

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 17, 2025**

Present: John Dillon, Robert Hetrick, Jr., Tim Lavoy, Michael Pelton-First Selectman, Jim Tripp (via zoom)

Absent: Michael Hernandez, Rick Sharr

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. ACCEPT AGENDA

Under New Business, Item C, "Contract Agreement with Martin Laviero Contractors, Inc." was added. John Dillon made a motion to accept the amended agenda, seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor, motion carried.

4. APPROVE MINUTES (Special August 26, 2025), (Regular) September 3, 2025

Tim Lavoy made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to approve the Special August 26, 2025 meeting minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

Tim Lavoy made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to approve the Regular September 3, 2025 meeting minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE:

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kelly Mullen, 54 Strongs Avenue, spoke regarding a parcel of land abutting their farm on Strongs Avenue that is being considered for lease. She told of the history of that parcel and the mutual agreement that has been in effect for years. She referred to a letter her husband had written and that they would like to be considered to lease it since they have maintained it for years and that they have access to the land for their cattle.

Danny Anderson, 18 Joelle Drive, spoke regarding the Strongs Avenue property. He has cleared trees for his nephew. He asked what the previous designation was and when did it become available for lease.

Joe and Michelle Engel, 2 Highland Avenue, saw the Brazos Drive parcel and did not know it was under any stewardship. They approached Michael Pelton with their idea for a flower farm. They want to share it and expand their business and incorporate community projects and events there. A farm that does educational projects would collaborate with them. Their vision is something that could bring business to the center of town, with the spa and restaurants in that area. The community can share and be a part of it. They want to bring this awareness and work with other farms in the area.

Joseph Mullen, 54 Strongs Avenue and Blague Farm LLC of Strongs Avenue. The property lends itself to his farm. He explained his haying process. He spoke of other possible land options in town. The land helps their small business; the other point is there are other town options. They hope to continue to utilize the land there.

Michael Pelton said he spoke with Joe Engel a couple of weeks ago and thought it was a great idea. Since then, he got some background from Susan [Bransfield]. He hopes that we can work together and figure out a solution so that it is beneficial to others. Any idea to get people working together is good. Talk among yourselves and come up with some ideas. There's got to be a way to make this work.

John Dillon said when he was growing up, he remembers the number of farms in town. A few years back, Portland was recognized as a farm community. It is refreshing to see two families that want to keep farming in our town and to continue it. We need to find a resolution and the more farming in Portland the better.

Deb Law, 18 Bell Court, told of some of her neighbors' trees that were on her property, and the damage to her roof and what it cost her. No one assisted her. The laws need to change. She also spoke regarding the damaged curbing in front of the police station and the need to get it fixed. She also believes the school times need to be changed to allow students to get the required sleep. She said other nations are laughing at us because we aren't bilingual. We need drastic changes. We must act on the children's behalf.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A) Monthly Report – Committee on Solidarity

Hope Jones reported on recent events, including the Voices of Portland event, as well as some upcoming happenings. She was hoping to find a home for some display boards and Michael Pelton said they could reside at the Town Hall.

B) Blue Earth Compost Program

Michael said he hopes to report on this in the October meeting. Robert Hetrick said he is not opposed to the program but rather to the cost.

C) Appointments/Re-appointments to Boards and Commissions

Robert Hetrick nominated Mitch Gilbert to be a full member of the Inland Wetlands commission, seconded by Tim Lavoy. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick nominated Karen Renner as an alternate to the America 250 Commission, seconded by Tim Lavoy. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick nominated Michelle Donahue as a full member of the Senior Citizen Advisory Board, seconded by Tim Lavoy. Vote unanimous, motion carried. *[duplicate appointment, Michelle was appointed on 8/6/2025]*

8. NEW BUSINESS

A) RESOLUTION: CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH HUBERT E. BUTLER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

Michael Pelton said work should start by November 1. The material will be left behind. The groundbreaking ceremony will be on October 11 and the BOS are invited to it.

Tim Lavoy read the resolution and made a motion to accept it, seconded by Jim Tripp. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

RESOLUTION BOARD OF SELECTMEN TOWN OF PORTLAND, CONNECTICUT

September 17, 2025

CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH HUBERT E. BUTLER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, LLC

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby authorizes First Selectman Michael Pelton to execute and deliver in the name of and on behalf of the Town of Portland, a contract with Herbert E. Butler Construction Company, LLC, 984 Portland-Cobalt Road, Portland, CT 06480 for the purpose of Bid 2026-01 Kayak Launch Site, Airline Avenue. Total contract amount is the base bid of \$258,875 minus \$13,800 lump sum deduction to leave excess materials onsite for a total of \$245,075, including unit prices for additional work, if any, and only ordered by the engineer.

B) REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS:

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to reimburse Snyder Civil Engineering LLC [\$67.23]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to reimburse McDougall, Suzanne/McDougall, Peter [\$10.84] [\$9.74]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

C) CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH MARTIN LAVIERO CONTRACTORS, INC.

John Dillon read the resolution and made a motion to accept it, seconded by Tim Lavoy. Vote unanimous, motion carried. Michael Pelton explained that the money will come from a grant. John Dillon said the change orders won't exceed the grant.

RESOLUTION
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF PORTLAND, CONNECTICUT

September 17, 2025

CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH MARTIN LAVIERO CONTRACTORS, INC.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby authorizes First Selectman Michael A. Pelton to execute and deliver in the name of and on behalf of the Town of Portland, a contract with Martin Laviero Contractors, Inc., 611 North Main Street, Bristol, CT 06010 for Bid #2026-02 – Portland Sidewalk Improvement Connectivity Grant #4. The total base bid contract of \$243,147 plus alternate #1 of \$139,000, prior to any change orders, approximately \$382,147. Additional change orders are expected to complete additional work approved by the State of Connecticut DOT, Town and Engineer. The \$243,147 is to be funded by Connectivity Grant Funding. The Add Alternate is to be funded by LOCIP (\$50,327) and the remainder to be funded by capital nonrecurring funds (\$88,673).

9. STATUS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

John Dillon reported on the BOE meeting: Karen Renner replaced Angela Hammond. Gildersleeve just got the Blue Ribbon designation. Portland is the only town that has three schools with this designation. The Portland H.S. band played at the Big E and at the UCONN game at Rentschler Field on Saturday. The Superintendent reported that it appears that there will be additional state reimbursement on school projects which may raise our reimbursement rate to 75%. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to T.A.C.O.

Tim Lavoy reported on the Economic Development Commission meeting on September 9th. The Oakwood project is moving forward. There are plans for two buildings on Rt. 66 across the street from the restaurant. It will be commercial with a residential component. Brainerd Place is progressing with plans for Jersey Mikes and Chipotle's coming in. There have been some issues with Styrofoam particles on the properties of Perry Avenue neighbors.

Robert Hetrick had nothing to report on Long-Range Capital Commission and P&ZC.

John Dillon reported on the Brownfield site walk last Friday. It was an amazing opportunity with good conversation and key people there. He told of the tour routing and said a lot of good ideas surfaced. Michael Pelton said Portland is getting on the map. Robert Hetrick asked if there is any more consideration about selling the Brownstone property. Pelton said not yet; they want to try to develop it first. A brief discussion ensued regarding contamination, cleanup and opportunities for development. We have become an

outdoor destination with the Air Line Trail, three golf courses, the Exploration and Discovery park and the spa.

Water & Sewer: Jim Tripp said we outlined our position to MDC and learned their position. They will try to push back. There will be more back and forth. Jim missed the Parks & Rec meeting.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the depth of the pipe for the water main on High Street. Concerns were expressed. Jim Tripp said the pipe was 42”.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kelly Mullen, 54 Strong Avenue, told of the benefit having the land available for the public so they can use it for activities like playing ball or playing with their dog there. People have stopped by to ask questions and take photos.

11. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Michael Pelton commented as follows:

- This will be the last meeting at Buck Foreman. The October 8th meeting will take place at the Public Library.
- Jobs Pond: EPA released a white paper and Michael will have this put on the web site.
- The Wethersfield Schools are grappling with the same issue that we are. Michael will share forthcoming information with the BOS members.

John Dillon reminded the public of the upcoming Food Drive in memory of Shaun Manning. Jim Tripp said demand has been higher. Robert Hetrick asked that the public be advised of the items that are needed.

Robert Hetrick told of the Fair taking place on October 3, 4 and 5th and said they are always looking for volunteers.

Tim Lavoy told of the status of the chairs for the BOS meetings at the Library. He asked the members to go by and give their opinion of the recommended chair.

Michael told of Sue Hale and Fran Dwyer being the recipients of this year's Ralph Paley Award.

12. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- Ethics Ordinance
- Review Town Charter

13. ADJOURN MEETING

At 8:18 p.m., Tim Lavoy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Robert Hetrick, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hoy

Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk