlington Multicultural Resource Center, for his efforts around Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events.

Councilor Mason thanked City and State officials for setting up an extremely efficient COVID-19 testing system, saying that he was able to sign up very easily and was able to get tested quickly.

Councilor Pine spoke about the tragic and fatal fire that occurred at 199 King Street. He said that the City has many older buildings and that Code Enforcement and the Fire Department have their mandates to protect residents, but that residents also have responsibilities to keep themselves and each other safe. He said that working smoke detectors are critical to safety and reminded residents of their responsibility to maintain these important life-saving devices. He thanked the Fire Department for its response to the fire.

Councilor Shannon asked for a moment of silence to remember the two lives that were lost in that fire as well as two other lives that were lost due to substance use disorder within the same week. A moment of silence was held for the four lives lost.

8. CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT – COUNCIL UPDATES



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8.01 Verbal Reports

City Council President Tracy noted that the School Board has finalized its budget and that the City Council will receive a presentation on their budget at the next City Council meeting. He also advised members of the public to utilize the public hearing portion of discussions around charter changes if they want to comment specifically on those proposed charter change (as opposed to speaking on them during public forum).

9. MAYOR – GENERAL AFFAIRS

9.01 Verbal Reports

Mayor Weinberger spoke about several COVID-19-safe events commemorating the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday in the Burlington area. He thanked Patrick Brown for hosting a COVID-19 safe event on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and also thanked him for his incisive remarks on delivering on racial justice and equity ideals. He also spoke about a similar event at ECHO, which included a panel of experts talking about the idea of municipal reparations for slavery. He thanked Director Green for her participation on this. He also thanked Fletcher Free Library for putting together and distributing a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day art kit.

Mayor Weinberger also provided a local COVID-19 update. He reminded the community to keep up their vigilance in this high-risk time. He wished Governor Scott and Health Commissioner Dr. Levine well during their quarantine. He spoke about increased participation at the Pine Street COVID-19 testing site and said the administration is working to further increase testing resources in the City. He said that the administration has added to the City's wastewater monitoring program, saying that they are now able to monitor for the new variants of COVID-19 and that there have not been significant levels of new variants in Burlington water. He said that the City is coordinating with the University of Vermont and Champlain College around the safe return of students after their winter break. He said that the State's vaccination effort will enter a community-vaccination phase next week, noting that Vermonters 75 and older will be eligible for vaccination beginning on January 25. He said the City will prioritize equitable distribution, the creation of walkable vaccination sites in Burlington, and education and communication targeted at the BIPOC community.

10. ADJOURNMENT

10.01 Motion to adjourn

MOTION by Councilor Dieng, SECOND by Councilor Hanson, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

The City Council meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.



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RScty: AACoonrad

