BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FINANCIAL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 3, 2025

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

Absent: Michael Hernandez, Robert Hetrick, Jr.,

Others Present: Tom Robinson, Financial Director, 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 Buck-Foreman Community Room located at 265 Main Street, Portland, Connecticut.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ACCEPT AGENDA

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES: (Regular) August 20, 2025

John Dillon made a motion to approve the August 20, 2025 regular BOS minutes, seconded by Jim Tripp, all were in favor, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE: Update on DPW-Jason Morrocco, Director

Jason gave the following update of the Public Works Activities: The new larger pump is supposed to be here in about two weeks and once installed, the pump down will be scheduled. The existing well was down for a month and is now back on line. Jason hopes to have the existing pump rebuilt and stored at the treatment plant for a spare. Buck-Foreman Building needs masonry repairs. The repairs came in under budget so they will do more masonry repairs on the rest of the building. The State was asked if we could expand the sidewalk program from Walgreens as far as we can go with new sidewalks. They plan to re-do the parking entrance to the Brownstone park and the Middlesex Avenue baseball parking lot. Carpeting will be replaced in the Library offices. The cost for the kayak launch came back higher than expected; they are trying to keep it within the budget. Sewer repair on Pickering will be done next week.

Michael Pelton said Jason inherited a lot of work and has accomplished a great deal in just three weeks. The bid from Butler for the river access project was really good but $15-20,000 over.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jose Otero, 5 Gloria Heights, appeared for the second time regarding the blight condition caused by his neighbor. He presented photos of the condition and asked if there has been any progress and if the BOS can take emergency actions with enforcement. Instead of getting better, the situation is getting worse. He gave the BOS members copies of the blight ordinance and photos of the condition. Instead of one person, Mr. Otero suggested having three people to decide and enforce the blight policy.

7. MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT

Tom presented the report pointing out the revenues. The property taxes have been coming in nicely. They continue to move forward on property liens. Under expenditures, Tom pointed out accounts that need watching. There has been a need to purchase more tires than normal and they are quite expensive.

8. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

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

9. REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS:

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to reimburse Force Farid [$57.53], all were in favor; motion carried.

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded John Dillon, by to reimburse VW Credit Leasing LTD [$387.93], all were in favor; motion carried.

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to reimburse Vault Trust [$621.93], all were in favor; motion carried.

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by Rick Sharr, to reimburse Nissan Infiniti Lease Trust [$479.11], all were in favor; motion carried.

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by Michael Pelton, to reimburse Bshara, Craig E [$393.74], all were in favor; motion carried.

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by John Dillon to reimburse Global Tech Systems LLC [$152.12] all were in favor; motion carried.

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by John Dillon to reimburse 4GJG LLC [$224.69], all were in favor; motion carried.

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by Rick Sharr, to reimburse Ives, Amanda C [$93.29], all were in favor; motion carried.

10. STATUS REPORTS

Jim Tripp reported that the next meeting of Parks & Rec is scheduled for 9/8. Water & Sewer: Jim told of negotiations meeting with MDC. Our negotiating position was laid out and how we wanted to move forward. Further discussions will probably take place next week.

BOE Meeting: John Dillon reported as follows: Angela Hammond resigned and a new person will soon be identified. Dylan Bernard was nominated for Educator of the Year and Mallory Rowley for Paraeducator of the Year. Dr. Britton said the first day of school went exceptionally well with just one bus delay which was rectified quickly. Enrollment is down this year. There was a large cohort in the preschool special ed class due to the new age requirement for kindergarten. The boiler will be installed on time. The new phoneless policy seems to be going well.

River Cleanup: Rick Sharr said the river cleanup is scheduled for September 27. He spoke to Lou Pear about changing the start time. The road race is also scheduled for that day. We will be provided with a dumpster. A ground raising ceremony is scheduled for October 11.

Library Board: Tim Lavoy attended the meeting and told of the chair that is being considered for the BOS meetings. It is narrow, well cushioned, is stackable but has no arms. Tim told of the Library policy review and one that says that if there are too many children for a program, the Portland children will have priority. Tim expressed his opinion to leave this language in.

Library Director Jennifer Billingsley said she agrees with Tim. She told why they couldn't separate the residents from the nonresidents with the current software. She is talking to other libraries to see what they are doing. There are statutory requirements in order to be available for state funding.

Michael Pelton shared the following:

- The last Portland day of the season at the Exploration and Discovery Park will be next Saturday 9/6.
- John and Michael will each speak at the Voices of Portland event at the Library on Saturday September 6 sponsored by the Historical Society, Solidarity Committee and the Library.
- Michael shared the number of calls managed this past month for the police and fire departments.
- Michael shared a proposal he received for the use of town land at the end of Middlesex Avenue/Brazos Drive, possibly to raise vegetables and flowers. It is presently unused property. Discussions will continue and Michael will share them with BOS members.
- The State gave us the approval to proceed with the High Street project. A meeting will take place on the 23rd and an invitation was extended to the BOS members to attend.
- Michael received a number of calls regarding speeding, especially on Middle Haddam Road. He asked the BOS and public to advise of their areas of concern regarding traffic.

Discussion ensued regarding the conditions and what could be done, such as adding traffic signal devices and/or a stop sign. Michael gave a shout-out to the family that aided the mother and son that were involved in the accident on Rt. 17.

- The owners of the old asphalt plant may be looking for a way to offload it. They do not want to start it up again and there may be an opportunity for the town to own it.

250 Committee: Jim Tripp gave an update on the bridge lighting. It won't be ready for the 250th celebration next year. A number of different factors must be considered such as how it impacts the water and the birds and how to deal with snow and future maintenance. It depends on what effect you want.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

12. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Rick Sharr asked what the next steps are regarding the SCIC Committee and the schools. A lengthy discussion ensued. John Dillon explained the actions of the SCIC committee and told of some of the challenges the town will experience in arriving at a decision.

13. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- Ethics Ordinance

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION: CONTRACT RENEWAL/LEASE OF TOWN-OWNED LAND

At 9:08 p.m., Jim Tripp made a motion to enter the executive session, seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor, motion carried.

Executive Session ended at 9:52 p.m.

15. ADJOURN MEETING

Jim Tripp made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hoy
Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk