



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

MEMORANDUM

To: City Council
From: Mayor Miro Weinberger
Date: June 2, 2023
Re: Appointment for Police Chief

I respectfully submit for your consideration and confirmation Jon Murad as Burlington's Police Chief.

Chief Murad has served as Acting Chief for three years as of this month. From the day he stepped into this office, he has faced tests with little precedent in Burlington. His first summer in this role saw large, sustained protests outside the front door of One North Avenue. The department lost 40% of its officers over his first two years as Acting Chief. Last year, we experienced record-high rates of gun violence and too frequent disorder in our treasured downtown. Through all these challenges the Chief has continued the department's proud legacy of being one of the most transparent, progressive municipal police departments in the country, implementing a new body-worn camera footage release policy, working with the Police Commission to formalize an expanded process for the citizen review of all complaints, reporting all police use-of-force incidents to the commission and the public, and launching a new racial justice training program for officers.

Under his leadership, the City has made progress on each of our Administration's top public safety priorities: strengthening and rebuilding the Department, holding perpetrators of gun violence accountable and reversing these troubling trends, restoring a sense of safety and belonging in our downtown, and advancing 21st-century police reforms. These are the areas where Burlingtonians are demanding action, and for our efforts to succeed, our City needs and deserves a strong and reliable leader in our Police Department. As further detailed below, Chief Murad's record of accomplishment as an acting chief has been notable, and he will be even better positioned to deliver progress on these priorities upon confirmation by this Council.

I am grateful that the Chief has stepped up to provide this leadership during these historically challenging times that have caused so many officers to step away.

Chief Murad's accomplishments at the Burlington Police Department include:

- Worked with the Committee to Review Policing Practices and then the Police Commission to draft a cutting-edge use-of-force policy that ultimately served as the template for a statewide policy adopted by the legislature.
- Led the Department through a staffing crisis, including developing and implementing the Public Safety Continuity Plan to augment unarmed, non-sworn roles in the department including Community Service Officers and Community Service Liaisons.

- Oversaw the development of the Crisis, Advocacy, Intervention Programs team which coordinates social service approaches to public safety.
- Developed and is implementing the BPD Rebuilding Plan to restore the officer headcount to 87 over a 4-year period.
- Improved transparency for the Department through use-of-force reporting, increasing the number of directives available online, making data and current news within the department available to the public, in monthly Chief's reports to Police Commission, implementing a new policy to proactively release body-worn camera footage of use-of-force incidents and significantly expanding the BPD's "Transparency & Data" webpage.
- Under his leadership, the BPD has arrested suspects in over 80% of the shootings in the last two years and closed the 50-year cold case in the murder of Rita Curran.

Background

Chief Murad was born in Burlington and raised in Underhill, and earned an undergraduate degree from Harvard. Following graduation, he worked as an actor and writer in Los Angeles and as an editorial assistant at Newsweek Magazine. He was drawn to law enforcement following the 9/11 attacks to serve his community through public safety.

Chief Murad began his career in the NYPD in 2005 as a police officer in the Bronx, performing patrol before serving as a detective in the Office of Management Analysis and Planning. He later obtained a master's degree from the Harvard Kennedy School. He was promoted to sergeant and served in New York City's Washington Heights neighborhood. In 2014, he was promoted to Assistant Commissioner and oversaw efforts to build trust between the NYPD and the public, leading a 49-person department responsible for communications. Chief Murad then served as Chief of Staff to Bill Bratton at Teneo Risk for two years before returning to public safety to join the Burlington Police Department as Deputy Chief in 2018. Chief Murad has served as Acting Chief since June 2020, following the departure of then Acting Chief Jen Morrison.