

W18 NPA Minutes – January 13, 2021

Additional information about W18 and NPA meeting is available on our facebook page →
<https://www.facebook.com/Ward1and8NPA>

- 7:00 Announcements & Introductions
- 7:05 Speak-out
- 7:20 City Council Update & Q/A: Jack Hanson, Zoraya Hightower, Jane Stromberg
- 7:40 School Budget & Infrastructure Planning: School Commissioners Aden Haji, Kathy Olwell
- 7:50 COVID update: UVM Spring semester plan -Gail Shampnois & Joe Speidel
- 8:00 Green Mountain Transit update: financial support -Tom Derenthal
- 8:05 Burlington Water Dept Update -Jenna Olson
- 8:25 Riverside Micro development Update -Mark Furnari & Laurie Smith
- 8:40 Redstone development at So. Winooski & Buell -Tucker Helmus
- 8:55 Future meeting topics?

Attendees:

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The meeting started at 7:00 PM

Speak-out:

- Dave Cawley
 - o Reported on work in progress to rework/design Colchester Ave. Various proposals have been put forth for public review and comment. These are available here →
<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/current-projects/scoping/colchester-ave-bikeways-parking-and-intersection-safety/>

- Reported the Neighbors of Burlington's Old East End are sponsoring a Winterlude Festival to chase the winter blues away in a covid safe manner.
Details are available here → <https://oldeastendbtv.com/>
- Cindy Cook
 - Announced the opening of a new Little Free Library & Pantry on East Ave
 - Expressed concern that the East Ave traffic limit is not being observed nor enforced.
- State Rep Selene Colburn
 - Reported the legislature passed a resolution asking President Trump to resign or be removed.
 - Passed a bill that provides Vermont towns flexibility to deal with covid19 on town meeting day.

City Council Update:

- Zoraya Hightower
 - Expressed sympathy for the victims of the King Street fire. A follow-up report is expected from the Fire Dept.
 - Ballot item – A charter change addressing **Just Cause Eviction [JCE]** will be decided on town meeting day. JCE prohibits the eviction of renters under specified circumstances.
See the language here → <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CT/Sample-Ballots-Warnings-and-Notices>
 - Police Staffing – Discussions on staffing levels are ongoing with Mayor Weinberger and director of police transformation, Kyle Dodson.
 - School Resource Officers [SRO] – The discussion on the role of SRO has been expanded to include the role of discipline in schools and the role of non-police school discipline administrators.
- Jack Hanson
 - Ballot item – **Rank Choice Voting [RCV]** will be a ballot item on town meeting day. RCV is a real time technique for voters to make their 1st, 2nd, 3rd... choices clear when no candidate has garnered a majority after the first count. See the language here → <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CT/Sample-Ballots-Warnings-and-Notices>
 - Ballot item – A charter change addressing **Regulation of Thermal Energy [RTE]** will be decided on town meeting day. RTE will enable Burlington to regulate energy use and the thermal envelope of buildings, including incentives and fees on certain energy sources. City council policy development will follow charter change success. See the language here → <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CT/Sample-Ballots-Warnings-and-Notices>
- Jane Stromberg
 - COVID 19 – Jane recognized the trauma we are all going through as covid infections and fatalities increase to all-time highs.
 - Divestment of Fossil Fuel Companies – Work is in progress to divest The Burlington Employees Retirement System from fossil fuel companies. Cash generated may be invested in green-new-deal related companies. Precise timing and reinvestment targets are TBD.
 - Burlington to get some state sales tax. Burlington's Community Economic Development Office [CEDO], is enrolling in a state program where sales tax on building materials used to create housing be used by the City. The building in question is a 69 unit apartment house near S. Winooski and Buell St.
 - Ballot Item – A charter change addressing the composition of the BTV Airport Commission will be decided on town meeting day. The change will add representation from Winooski. See the language here → : <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CT/Sample-Ballots-Warnings-and-Notices>

School Budget & Infrastructure Planning: Aden Haji

- The plan is to move BHS operations to the old Macy's building at a cost of \$2.4M. BSDVT may [or may not] receive state reimbursement of \$720K.
- A presentation from the superintendent to the school commissioners was shared. Should education spending increase \$3.94M as currently estimated, the homestead education tax would increase by 12.1%. The presentation is available here → <https://www.bsdt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/20210105-Budget-Development-Update.pdf>

COVID update: UVM Spring semester plan - Wendy Koenig and Gail Champnois

- Wendy Koenig described UVM's spring plan for returning students. Following the success of fall 2020, spring 2021 will use a similar strategy including pre-arrival testing and weekly testing after arrival. Students arrive starting Jan 18th. Details can be found here → <https://www.uvm.edu/returntocampus/pre-arrival-covid-19-testing>
- Gail Champnois described how students are being informed and supported following arrival. There are many legs to the information and support plan for covid and mental health. Details are available from The Office of Student and Community Relations here → https://www.uvm.edu/oscr/contact_us

Green Mountain Transit update: Tom Derenthal

- Tom presented a short history of GMT and some vital statistics including recent revenue, services rendered [fixed route, commuter links, ADA program, and others], counties and cities services, and the number of rides provided [2019]. GMT has 2 electric busses in operation today with more planned. Contact tderenthal@ridegmt.com for more information.

Burlington Water Dept Update

- **Jenna Olson and Jessica Lavalette** provided an update to the Rate and affordability project proposal first shown in the fall of 2019. The plan has 3 objectives: rate affordability, revenue stability and sustainability and equity across customer groups. The presentation included a description of rate & policy changes along with the proposed rates. Next steps include outreach in 1Q21, internal review and updates 2Q21, authorization 2Q21 and implementation 3Q21. Details and schedule is available here → <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW/Water/AffordabilityProject>

The meeting ended at 9:00 PM

Minutes written by Tom Derenthal