

Burlington City Council



802/865-7136
TTY 802/865-7142

April 10, 2013

Dear Councilors,

As I have mentioned previously, it has come to my attention over the course of the last year, that our current deadlines to submit materials to both the City Attorney's office and Clerk's office is not working well for staff. In order to be an effective gatekeeper the work must flow through the gate, which does not consistently happen at this time. In addition, while Councilors have been meeting deadlines, often modifications, sponsors, and other edits are happening well after the deadline.

I met with City staff 2 weeks ago to discuss improvements to our process. The goal of the attached Resolution is to make suggestions for changes to our Council Rules that will help us work more efficiently while at the same time allowing us the flexibility that we need.

In addition to the suggested changes in the Resolution, a discussion is needed with the full Council to address our culture regarding allowing items to be amended onto the agenda. We will always need to have the ability to amend an item onto the agenda; however, giving greater scrutiny to those items might result in better efforts to meet our deadlines so that we don't have so many amendments on the night of our meeting. We should also discuss the expectations of our staff at the Clerk's office in regards to preparing our amendments. Right now, the volume of last minute amendments is very much disrupting the office workflow.

I have recommended that this Resolution be referred to the Charter Change Committee for further review and refinement. I would recommend that the Charter Change Committee consult with staff members responsible for preparing our agendas as part of their evaluation of the proposal. I would further request that the Charter Change Committee consider adopting some Council rules about amending items on to the agenda after getting feedback on the issue through our Council retreat.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joan Shannon".

Joan Shannon
City Council President