



## **Racial, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging**

**Tuesday, September 1, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)**

**Held in the Sharon Bushor Conference Room, Ground Floor City Hall**

**OR**

**via Zoom Meeting**

**<https://zoom.us/j/96324562039>**

**Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039**

**Or Use Phone number: 305-224-1968**

**Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039**

### **1. Call to Order**

---

### **2. Adopt Agenda & Minutes**

---

|                |                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b> | <b>2.1. August 25 2026</b>                                                                                                                              |
| Meeting        | September 1, 2026 - Special REIB City Council Sub Committee Meeting - Tuesday, September 1, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB) |
| Category       | 2. Adopt Agenda & Minutes                                                                                                                               |
| Department     | Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)                                                                                                            |

Type

Recommended Action

### 3. Public Forum

---

#### 4. Community Health: Alcohol & Substance Use - Learning from Lived Experiences

---

#### 5. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework For Safe Public Spaces And A Stronger Community

---

|            |                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Subject    | 5.1. Burlington Forward_REVISED                                                                                                                         |
| Meeting    | September 1, 2026 - Special REIB City Council Sub Committee Meeting - Tuesday, September 1, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB) |
| Category   | 5. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework For Safe Public Spaces And A Stronger Community                              |
| Department | Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)                                                                                                            |
| Type       |                                                                                                                                                         |

|            |                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Subject    | 5.2. REIB Impact Assessment Memo_Burlington Forward                                                                                                     |
| Meeting    | September 1, 2026 - Special REIB City Council Sub Committee Meeting - Tuesday, September 1, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB) |
| Category   | 5. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework For Safe Public Spaces And A Stronger Community                              |
| Department | Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)                                                                                                            |
| Type       |                                                                                                                                                         |

### 6. Adjournment

---

|                    |                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b>     | <b>6.1. Motion to adjourn</b>                                                                                                                           |
| Meeting            | September 1, 2026 - Special REIB City Council Sub Committee Meeting - Tuesday, September 1, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB) |
| Category           | 6. Adjournment                                                                                                                                          |
| Department         | Council and Board                                                                                                                                       |
| Type               |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Recommended Action |                                                                                                                                                         |

## 7. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

---

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b> | <b>7.1. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. For more information on access, call Lori Olberg, Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator (802-865-7136)(TTY 802-865-7142). Persons with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate are encouraged to contact 802-865-7000 (voice) or 802-865-7142 (TTY) at least 72 hours in advance so that proper arrangements can be made. This meeting will also air on Town Meeting TV the Wednesday after the meeting, starting at 8:00 pm and repeating at 1:00 am and 7:00 am the following day. The City of Burlington will not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, race, color, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, disability, HIV positive status, crime victim status or genetic information.</b> |
| Meeting        | September 1, 2026 - Special REIB City Council Sub Committee Meeting - Tuesday, September 1, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Category       | 7. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Department     | Council and Board                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Type           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

**Attendees:**

Councilor Laura Sanchez-Parkinson (in person)

Councilor Sarah Carpenter (in person)

Councilor Melo Grant (in person)

Kelli Perkins (in person)

Christian Berry (in person)

Vicky Luciano (in person)

Mona Tolba (in person)

Chris McGrath (in person)

Rachel Jolly (in person)

Kate O'Neil (in person)

Mark Hughes (in person)

Maryan Maalin (online)

Loan Nguyen (online)

Tiffanie Katsuva (online)

Hemant Ghising (online)

André Clark (online)

Alicia Van Dyk (online)

iPhone (online)

Bill Lowell (online)

Bella Fearn (online)

Suki Rubin (online)

1. Call to Order
  - a. Call the meeting to order 5:33 pm
2. Adopt Agenda & Minutes
  - a. Councilor Carpenter moved to approve the agenda and minutes. Councilor Grant seconded. The agenda and minutes passed unanimously.
3. Public Forum
  - a. Chris McGrath thanked the REIB Office for its extensive feedback on the Burlington Forward Resolution. He encouraged community members to review the comments, noting that he had learned a great deal from them.
    - i. Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson acknowledged that she had received similar positive feedback from other community members regarding REIB's work and analysis
4. Community Health: Alcohol & Substance Use – Learning from Lived Experiences

- a. Rachel Jolly, Director of the Chittenden County Community Justice Center, provided an overview of the organization's work and its role in community health and safety.
  - i. Rachel Jolly highlighted two programs funded by the Vermont Attorney General's Office:
    1. Tamarack: A diversion program connecting people whose offenses are related to mental health or substance use to services and, when appropriate, restorative processes.
      - a. During FY2026 Tamarack served approximately 120 people
    2. Pretrial Services: Connects people whose offenses are related to substance use or mental health to services while they are proceeding through the court system.
      - a. During FY2026 Pretrial Services served approximately 361 people.
    3. The programs have relatively low completion rates, between 30%-60%, reflecting the high needs and risks of the people being served.
    4. Rachel Jolly identified two major gaps:
      - a. Long-term treatment: Ideally treatment lasting at least one month, and preferably three months or more.
      - b. Supportive housing: Stable housing is essential for people attempting to participate successfully in treatment, diversion, and other programs.
  - ii. Councilor Grant asked Rachel Jolly if more information could be shared to help educate the public better
  - iii. Councilor Carpenter asked how to get people into the system.
    1. Rachel Jolly explained that pre-charge diversion represents one of the most upstream opportunities for intervention. She emphasized that preventing people from entering the criminal legal system in the first place is preferable because deeper involvement can increase risk. She also discussed the possibility of expanding opportunities for self-referral. Refer to the video
    2. The committee discussed the challenge of balancing accountability for harmful behavior with approaches that do not unnecessarily deepen a person's involvement in the criminal legal system.
    3. Rachel Jolly shared examples such as investing in youth around leadership opportunities and internship instead of putting them in the system. Building rapport to find ways for betterment outside of the criminal legal system.
  - iv. Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson shared that these upstream and downstream resources are limited. She posed the question of what the committee can do. She expressed interest in talking about where the committee can talk about ways to help and asked about capacity.
- b. Rachel Jolly clarified recent confusion surrounding the City Circle program and its funding.
  - i. The Community Justice Center is not ending its broader community referral work. Community members can continue referring civil tickets, including noise complaints and other lower-level matters, as well as pre-charge and post-charge cases. Six community volunteers who participated in City Circle remain interested in continuing to support community-based responses. Refer to the video.
- c. Councilor Sanchez Parkinson emphasized the importance of upstream and downstream interventions. She noted that resources are limited at both ends of the continuum. She asked Rachel Jolly to share about the capacity each program has.
  - i. Rachel Jolly emphasized that the primary limitation for Tamarack and pretrial services is currently not staff capacity, but the lack of available treatment, housing, transportation, child care, and other wraparound services.

- d. Mark Hughes asked Rachel Jolly about data and data collecting systems county wide and what data she would be collecting to measure disparities within system. He shared that he knew of some people who could help.
    - i. Rachel Jolly explained that the Community Justice Center collects referral, case closure, racial demographic, and age data, but there is no unified countywide system showing:
      - 1. Total law enforcement contacts.
      - 2. Which cases are referred to diversion
      - 3. Which cases move into other parts of the criminal legal system.
      - 4. How people move through the system by race and other demographics.
    - ii. Different law enforcement agencies and courts use different systems and collect demographic information inconsistently.
  - e. Mona Tolba asked the Tamarack program is only for first time offenders and what organizations are they referring to. She asked what kinds of supports are given after they are done with the services offered to them. Refer to the video.
    - i. Rachel Jolly shared that they don't have wraparound services.
  - f. Councilor Grant recommended inviting Rachel Joy from the Crime Research Group. Refer to the video.
5. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework for Safe Public Spaces and a Stronger Community
- a. Kate O'Neill, a Ward 5 resident and longtime Burlington community member, shared the story of her sister, who died while incarcerated in 2018 after struggling with substance use disorder for more than a decade. Kate O'Neill described her sister's repeated efforts to access treatment and periods when she was able to achieve stability, followed by relapse. Refer to the video.
    - i. She emphasized the need to examine:
      - 1. The family policing system and DCF's interactions with families affected by substance use.
      - 2. The distinction between drug testing and parenting ability.
      - 3. Evidence-based treatment for stimulant use disorder.
      - 4. Incarceration and correctional health care.
      - 5. Harm reduction.
      - 6. The ways criminal records can create long-term barriers to employment and stability.
  - b. Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson thanked O'Neill for sharing her experience and emphasized the importance of connecting individual lived experiences to the broader data and policy discussions.
  - c. Councilor Carpenter emphasized the resolution was not intended to call for incarceration but to address threatening or disruptive behavior in downtown public spaces and parks.
    - i. Councilor Grant discussed the difference between policy intent and impact, particularly for people who are unhoused, BIPOC or otherwise marginalized. Refer to the video.
  - d. Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson shared a draft memo summarizing the committee's analysis of Burlington Forward.
  - e. The memo incorporates community feedback and the State of Vermont's racial equity impact assessment framework.
  - f. Key areas of focus include:
    - i. Meaningful engagement with affected communities.
    - ii. Examining both the resolution and the process used to develop it.
    - iii. Identifying unintended and disproportionate impacts.
    - iv. Developing practical alternatives to enforcement-focused responses.
  - g. Mark Hughes asked if there was still an opportunity to submit a draft

- i. Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson clarified community members are still encouraged to submit written analyses and recommendations for consideration.
  - h. Andre Clark shared that the system in Burlington Forward does lead to jail and urged everyone to talk to organization to see how to collaborate. He expressed his appreciation for the edits made to the Burlington Forward Resolution. Refer to the video.
  - i. The committee plans to provide its response to City Council on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
  - j. Members emphasized that work on community health, housing public safety, substance use, and racial equity should continue beyond the Burlington Forward process.
6. Adjournment
- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:35