MEDIA RELEASE

INCIDENT TYPE:		DATE/TIME REPORTED:	
Assault		10/01/2019 2228 Hours	
INCIDENT NUMBER:		LOCATION:	
19BU021906		2 N. Winooski Ave	
AUTHOR:		APPROVED BY:	
DC Murad		DC Murad	
SUSPECT:		AGE:	SUSPECT ADDRESS:
Jerry Lee Hoffman		26	Burlington
SUSPECT DISPOSITION:			
Arrested for assault			

NARRATIVE:

On Tuesday October 1 2019 at approximately 2228 hours, Burlington Police dispatch received reports that a man—later identified as Jerry Lee Hoffman, 26—had randomly assaulted other individuals in front of The OP bar at the corner of Pearl Street and North Winooski Avenue.

A group of witnesses and victims report that they were standing outside the OP bar talking when Mr. Hoffman attempted to enter the bar. He was allegedly denied entry by staff owing to his apparent intoxication. Mr. Hoffman then demanded a cigarette of the first victim, then abruptly and without warning punched him in the face, breaking the victim's glasses. The group attempted to ward off Mr. Hoffman and otherwise prevent him from fighting, but Mr. Hoffman allegedly punched other victims as well. He then fled south on South Winooski.

Some of the victims followed the suspect at a distance. Police responded and victims positively identified Mr. Hoffman. When police stopped him, he swore at officers and was non-compliant. He violently resisted arrest, assaulting two officers by kicking and flailing his arms. Officers used a TASER to gain control of him and take him into custody.

It is worth noting that Mr. Hoffman was allegedly involved in a nearly identical series of events at the same location earlier this summer on June 1. The press release from that incident is attached for reference, as well.

"Citizens can continue to rely on the fast and effective response of Burlington police officers when they encounter violent individuals in the street," said Brandon del Pozo, Chief of Police. "People should be able to enjoy their time in our city without worry or fear."

"There are many social conditions for which enforcement is not the answer," said Deputy Chief of Operations Jon Murad. "And the Burlington Police Department routinely works with social-service providers and other healthcare partners to deliver non-enforcement assistance to our most vulnerable neighbors, particularly those who need help with mental-health issues or substance-use disorders. Nevertheless, everyone in our community has a right to be free from random assaults. When a person's violent behavior puts other people's safety at risk, our officers will do their part to protect our neighbors and take culprits into custody. But the fact that this individual allegedly committed essentially the same acts in the same place earlier this summer suggests that, in his case, more may need to be done."

Mr. Hoffman was arrested for two counts of simple assault, two counts of assault on a police officer, and one count of unlawful mischief. He was held and lodged. His criminal history includes one prior failure to appear, ten prior misdemeanor convictions, and seven prior charges for assaultive crimes with four convictions. He is currently being supervised by Burlington Probation and Parole. Anyone with additional information about this incident or others like it is asked to contact the Burlington Police Department at (802) 658-2704.He is currently being supervised by Burlington Probation and Parole. Anyone with additional information about this incident or others like it is asked to contact the Burlington Police Department at (802) 658-2704.

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