

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 22, 2025**

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

Others Present: 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. APPROVE MINUTES:

John Dillon made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to approve the January 8, 2025 meeting minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

4. ACCEPT AGENDA

Jim Tripp made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Rick Sharr, all were in favor, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE:

Proclamation to Shaun Manning (posthumous) – Robert Hetrick read the proclamation, seconded by John Dillon.

Proclamation to Joyce Ghent - Jim Tripp gave some background and read the proclamation, seconded by Michael Hernandez.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ben Srb, 139 W. Cotton Hill Road, said he was pleased to hear that John Dillon put his name in as a member of the Strategic Capital Improvements Committee.

Kim Hanna, 3 Butler Road, thanked the town for the Proclamation for Shaun (her brother). She suggested moving the meetings to the Library because, in view of what happened to Shaun, it is better lit and it would be safer for everyone.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A) Monthly Report – Committee on Solidarity –

Liz Hibino thanked Ryan Curley for his support. She will no longer be chairing the Solidarity Committee and will be handing the chair over to Cindy Tyler. Jackie Davis will be nominated to the Committee. She told of the upcoming events including a panel “Highlighted Voices of Portland” on February 22nd, a podcast interview with Dave Kuzminski, a May book discussion, as well as the plans for Juneteenth. They are getting students involved and are partnering with the Senior Center and the Police Department.

B) Appointments/Reappointments to Boards and Commissions

Appointments:

- *Brownfield Area Steering Committee* (3);
- *America 250/PortlandCT Committee* (5+2 alternates);
- U) Jacquilyn Davis-Committee on Solidarity

Expired:

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

Resignations:

- D) T. Maureen O’Doherty, Inland Wetlands Commission (resigned 11/13/2024)
- R) Edward Sharr, Air Line Trail Committee (resigned 1/9/2025)
- R) Edward Sharr, Riverfront Access Committee (resigned 1/9/2025)
- Edward Sharr, Water & Sewer Commission (resigned 1/9/2025)
- R) Joseph Spada, Conservation Commission (resigned 1/15/2025)
- Rodney Spooner, Veterans Affairs Committee (resigned 1/14/2025)

Michael Pelton nominated Sam Newsom to the America 250 Committee, seconded by Michael Hernandez, all were in favor, motion carried.

John Dillon nominated Jacquilyn Davis to the Committee on Solidarity, seconded by Michael Hernandez, all were in favor, motion carried.

Jim Tripp nominated John Dillon to the Strategic Capital Improvements Committee, seconded by Michael Hernandez. Tim Lavoy challenged whether a person represented by a different political party than that of the one who resigned was eligible to fill this vacancy. A brief discussion ensued. It was decided to consult the town attorney and table this until the next BOS meeting.

Robert Hetrick nominated Joe Spada to the Water & Sewer Commission, seconded by Jim Tripp, all were in favor, motion carried.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A) AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION: CTDESPP DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY

John Dillon read the resolution CTDESPP Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and moved to accept it, seconded by Tim Lavoy. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION OF THE
Portland Board of Selectmen

CERTIFICATION:

I, Michael 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 **January 22, 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 23rd day of January, 2025.

Michael Tierney, Portland Town Clerk

B) REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS:

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Michael Hernandez, to reimburse Watts-Bunting, Yvette O [\$4,121.32]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Michael Hernandez to reimburse ACAR Leasing [\$124.00][\$272.17][\$1,047.48]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

9. STATUS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Jim Tripp reported on the Water & Sewer Commission. Coe Avenue is still on hold. Waiting for parts. Regarding the production report, we have a small balance which we will have to buy. It is better to be a bit over than under. Regarding the well drilling, they are down 200 feet as of noon today. They must thaw out pipes before they drill.

John Dillon reported on BOE: The principal from Valley View and some others came dressed in super hero costumes, this is what they do in assemblies. They have a pledge each month that has helped the morale of teachers. There were 45 letters in support of retaining positions at school. There was a discussion and approval of Spanish textbooks. There was also a discussion and approval of the superintendent's proposed budget.

Rick Sharr told of some major water leaks that had been repaired and some smaller ones that they are working on. Leak testing has been done on the entire town. Jim Tripp said we have leak detection equipment but the issue is the lack of personnel.

Rick Sharr reported on the River Access Committee. He told of the plant and animal study that had been done and that there is to be an archaeological study done at some time in the future. The project continues to move along. The Air Line Trail is in good shape and continues to get use even in this cold weather.

Michael Pelton reported that the River COG received grant money for the East Hampton part of the trail. He gave an update on the spa and Brainerd Place. Starbucks should open in the middle of February. A grand opening will be planned.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ben Srb wants to make it clear that the SCIC has a major decision to make. The new member needs to be very independent and represent the community as a whole. There is very little representation from outside the BOE. We need it to be independent; we need an independent person. We failed before and we want this referendum to go through. Whoever you pick, they need to be removed from BOE. It has to be a neutral person. We don't want the perception that it is made up of BOE. It is not the right fit to have Tim Lavoy on the committee.

11. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Michael Pelton said they approved \$15,000 for the relocation/placement of the Portland Welcome sign. The contract is now in place.

Robert Hetrick asked about what items are done with the capital budget. He expressed concern about the lead connections and how and when they will be replaced. That is more important than a water main. Get the lead connections out of the system. The lead connections are just elbows. They should be done sooner vs. later. Also the Main Street paving is to be scheduled and they won't do it if the lead is still there.

Robert also asked how the other members feel about using \$1,000 a year to buy tablets for the BOS in order to reduce the amount of paperwork they receive.

12. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- **Ethics Ordinance**
- **Review Town Charter (Do this after budget season).**

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Personnel Matters – Director of Public Works

At 8:15 p.m. a motion was made by John Dillon, seconded by Tim Lavoy to enter the Executive Session, the subject was Personnel Matters – Director of Public Works.

The Executive Session was exited at 8:58 p.m.
There was a brief recess.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSON: First Amendment to Extension of Lease Agreement between Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park, LLC

At 9:00 PM a motion was made by John Dillon, seconded by Tim Lavoy to enter the Executive Session.

At 9:56 PM, the Executive Session was exited.

15. ADJOURN MEETING

At 9:56 PM a motion was made by John Dillon 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