

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FINANCIAL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 8, 2025**

Present: John Dillon, Michael Hernandez, Robert Hetrick, Jr., Tim Lavoy, Michael Pelton-First Selectman, 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 Financial Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Public Library Mary Flood Room located at 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, Connecticut.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ACCEPT AGENDA

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES:

Correction to the August 6, 2025 meeting minutes:

- #6 Public Comment: **Debbie** Law, not Debra Law.
- #13 Appointments to Boards and Commissions: Christopher Donahue was appointed to the **Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee** not the Conservation Commission.

Tim Lavoy made a motion to correct this for the minutes of August 6, 2025, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried.

Tim Lavoy made a motion to approve the minutes of September 17, 2025, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE None.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Pelton explained why the meeting has been moved to the Library. Kim Hanna explained that the Library is a much safer place to hold the BOS meetings. When she finished her comment, Michael Pelton asked for a moment of silence.

Michael Pelton commented on the shirts that are being sold as a fundraiser by the America 250 Committee. He also commented on the Freedom of Information Act and the importance of transparency in government. He distributed a pamphlet on it.

Kelly Mullen, 54 Strongs Avenue, asked what the current status was for the Strongs Avenue/Brazo Drive land discussed at the last BOS meeting. Michael Pelton indicated that no decision has been made at this time. Since the BOS may change after the election, it most likely will not be decided until after that.

Kim Hanna, Butler Lane, spoke of the dangerous intersection on Butler Lane and High Street where buses are exiting [the school] with kids on them while at the same time young drivers are exiting. It is a liability issue for the town. The gate is open from 6:30 AM till when they [the school] decide to close it. It originally was to be only for 15 minutes. It's a dead-end road and the access is for emergencies. Traffic is pretty constant. It is a bad intersection for kids to be leaving from. It is a town issue because you are liable. Look at it and make a decision on it. The sign says no outlet.

John Dillon asked if this decision was made on their own or was there conversation. It says "school emergency access only," and the town map shows it as a cul-de-sac. Hopes there is conversation with others besides the HS principal. Michael confirmed that there was and it was not the outcome that was hoped for. He believes the intention was to be only as needed. Bob, Kate and the SRO made the decision. It has been left open longer so there are legitimate concerns. Robert Hetrick said the decision was internal by the school and had nothing to do with the BOS. John Dillon said it is a town road and it should have had input by the parties involved, including the town crew and the schools. Jim Tripp said if it is to be used on a regular basis then it needs to be made safer. They don't abide by their own recommendation of the time frame. Michael Pelton said there is a gray area. He will learn more details and will then have a further discussion. John Dillon added that this has been going on for awhile. The letter to Butler Lane residents is dated September 10, 2024.

7. MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT No report.

8. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Robert Hetrick nominated Sandy Castelli to the Senior Citizens Advisory Board, seconded by John Dillon. All were in favor, motion carried.

9. REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to reimburse Portland Boat Works Marina LLC [\$187.62]. All were in favor; motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to reimburse Lavigne, Troy T [\$140.88]. All were in favor; motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to reimburse CCAP Auto Lease LTD [\$330.28]. All were in favor; motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to reimburse ACAR Leasing LTD [\$410.95]. All were in favor; motion carried.

10. STATUS REPORTS

Water & Sewer: Jim Tripp extended thanks to the Water and Sewer Department for their work in correcting the backup at the school. He and Mike went to MDC and made their comment under Public Comment. They are holding that either we buy more water or we give up our safe yield. He went on to explain what that is. We need to have the full capacity until the new well is on line. If we let the diversion permit to go, and then have some hiccup at the well, and needed that safety net back, we wouldn't get it. The only other option is that we buy more water, going to 650. That will increase our annual cost by \$480,000 or a 27% increase. They're holding at a 200,000 gallon per year increase which would be about \$380,000 of additional water we would have to buy. We're not in agreement with the terms they are offering. We are asking for status quo and to continue for another 2 years with two additional option years. It gives them budget predictability. Another meeting is scheduled for Tuesday. They are trying to require us to buy more water if they can. This is part of their go forward status. There's a lot of interplay and we want to be very careful. The hardness of the water was then discussed. If they can require us to buy more water, then they can lower the rates for other customers. We want to handle it appropriately. The new pump has been tested at 1.9 million gallons of water per day.

Jim reported that the 5K was a great event and the participants had a lot of fun. Kudos to all who were involved in making this event happen.

Board of Education: John Dillon reported that the BOE meeting had been postponed due to the sewer backup at the school.

Rick Sharr reported on the river access. They had 25 people helping with the cleanup. There is still a little more needing cleanup but they got a lot of the area cleaned up. The groundbreaking will take place this Saturday 10/11 at 10:00 a.m. and the BOS members are invited. Construction will start this fall with the hope of river access by Spring. The river is shallow so one can wade and fish in that area.

Tim Lavoy told of the last Library Board meeting when several policies that had been revised got adopted. He asked if other BOS members had gone down to look at the chair that will be ordered for the BOS meetings at the Library.

Michael Pelton shared the following:

Now that the SCIC has submitted their report, we must go on from there. It is not yet known if the BOE has voted on that. People are asking when it will be on the BOS agenda. John Dillon still thinks we need some public meetings to address this. There may be a need for the SCIC committee to continue meeting. Michael will invite Dr. Britton to the next BOS meeting. Michael will add this to the next BOS agenda. John Dillon asked that the word get spread that this will be discussed at the next BOS meeting.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

Joe Engel, 2 Highland Avenue, said he has found another piece of town-owned land that seems to be able to work for them. He asked that it be on the agenda for the next BOS meeting.

12. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Rick Sharr said Jim McCabe asked about the storm water getting mixed in with sewer water on lower Main Street and what are we doing about it. Rick said he would bring it up at the next BOS meeting. Michael Pelton said they are aware of the issue. They will take a closer look at it. We now have all the people in place to take care of it. It will be added to the next BOS agenda.

Rick Sharr expressed concern that based on the SCIC Committee's recommendations for the schools, the town will still own and be responsible for maintaining five buildings. He doesn't think there will be much savings. People need to be made aware of this. Why are we keeping these schools when we have a declining enrollment. He is not anti-education but questions whether this is the right path to follow.

Michael Pelton agreed and asked are the numbers accurate and what is going to happen to BIS. It's got to be accurate and real and easy to explain and definitive. He explained what has just happened in Wethersfield.

13. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- **Ethics Ordinance**
- **Charter Revision**

14. ADJOURN MEETING

Tim Lavoy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hoy

Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk