

Burlington Fire Commission Meeting

Tuesday August 11, 2026 09:00-10:07

Members Present: Chair Jake Perskinson, Vice Chair Kevin McLaughlin, Monica Chapman, and Ashley Bond (via Zoom). Chief Curtin, Deputy Chief Stephen Petit, Battalion Chief of Training Adam Savoy, Battalion Chief of EMS Marsha McCombie, Data Analyst Jeff Nicholson, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney.

Call to Order –

The meeting called to order August 11, 2026 at 09:00 am.

Motion to Amend/Adopt Agenda-

Chair Commissioner Perkinson asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as submitted. Motion moved by Commissioner McLaughlin and seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Approved by acclamation.

Commissions –

Brief commission business included acknowledgments of commissioned individual BC Adam Savoy.

Public Comment –

No comment from member of public.

Accept Minutes from June Meeting-

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

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:

The Chief's Oral Report highlighted that the department completed 1,097 runs in July with 6,448 runs by August 1st, a 5.6% decrease from the previous year. Key updates included the resignation of Tanner Studlack, creating a vacancy, and the acquisition of the department's first boat to enhance water rescue capabilities, with plans to have it operational by the end of the month.

Station Maintenance and Renovation Updates

BFD provided updates on several station maintenance and renovation projects. The window restoration project at Station 1 begins on the 18th and will continue through next spring, with estimated costs around \$3,000 for front ramp repairs and \$15,000-20,000 for a new HVAC preventive maintenance contract. Additional work includes kitchen renovation at Station 1 with a

\$150,000 budget, replacement of the basement apparatus bay door at Station 2, and ongoing efforts to bring the sprinkler system at Station 2 up to code requirements.

BFD Station Updates and Training

BFD provided updates on station improvements, including new equipment at Stations 2 and 4, and outlined plans for the Station 3 bunk room remodel with two bathrooms. The department implemented a new background check process for ride-alongs and is preparing for upcoming promotional processes including Battalion Chief, Lieutenant, and Captain positions. BFD reported on training initiatives, including roof rope rescue training conducted by FDNY with 9 local firefighters participating in a train-the-trainer program, and the completion of rope rescue bags for all stations.

BFD Recruitment and Training Updates

BFD reported that the department completed their SCBA confidence course and annual fitness appraisal, with 5 recruits progressing well and expected to complete training by end of September. BFD discussed recruitment challenges, explaining that while they get a good pool of qualified candidates, the main issue is convincing them to accept positions in Burlington rather than pursuing other opportunities. BFD noted that with increased recruitment funding and a focus on local hiring, they are successfully attracting higher quality candidates who understand the commitment required for the role.

BFD Program and Operations Updates

BFD discussed the lateral firefighter program, noting positive impacts including one member who is now leading a recruiting academy, though challenges remain including cost of living concerns and two-person engine operations. The department submitted a grant application for 11 new personnel positions to address staffing issues. BFD also updated the team on ongoing projects including the monthly report format changes, infection control program improvements following OSHA and CDC guidelines, and the implementation of new Life Pack 35 equipment and IV pumps on ambulances.

Monthly Incident Data Review

BFD presented monthly incident data up to July, highlighting a total of 741 incidents and noting the lowest transport rate in July 2026, which aligns with summer trends where patients are more likely to stay at their current location. The discussion covered call categories, with injury trauma being the top category, followed by patients refusing evaluations or care, including specific cases like motor vehicle crashes and falls. BFD also mentioned that the response team's role was discussed, though the specific details were not elaborated upon in the transcript.

Drug Overdose Response Patterns Review

The team discussed overdose data and response patterns, noting that while opioid overdoses are down, drugs have evolved with over 530 different chemical types now appearing in street drugs. They reviewed 31 substance-related events in July and plan to analyze call locations and types in future reporting. The discussion included clarification on how working diagnoses are categorized and the crew's discretion in documenting incidents.

Burlington Emergency Medical Services Discussion

The meeting focused on emergency medical services data and response patterns in Burlington. BFD expressed concerns about a city resolution regarding call routing signs, arguing the fire department wasn't properly consulted and that better integration and communication protocols are needed before implementing such changes. The discussion reviewed patient demographics data showing psychiatric and behavioral calls are more prevalent than drug-related calls in certain age groups, though drug issues still present significant challenges that fluctuate over time.

The team also examined high-utilizer patients who account for a disproportionate share of calls, and discussed the UVM Street Medicine program launching August 15th, though it will initially only accept hospital referrals rather than direct community calls.

Old/New Business-

* Commissioner Perkinson asked if there was any updated on the awards banquet. Chief Curtin is following up with the Burlington High School contact after school starts to see if we will be able to host it there.

* Commissioners would like to follow up with CRT discussion at next meeting.

Adjournment-

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner McLaughlin and seconded by Commissioner Chapman at 10:07.