

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 19, 2025**

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

Absent: Robert Hetrick, Jr.

Others Present: Andy Bauer (Chair-Clean Energy Task Force), 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 to approve the minutes of February 5, 2025, seconded by Jim Tripp, all were in favor, motion carried.

4. ACCEPT AGENDA

Tim Lavoy made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by John Dillon. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE: Proclamation Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Andy Bauer, 256 Old Marlborough Turnpike, reported on the Get Smart Campaign, an opportunity to receive funding which the task force would use to promote things that will reduce your energy bill and harmful emissions. The resident makes negotiations with the vendor. The BOS needs to get involved. There is no financial arrangement between the town and the Get Smart Campaign. Andy will report back after he learns more about the details. The River COG will act as a fiduciary. Michael Pelton expressed appreciation for all that Andy does.

John Dillon read the proclamation Problem Gambling Awareness Month, seconded by Tim Lavoy. Michael Hernandez said with every bad there is also good and spoke of how responsible gambling results in income for the state.

Proclamation

PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, the National Council on Problem Gambling has designated March 2025 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, problem gambling is a public health issue affecting millions of Americans of all ages, races and ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, problem gambling has a significant societal and economic cost for individuals, families, businesses and communities; and

WHEREAS, problem gambling is treatable, and treatment is effective in minimizing this harm to both individuals and society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, numerous individuals, professionals and organizations have dedicated their efforts to the education of the public about problem gambling and the availability and effectiveness of treatment; and

WHEREAS, the National Council on Problem Gambling and the Town of Portland invite all residents of Portland to participate in Problem Gambling Awareness Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman of the Town of Portland Connecticut, do hereby proclaim the month of **March 2025** as “**Problem Gambling Awareness Month**” and encourage its residents to support the National Council on Problem Gambling in their efforts to mitigate gambling-related harm nationwide.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereby set my hand, and cause the seal of Portland to be affixed this 19th day of February in the year two thousand and twenty-five.

By,

Michael A. Pelton
First Selectman
Town of Portland, Connecticut



Portland Board of Selectmen:

John H. Dillon
Michael S. Hernandez
Robert W. Hetrick, Jr.
Edward J. Sharr Jr.
Timothy E. Lavoy
James K. Tripp

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. OLD BUSINESS

A) Resolution Lease Agreement: Reschedule Special Town Meeting

Michael Pelton said there will be a Special Town Meeting on February 26th at 6:00 PM. It had to be rescheduled because the originally scheduled meeting didn't get published in time.

B) Monthly Report – Committee on Solidarity -

Glenn Eason gave an update on what the Committee is working on; the Voices of Portland Black History Event on February 22nd; and he encouraged everyone to check out Dave Kuzminski's Voice of Portland latest podcast.

C) Appointments/Reappointments to Boards and Commissions

Tim Lavoy nominated Mary Nunn Maki to the America 250 Committee, seconded by Jim Tripp, all were in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A) REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS:

Michael Hernandez made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Morin Diesel LLC [\$231.36]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Michael Hernandez made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Nissan Infiniti LT LLC [\$501.64][\$289.55]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Michael Hernandez made a motion, seconded by Jim Tripp, to reimburse Byrne, James J and Bryne, Lynda [\$99.82][\$97.32][\$102.90. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

9. STATUS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

John Dillon reported on the last two Strategic Capital Improvements Committee meetings. The next meeting is Feb 20th at 5:00 p.m. John encouraged the BOS to attend or listen to the meeting on zoom. Friar will come back with a revised presentation going line-by-line to determine where decisions can be made to get to the end goal. One suggestion was to take two schools and renovate one to new and do a strategic repair to the other. They are looking at every creative way to keep the costs down. When it is all sorted out, Dr. Britton will make a presentation to the BOS to explain the details.

Jim Tripp reported on Water & Sewer: they extracted the pipes from the well and reassembled them, no major hiccup. When they pushed the pipe down in, they were rewarded with a nice plume of water. They are now working on the backfill process and the plan to give them the best seal. Discussions are ongoing regarding the conditions they are encountering. After about a week, they will start pumping some water. They don't know of dates yet since they need suitable conditions.

The town responded to three water leaks. They did an immediate repair for one on Main Street but then had to go back to fully repair it to the permanent state. There were two simultaneous events on Strongs Avenue. Regarding the sewer, they are still waiting for the back order of material.

Rick Sharr reported on the river access: we got the approval from DEEP on the NDDB (natural database data and diversity) study. This took about six years and is a real positive

step forward. We are now in a position to apply for the permit from DEEP. Michael has reached out to Tilcon for an update. It may be going out to bid in the Spring. This will be the first public access to the river that we have ever had.

Michael Pelton said Public Works can probably do more work with the road. We still need to get it marked off by the town engineer. John Dillon said he sees a lot of projects for the Eagle Scouts.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

11. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Michael Pelton reported the following:

- The STEAP grant application was approved on the 13th. It was submitted two days ago to the State. The town by vote will be contributing \$200,000. We hope they will start reviewing it in the next 4-5 weeks. We have a good chance of getting it.
- We received seven RFP's for the grant we received for \$200,000 from the state for connectivity of the Main Street area. We will look at them over the next week or so and will keep everyone updated on it. Michael thinks it is perfect because of things going on in town and what we can do to improve the downtown area.
- It has been a challenge to connect the Air Line Trail to Main Street. Michael talked to Butler Construction and the other abutting property owners. He will meet with Butler again next week and is optimistic about this progress.
- Regarding the two recent storms, Public Works did a fantastic job with the treatment before the storm hit and the cleanup. A special shout-out to Michael Lastrina for his actions to save the town money with the early treatment and cleanup.
- The First Selectman's budget should be available by Feb 28th. Finance Director Tom Robinson has been working very hard Tom Robinson on it with him. He gave the dates for the workshops (in March) and the date of May 12th for the budget referendum.

Michael Hernandez reminded everyone that February is black history month.

12. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

- **Ethics Ordinance**
- **Review Town Charter**

13. ADJOURN MEETING

At 7:54 p.m. a motion was made by Tim Lavoy to adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Dillon, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Hoy
Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk