DRAFT MINUTES

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL

29 JUNE 2026

The South Burlington City Council held a special meeting on Monday, 29 June 2026, at 6:30 p.m., in Room 301, 180 Market Street, and by Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: T. Barritt, Chair; E. Fitzgerald, Dr. B. Zigmund

ALSO PRESENT: J. Baker, City Manager; Chief S. Locke, Deputy City Manager; C. McNeil, City Attorney; Chief B. Breault, Police Department; M. Machar, Finance Manager; J. Sturbank

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Instructions on exiting building in case of emergency and review of technology options:

Ms. Baker provided instructions on emergency exit from the building and reviewed technology options.

3. **Additions, deletions or changes in the order of Agenda items:**

Members agreed to remove an executive session at the end of the meeting.

4. **Comments and questions from the public not related to the agenda:**

No issues were raised.

5. **Councilors Announcements and Reports on Committee Assignments and City Manager's Report:**

Council members reported on recent meetings and events they had attended.
Ms. Baker: Noted this is the 5th City Council meeting this month.

Officially welcomed Leunig's to Market Street.

6. **Consent Agenda:**
   a. **Consider and Sign Disbursements**
   b. **Allocate $78,740 of unassigned ARPA inspired fund balance to cover the paving cost of the Police Department parking lot at 19 Gregory Drive and authorize the Police Chief and Public Works Director to sign the contract with S.D. Ireland**
   c. **Reinstate the Employee Handbook approved in June, 2025**
   d. **Approve and authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Sawyer Sprinkler Service, LLC, in the amount of $180,000 subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney. Approve and authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement with the South Burlington School District for repayment of expenses incurred to install a fire suppression sprinkler system at 577 Dorset Street.**

Dr. Zigmund moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Ms. Fitzgerald seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

7. **Receive information on the 2026 Grand List and approve the FY 27 municipal tax rate and tax due dates:**

Ms. Machar noted that the Grand List growth, which had been estimated at 1.5%, came in at 1.62%. This has resulted in a reduction in the proposed tax rate of 3.3 to 2.93. Ms. Machar noted the City has not yet received the tax rate for education.

Ms. Fitzgerald expressed concern regarding mail delivery and getting tax bills to property owners in a timely manner.

Mr. Barritt asked about the TIF. Ms. Baker said Ms. Blanchard will speak to that at an August meeting.

Ms. Fitzgerald then moved to set the FY27 Municipal Operations Tax Rate of $0.5345 for a total Municipal Tax Rate of $ 0.5550 and set the installment due dates of 18 August 2026, 16 November 2026, and 15 March 2027. Dr. Zigmund seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

8. **Receive the Council-requested Delinquent Tax Report:**

Ms. Machar reviewed the tables in the report, including what was and was not received in taxes, interest, and penalties charged for delinquencies.
Ms. Fitzgerald said she was relieved that delinquencies were under 1% and noted that many other communities are not so fortunate. She also noted that the penalties help the City if it has to front any money for payments.

Ms. Baker noted that people are catching up and said that because the City has cash on hand, it does not have to borrow.

Ms. Machar said that the City had started the tax sale process on 5 delinquent properties.

9. **Discuss and possibly approve an update to the South Burlington Amended and Restated Retirement Income Plan Document, subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney, that among other updates, makes changes to the eligibility for pension benefits for sworn Police officers:**

Chief Breault said this update aims to keep experienced officers on board while newer officers are trained and gain experience.

Mr. McNeil said they have now incorporated everything into one document. He then introduced Jennifer Sturbank, the company's actuary.

Mr. Barritt asked what vesting they would have to wait for if they went with VMERS. Mr. McNeil said it would be 5 years. Mr. Barritt asked if it is then a "wash" for the City in terms of cost. Mr. McNeil said it is "pretty much a wash." Mr. Barritt asked what officers would have to pay to VMERS. Mr. McNeil said it would be based on a percentage of salary. Chief Breault said it comes to $4500 a year more they would be paying.

The Chief noted that 18 Police officers have less than 5 years of service. Three more are being hired on Monday, and there will still be 8 openings. He cited the need for officers to gain experience to reduce liability. He added that it takes a full year from when an officer is hired before the City gets any return. The City also invests $3500 per officer for advanced training. When 6 officers left within the first year, the City got zero return on its investment.

Chief Breault also noted that there are only 12 officers involved in this, and it is an incentive to have them stay with the department to help train newcomers. He added that this kind of turnover is common throughout the country.

Mr. Barritt asked the retirement age of the City's officers. Ms. Sturbank said she did not have that information on hand. Chief Breault noted that a 25-year officer retired a few months ago and then was hired in Shelburne.

Ms. Fitzgerald then moved to approve and authorize the City Manager to execute the City of South Burlington Amended Restated Retirement Income Plan Document, subject to final review and approval of the City Attorney. Dr. Zigmund seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

10. **Convene the Liquor Control Commission to consider the following applications for approval:**

    a. **The Valley Vape Company, LLC, 2nd Class Liquor License, Tobacco/Tobacco Substitute Endorsement**
    b. **El Gato Cantina, 1st Class Restaurant/Bar License, 3rd Class Restaurant/Bar License**

Ms. Fitzgerald moved to convene as Liquor Control Commission. Dr. Zigmund seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the two applications as presented. Dr. Zigmund seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Ms. Fitzgerald moved to reconvene as City Council. Dr. Zigmund seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

11. **Review the significant agenda topics for the Council's 6 July 2026 City Council meeting:**

    a. **Possible approval of FY27 Policy Priorities and Strategies annual work plan**
    b. **Receive a presentation from the Planning Commission on comprehensive updates to the Land Development Regulations and consider setting a public hearing for 3 August 2026**

c. **Hold a First Reading of an update to the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance**
d. **Tentative art recommendation**

Ms. Fitzgerald said she would like an update on staff resources based on availability. Ms. Baker noted that was a key topic of conversation at the administrators' meeting.

12. Other Business:

No other business was brought forth.

As there was no further business to come before the Council Mr. Smith moved to adjourn. Ms. Fitzgerald seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

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Clerk