

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
FINANCIAL MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 5, 2025**

Present: Michael Pelton-First Selectman, John Dillon, Michael Hernandez, Robert Hetrick, Jr., Tim Lavoy, Jim Tripp

Absent: Rick Sharr

Others Present: Members of the Public and Media

**1. FIRST SELECTMAN CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

First Selectman Michael Pelton called the Financial Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ACCEPT AGENDA**

Tim Lavoy made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

**4. APPROVE MINUTES: (Regular) February 19, 2025**

Tim Lavoy made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to approve the February 19, 2025 minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

**5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**7. MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT**

**8. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

- Request to amend the makeup of the Committee on Solidarity to allow up to two high school students to serve as non-voting members on the Committee on Solidarity. Said students to be selected by Portland High School faculty.

- Appointments:

- Brownfield Area Steering Committee (2)
  - America 250/Portland CT Committee (3+2 alternates)

- Expired:

- D) Donald Roy, Ethics Commission (expired 12/2024)
  - R) Joseph Spada, Housing Code Board of Appeals (expired 12/2024)

- Resignations:

- R) Rodney Spooner Veterans Affairs Committee (resigned 1/14/2025)

- R) Joseph Spada, Conservation Commission (resigned 1/15/2025)
- D) Nancy Brault, Conservation Commission - Alternate (resigned 1/30/2025)
- D) Nancy Brault, Inland Wetlands Commission (resigned 1/30/2025)

Tim Lavoy nominated Mike Nadolski to the Brownfield Area Steering Committee, seconded by Robert Hetrick, all were in favor, motion carried.

Tim Lavoy nominated Bob Ellsworth to the Brownfield Area Steering Committee, seconded by Jim Tripp, all were in favor, motion carried.

Tim Lavoy nominated Bob Wildermouth as an Alternate to the Inland Wetlands Commission, seconded by Robert Hetrick, all were in favor, motion carried.

Michael Pelton told of the Solidarity Committee wanting to include two High School students as non-voting members of their committee. Jim Tripp asked how they would be selected. The students would be identified by the faculty. John Dillon asked if the BOE needs to sign off on the nominees. After a brief discussion, the consensus was for the Solidarity Committee to bring a proposal with details to the BOS and then the BOS would vote on it at a later meeting.

**9. REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS: none**

**10. STATUS REPORTS**

Water: Jim Tripp reported that the drilling rig is no longer at the well site. The project is moving along nicely. They got a high quantity of water. The integrity of the well looks good. Next is the pump testing. They may need to have someone come back to put the cap on the well. It will then move to the permitting phase.

John Dillon reported on the BOE meeting. Bilingual students are now around 48, up from under 10 about 20 years ago. Tickets are now on sale for the play "Anything Goes," which will be performed on March 21st and 22nd. A discussion took place regarding new classes which will be available including Introduction to Data Science, an Advanced Fitness noncredit class, as well as a graphic arts and design class.

Michael Pelton shared the following:

- The legislature passed a bill (HB 7067) that allows towns to make a change locally regarding the car tax. Two parts of the bill were vetoed. Michael will advise as more information becomes available. This should have a big impact on the budget.
- Budget workshops will start the day after the hearing which is scheduled for March 11th.
- Two shoutouts: Carl Richards who has retired after 35+ years with the town (DPW Highway Division) and a promotion for Michael Lastrina to Supervisor of Public Works Operations.

- Nordic Spa: They hope to be breaking ground in early April. They are current with their permits and hope to open in early summer of 2026. Parking Lease for Spa: Waiting on Jacobson, then conversations with Parks & Rec and then possibly an executive session regarding it.
- Brainerd Place: They have showings every day and hope to be completely filled in the first building by September/October. Prices are thought to be very reasonable. They may have interest in the commercial space.
- Air Line Trail: Michael will meet with Butler on Friday to explore how to get to downtown Portland and then eventually to the Meriden line. Jim Tripp will attend as well. We need to get it over the bridge.
- STEAP Grant: We won't know until April regarding the continuation of the High Street project.
- Connectivity Grant: Seven companies have offered to do the grant. It's a remediation grant for connectivity in our downtown area. The presentations were looked at and narrowed down to three. The final three will be coming back for a presentation after which a decision will be made.
- The parking lease was sent out for signature and should be signed later in the week.
- River Park Trail behind Tilcon: The easement covenant has been done to protect the wildlife. We need the parking easement. Jacobson is to provide us with an updated map and then it will be sent to the State. We have a December deadline for completion. It was delayed due to the pandemic.
- Birdon: Mike will be meeting with them regarding expansion.
- Chris Cote will be hosting the world-class 3-day long drive event here in Portland, to be televised. With the three golf courses, Portland is the unofficial golf capital of CT; more discussion to come regarding making it official.

John Dillon asked about the status of the solar project. Michael reached out to DEEP and they are working on it. When the panels are in, it will be additional revenue for Portland.

## **11. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Nancy Goodwin, 5 White Birch Bend, said she was happy that they are agreeing to have two High School students involved in the Solidarity Committee.

## **12. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION**

Jim Tripp also congratulated Michael Lastrina on a well-deserved promotion. Also extended thanks to Public Works for their assistance in expediting the drilling of the well. The drilling company appreciated what the town contributed. Regarding giving the water department some relief, we need weekend coverage and with only two people, they work every other weekend. Jim is hoping that it will materialize into funding the other half of the FTE.

Robert Hetrick asked for the status of the pavilion repair work. Response was that they should have the material by April 21 and hope to have it done by the Middle of May,

weather pending. The photo provided by John Dillon of a way to keep it off the ground was given to Ryan O'Halpin. Also, the "Welcome to Portland" sign will be relocated once the weather gets better.

**13. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

- Review Town Charter
- Ethics Ordinance
- Discussion: First Amendment to Extension of Lease Agreement between Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park, LLC and the Town of Portland

**14. ADJOURN MEETING**

John Dillon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sharon Hoy*

Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk