

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 20, 2025**

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

Absent: Michael Hernandez

Others Present: Jason Morrocco, Public Works Director; Members of the Public and Media

1. FIRST SELECTMAN CALL MEETING TO ORDER

First Selectman Michael Pelton called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Buck-Foreman Community Room located at 265 Main Street, Portland, Connecticut.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ACCEPT AGENDA

Add under New Business C) Request for Bid Waiver of Bid Requirements Truck Parts and Sales of CT. Tim Lavoy made a motion to accept the amended agenda, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor, motion carried.

4. APPROVE MINUTES (Regular) August 6, 2025

Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by Tim Lavoy, to approve the August 6, 2025 meeting minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE: Director of Public Works, Jason Morrocco

Michael Pelton introduced the new Director of Public Works, Jason Morrocco.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. OLD BUSINESS

A) Monthly Report – Committee on Solidarity – None

B) Appointments/Re-appointments to Boards and Commissions

Jim Tripp nominated Susan Bransfield as a full member of the America 250 Commission, seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A) PROCLAMATION: LIBRARY CARD SIGN-UP MONTH (SEPTEMBER)

Jim Tripp read the proclamation into the minutes.

Proclamation

LIBRARY CARD SIGN-UP MONTH

WHEREAS, libraries are foundational to education, imagination, and opportunity, offering everything from early literacy programs to digital tools that support lifelong learning and personal growth for all segments of their communities; and

WHEREAS, libraries welcome all people, serving as inclusive and accessible community hubs that connect individuals across cultures, generations, and experiences; and

WHEREAS, library programs, displays, and materials serve as resources for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas; and

WHEREAS, libraries curate collections and design programs that reflect the diversity of the populations they serve, ensuring equitable access to information, technology, and culture for all; and

WHEREAS, libraries help individuals navigate life's challenges by providing trusted information, and digital access; and

WHEREAS, in times of both crisis and calm, libraries and their staff remain steadfast in supporting and strengthening their communities; and

WHEREAS, library resources help households save money, reduce waste, and make sustainable choices, all through the simple power of a shared public good; and

WHEREAS, a library card opens doors to endless possibilities, from books and technology to lifelong learning and imagination; and

WHEREAS, the Portland Public Library aspires to be the heart of the community; a space that is accessible, adaptable, and responsive to the personal and professional needs of its diverse users.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman of the Town of Portland Connecticut do hereby proclaim the month of **September 2025** as "**Library Card Sign-up Month**" and encourage all residents to sign up for a Portland library card and explore the endless possibilities it offers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereby set my hand, and cause the seal of Portland to be affixed this 20 day of August in the year two thousand and twenty-five.

By,

Portland Board of Selectmen:

John H. Dillon

Michael A. Pelton First Selectman Town of Portland, Connecticut	Michael S. Hernandez Robert W. Hetrick, Jr. Edward J. Sharr Jr. Timothy E. Lavoy James K. Tripp
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B) REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS:

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Webster, Robert C Jr [\$54.54]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Winthrop Financial Resources LLC [\$48.60]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Sanborn, William S Sr [\$146.72]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Ricci, Constance A [\$460.93]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Levesque, Brendon P [\$23.14]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse DRVN Enterprises Inc. [\$83.31]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

C) BID WAIVER – TRUCK PARTS AND SALES OF CT

Michael Pelton explained the need for this resolution and said the funds are available. John Dillon read the resolution and made a motion to accept it, seconded by Tim Lavoy. Vote unanimous, motion carried. Jason Morrocco said this will be the 5th truck with the same body.

RESOLUTION BOARD OF SELECTMEN Town of Portland, Connecticut August 20, 2025

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF BID REQUIREMENTS TRUCK PARTS AND SALES OF CT

WHEREAS, the Town of Portland Highway Department is in need to purchase a replacement dump body on a truck that still has considerable useful life; and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Department has received a quote from the original truck builder needed to match the existing body components that will remain in order have the truck operate in a similar safe manner as our other Town trucks; and

WHEREAS, a quote for furnishing and installing the new replacement dump body and necessary components and an additional salt dispensing computer came in at \$84,935 from Truck Parts and Sales of CT; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in the best interest of the Town, pursuant to Section 1208 §7 of the Portland Charter, the Board of Selectmen hereby waives the bidding requirements of Section 1208 of the Portland Charter as it pertains to utilizing Truck Parts and Sales of CT as the vendor to furnish and install the new replacement dump body and necessary components and an additional salt dispensing computer; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen authorizes the First Selectman, Michael Pelton to act on behalf of the Town of Portland to enter into any and agreements related to these repairs/improvements.

9. STATUS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks & Rec Meeting: Jim Tripp told of a discussion regarding Little League. Parks & Rec was asked to consider modifying the fields at the Portland Rec Complex by removing the pitching mounds, use portable mounds and removing the infield grass so they would be able to play not only little league baseball but the girls would be able to play softball. There was concern as to how this would impact future tournaments and the costs involved. Parks & Rec will look into what the costs would be. There are some other places for the girls to play but this complex is considered to be the premier site. Nothing was resolved as of now.

Water & Sewer: Coe Avenue pump station, they did work on it a while ago, but it was getting noisy. The issue was a defective check valve. They are working on getting it replaced. They need to finish up the fencing and the landscape. They reported a water main break on High Street between Carlson and Williams. We were being held up with the 5-day pump-down test because we needed a permit. There is no permit required so they are working on scheduling the 5-day pump down. They are looking to get a larger pump to get more gallons per day. The Town well is not back on line yet but it is expected to be back within a week. We should keep the rebuilt old pump so we have a spare if needed.

Rick Sharr asked if the dry weather would affect the testing. That was not discussed but Jim said they must have the appropriate conditions and they are well aware of the dry conditions. The hard water has to be treated but nothing else.

Michael extended congratulations to all who worked on the concert series. It was great to have so many people attending this year.

John Dillon reported that at the BOE meeting there was unanimous approval of the Dean of Students/Athletic Director, Jeffery Marino. There was a long list of candidates. Positive comments were expressed for the new director. Also at the meeting, they unanimously approved a Portland HS cellphone policy. Students are to power them down when school starts and power them back up when they leave school.

Rick Sharr said the River Access Committee met last night. Lou Pear would like to have an electronic copy of the bid papers. They think they should have a professional environmentalist to make sure the silt fencing is proper and to stay away from the restricted area. They must find out from Geoff Jacobson where the mussel location is and to do it sooner rather than later. They have a dumpster coming for the September 27th Saturday CT River Conservancy cleanup. They hope to get the dumpster as close to the debris as they can. They will be having a groundbreaking ceremony probably on October 11. The next meeting will be on October 7.

Michael reported on the following:

- Spa: They are moving rock and blasting daily. Michael is very happy with progress. He got very few complaints. Neighbors were advised as to what was happening. The original plan was to open 18 months after the start of work. They talked about parking. They can't lock the parking lot up. Other options for parking will be explored. Volunteers are to identify themselves to Michael.
- Regarding the cracked parking lot. Funds were not available but BOE is taking care of the material and public works will be putting it down.
- Michael gave a shout out to Liam Rowe, his intern, who was at last night's meeting. He is a fine young man and they hope to do it again next year.
- River Access Project: Opened bids a couple of days ago. Working on paperwork right now. They had around 18 bidders. They took the low bid. Rick Sharr suggested putting blocks in the sand to help with mud.
- Air Line Trail and Eversource: It stops at Eversource line. They finally got an engineer from Eversource and they will work with us. We will be talking with DQ. They may need engineering re power lines and challenging terrain. Some power lines will have to be moved and a boardwalk put over the water.
- Ryan O'Halpin had the double poles removed on Main Street.
- A parking area was created so you can park and go right onto the Air Line trail.
- A shout out to Matt Gotta who has been running the sewer plant down there by himself (with Mike's help if needed) while Kevin was on vacation. He did a great job.
- Chip sealing is done; may have some more sweeping to do. No complaints about it were received. It is much cheaper than paving.
- Congratulations to Bob Petzold on his Clinton project.
- BOS meetings will be held in the Library starting in October. Michael explained how it will be set up. More people will be accommodated with better parking.
- Old Town Garage behind police HQ. Brief discussion re options. Quotes were received for repainting. This will give us time. \$200,000 to modify and reinforce it and replace bad wood. Tear it down and build storage for \$400,000. Michael will bring back more information. Also, they will be looking at flooding in that area.
- America 250 Commission: Michael met with Mayor of Middletown. There will be ongoing talks about lighting up the bridge. They are forming exploratory committee on it. Michael asked for volunteers and will keep everyone posted.
- The park entrance is a "go," and the parking at Agogliati Field. Details will follow.
- Parks & Rec Road Race is September 27th.

- Next Tuesday, August 26, combined meeting at HS on SCIC with BOS and BOE. Jim Tripp will be out of town.

Tim Lavoy said the EDC cancelled their August meeting. The next meeting will be September 9. The Library Board meeting will take place on Thursday, August 21.

Robert Hetrick said the Capital Committee will not meet until the Fall. Michael wants it done sooner for the next time. Planning and Zoning is quiet with no big applications as of now.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Don Gouin (on Zoom) offered a large pile of flat granite that could be used at the boat launch landing. You are welcome to the pile of stone but you will have to pick it up.

11. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Question: The lease agreement was not on the agenda. Was it resolved? Answer: It is premature at this point. Michael will check with the attorney. It will be addressed at the next BOS meeting in an executive session.

Robert Hetrick asked what is the status of the Main Street sidewalk extension. The bids were received, the contractor has been selected, the designs are done. Some add-ons are included. No bids were received on the solar project. Rick Sharr offered to meet with Michael tomorrow to discuss his contact and project.

Robert Hetrick asked if we have a delivery date for the new firetruck yet. Michael will check on it. Robert again said that we talked about keeping the old one for a spare.

Regarding High Street, Michael explained what Phase I entailed, where the town is right now and what is ahead. A discussion ensued regarding the High Street project and the extension of water and sewer lines and what the history is. Robert expressed concern about paving before the decision is made whether to extend the water and sewer lines. He suggested having Morrocco, Lastrina and O'Halpin involved in discussions to learn of their knowledge and advice. Michael Pelton said he will put this on the next BOS agenda.

Jim Tripp thanked all who were involved in the concert series, including the CERT team and EMS.

12. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- **Ethics Ordinance**
- **Review Town Charter:** Michael said he reviewed it and looked at our previous charter provisions to try to understand why it is as it is now. It needs updating regarding technology, zoom, and telecommunications. If any BOS member needs a copy, stop by his office. It will be a future agenda item.

13. ADJOURN MEETING

At 8:34 p.m., Robert Hetrick made a motion 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