

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 16, 2025**

Present: Michael Pelton-First Selectman, John Dillon, Robert Hetrick, Jr., Tim Lavoy, Rick Sharr

Absent: Michael Hernandez, Jim Tripp

Others Present: Pete Willse (Bldg. Official), Andy Bauer (Clean Energy Task Force), Rob Klee (Solar Transfer), Members of the Public and Media

1. FIRST SELECTMAN CALL MEETING TO ORDER

First Selectman Michael Pelton called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Buck-Foreman Community Room located at 265 Main Street, Portland, Connecticut.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ACCEPT AGENDA

John Dillon made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor, motion carried.

4. APPROVE MINUTES (Regular) June 4, 2025

Tim Lavoy made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to approve the June 4, 2025 minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE:

Michael Pelton shared the following:

- The winners of the 2025 Street Garden contest.
- The Lt. Governor will be in Portland to talk about the High Street water main project on Monday (July 21).
- The upcoming relocation of the BOS meetings to the Library hopefully will occur in October.
- Phase I of the High Street project replacing the pipeline is nearing completion. Phase II will take place next summer.
- Reminder of the chicken dinner fundraiser for the Portland Fair that will take place on Saturday, July 19. Portland Fair is scheduled for the first weekend in October.
- Launch of the buddy bench program.
- The Gildersleeve Family Event sponsored by the Historical Society.
- The first Town Meet and Greet at Brainerd Place.

BROWNSTONE QUORUM UPDATE (Tom Bransfield)

Tom explained the mission statement and the need to improve the entrance to the park. They need help with funding. If Town will do paving they will put in the island and signs. He requested verbiage be taken out of lease where the parking is located. The Town of Portland sign with town seal is rotting and falling apart and needs to be re-done. There is a need to make the park entrance look as good as it can as redevelopment plans start to develop. John Dillon commented that it would enhance the area for the upcoming development. A similar entrance could be developed for the new river kayak launch area.

SOLAR/FEDERAL BILL FALLOUT (Andy Bauer)

Andy Bauer and Rob Klee (Solar Transfer) gave updates on the Heat Smart outreach program for energy efficiency. Some funding is ending this year. If you go solar, run to vendor now. Contract must be paid in full by December. Tax credits will be phasing out. The window is August to September for the concession stand. The Town needs to go out for bid soon. Not iron-clad commitment on behalf of the town. Rob gave an update on the landfill which is still on track. He told of some opportunities for SolarRay in other towns where Portland would derive benefit NRES (nonresidential renewable energy solution program).

OLD TOWN GARAGE/MAINTENANCE STORAGE BUILDING (Pete Willse)

Pete shared some concerns about the safety of the building: missing hinges, paint peeling, one wall is not secured to brick, stairs are unsafe, treads are missing and broken. It is not safe for anyone. Michael Pelton added that for safety, we need to prevent people from going into the building.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. OLD BUSINESS

A) Monthly Report – Committee on Solidarity –

The committee's report included their recent activities, the introduction of their HS representatives, a report of folks in other towns reading their message in the *Rivereast*, the newly formed Social Justice Leadership Network, their Pride activities, a United Way Training Program, the Juneteenth celebration, and their meet and greet at the summer concert series.

B) Blue Earth Compost Program

Robert Hetrick explained that this service is costing two or three times what it would cost for other disposal. It would be better to have a program to do it in-house. Michael proposed a "citizen to compost" location somewhere in town. This will be put on the September BOS agenda.

C) Appointments/Reappointments to Boards and Commissions

John Dillon nominated Al Abbott to serve on the Veterans Affairs Commission, seconded by Robert Hetrick, all were in favor, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion to move Sharon Hoy from an Alternate to a full member of the America 250 Portland CT Committee, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried.

Michael Pelton nominated Emily Bickhardt to be a full member of the Solidarity Committee, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A) AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION FOR DESPP GRANT

Don Gouin (Portland EMD) explained the resolution and authorization to sign forms and paperwork for the EMD grant. Tim Lavoy read the motion and made a motion to accept it, seconded by John Dillon. Vote unanimous, motion passed.

AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION OF THE Portland Board of Selectmen

CERTIFICATION:

I, Michael V. Tierney, the Town Clerk of Portland, Connecticut, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by Portland Board of Selectmen at its duly called and held meeting on July 16, 2025, at which a quorum was present and acting throughout, and that the resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked and is at present in full force and effect:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Michael A. Pelton, as First Selectman of the Town of Portland, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Portland and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

The undersigned further certifies that Michael A. Pelton now holds the office of First Selectman and that he has held that office since January 8, 2025.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF: The undersigned has executed this certificate this 17th day of July, 2025.

B) DISCUSSION OF FUNDS FOR THE AMERICA 250/PORTLANDCT COMMITTEE

Ben Srb on behalf of the committee, said the town will get approximately \$9400 from fundraising. The committee is requesting \$5,000 from the Town to support their activities next year. Portland was the first town in dollars raised and the number of people who participated. Michael Pelton will have an update for them at the next BOS meeting.

C) REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS:

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to reimburse Corelogic [\$61.24]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to reimburse Honda Lease Trust [\$219.86]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

9. STATUS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Water & Sewer: Rick Sharr said the work at the Coe Avenue pump station is finished. They are waiting for the test results on the well. Storm water is going into our system and needs to be corrected.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

11. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

John Dillon told of the banners on Main Street Manchester featuring vets who paid the supreme sacrifice and suggested that Portland might want to do something similar.

Robert Hetrick expressed concern again regarding the condition of the wall surrounding the war memorial at the end of Bartlett Street. He also gave an update on the work done on one of the school's parking lot. The town did the work but they ran out of material and didn't touch the other school parking lots. The condition of the school parking lots needs to be addressed now. Hetrick also said that the company doing construction on High Street is doing a very messy job and how they are leaving the site at night. Hetrick also suggested that the future public hearings have a segmented vote instead of just "yes or no" for the whole thing. Split it out by subject so some items can be approved while others denied.

Michael Pelton reported on the following:

- The Strategic Capital Improvements Committee will have their recommendations soon regarding the schools. Much work will need to be done after their report is received. A discussion followed regarding the committee's work.

- A RFQ was put out for parking down by the park and nothing happened so he wants to release it again. A brief discussion ensued regarding the parking in that area and an executive session at an upcoming BOS meeting was suggested.
- Speeding on Main Street: Michael talked to two companies about this, then spoke of what Middletown is doing. He told of some of the considerations in managing this situation and the ultimate goal is behavior modification. This is something he wants to look at later.
- Air Line Trail: Discussion continues with Eversource and property owners regarding how the trail can be extended over Rt. 17.

12. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- **Ethics Ordinance**
- **Review Town Charter**

13. ADJOURN MEETING

At 9:58 p.m. a motion was made by Robert Hetrick to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hoy

Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk