

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FINANCIAL MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 6, 2024**

Present: Ryan Curley-First Selectman, John Dillon, Robert Hetrick, Jr., Shaun Manning, Michael Pelton, Jim Tripp

Absent: Michael Hernandez

Others Present: Ray Sajdak, Fire Marshal, Members of the Public and Media

1. FIRST SELECTMAN CALL MEETING TO ORDER

First Selectman Ryan Curley called the Financial 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

Shaun Manning made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Michael Pelton, all were in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

4. APPROVE MINUTES: (Regular) October 23, 2024

John Dillon made a motion, seconded by Shaun Manning, to approve the October 23, 2024 minutes, all were in favor, motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

Ryan gave results of the election. The question about the school failed: 60% no, 40% yes. The dollar amount was too much and too much change for the residents all at once. The question regarding the water passed. Ryan spoke with Dr. Britton and it will be helpful to have a joint meeting of the BOS and BOE to digest where we are and the next steps. A BOS discussion ensued. Comments included a need for better communication and education before voting; a joint session with BOE and BOS would be great; people didn't know there would be other costs associated with the project; there wasn't a concrete plan for the closed schools; \$33 million was a big hit for taxpayers. We need to be proactive and do something fast; there must be a clear-cut path of where we are going. The numbers were scary to people. Other town projects, i.e., sewer plant, will need millions of dollars before the mega school would be paid off. Don't assume people are watching a meeting. Issue a 1-page list of outcomes afterward and communicate it. Time is of the essence for this committee and the decision making. We must do what is good for everyone in town. We must do a better job communicating with the public and come up with a plan that the whole town will get behind. Decide on capital improvements and develop a schedule for them.

There will be a special joint BOS/BOE meeting on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Portland High School Media Center.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ben Srb, West Cotton Hill Road, said the voters have spoken; \$33 Million was too much. He is willing to serve on a committee. The plan wasn't finished; he believes we can close a school and get immediate savings. Last year we ran out of paper in the schools. Some people said they would leave because of higher taxes. Whatever is decided, we need to do it fast. Maybe the right info wasn't out there. Let's look at the list of what needs to be done in the next 5 or 10 years and bond it. We must work together and do what is right for the town.

Andy Bauer (Chairman of the Clean Energy Task Force), spoke of the upcoming solar campaign and the available incentives including a full-house battery. There will be more details available at a meeting in the Mary Flood Room at the Library on November 21st at 7:00 p.m. There will be a dedicated link for those who can't make the meeting on the 21st. It will be available to people in other towns as well giving us a better chance to activate the government discount.

7. MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT: No report.

8. PROPOSED EMERGENCY ORDINANCE BURN BAN

Fire Marshal Ray Sajdak told of an Emergency Ordinance which would go into effect banning open burning for 31 days because of dry weather conditions which increases the high fire danger. After a brief discussion, John Dillon made a motion to adopt the Emergency Ordinance banning open burning during extreme weather for 31 days, seconded by Jim Tripp. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Emergency Ordinance

TOWN OF PORTLAND, CONNECTICUT
Chapter 8
FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

Article III. Ban on Open Burning During Extreme Weather

Due to extremely high fire danger in our area, ALL open burning is strictly prohibited within the Town of Portland. This includes ALL leaf burning, burning of brush, use of fire pits and chimineas, and cooking outside of a listed appliance, without exception. Please exercise extreme caution, especially when disposing of smoking materials outdoors.

The Board of Selectmen hereby adopt this Emergency Ordinance per Section 409 of the Portland Town Charter and all applicable provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes, including the Municipal Powers Act (C.G.S. § 7-148) and Section 409 of the Portland Town Charter, no such outdoor burning shall occur. Violators shall be subject to fines and other penalties allowed by law. Open Burning within the Town of Portland shall remain prohibited, and this Ban shall remain in effect until the termination of the thirty-first (31st) day following final passage of this ordinance OR until the Fire Marshal determines that fire danger risk is reduced. When that occurs, a notification will be given indicating that the Emergency Burn Ban entered on this date has been lifted.

Open Burning Permits will not be issued until the fire danger risk is reduced to Medium or Low-risk conditions. Please note that today’s forest fire danger report remains at EXTREME: <https://portal.ct.gov/deep/forestry/forest-fire/forest-fire-danger-report>.

Extreme caution should also be exercised while operating any equipment which may cause sparks outdoors. Additionally, residents must be cautious when operating lawn equipment, as leaf buildup can create a significant fire risk. Numerous fires in lawn equipment including incidents in the Town of Portland have occurred because of this danger.

We appreciate your cooperation in preventing wildland and brush fires during this time of extreme conditions. Any questions should be directed to the Town of Portland Fire Marshal’s Office at (860) 262-7223.

9. ANIMAL CONTROL DIVISION PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE

Ryan presented two proposals and explained that the part in blue cannot be changed but the BOS can change the part in white. He called attention to the quarantine schedule. The biggest cost is the overtime on weekends. If an animal is quarantined or impounded over the weekend, then it requires overtime. Jim Tripp made a motion, seconded by Shaun Manning, to change the 2024-2025 Quarantine Fee Schedule to \$10.00 per day. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

FEE SCHEDULE PORTLAND ANIMAL CONTROL DIVISION	
Description / Duration	Fee to be Paid by Owner/Keeper (Revised 11/6/2024)
Adoption (animal is spayed or neutered)	\$5.00
Adoption (animal is not spayed or neutered)	\$50.00 (\$45.00 APCP fee + \$5.00)

Impounded – First Day	\$15.00
Impounded – Every day thereafter first day of impoundment	\$10.00 per day
Quarantine – Standard Order 10 Days	\$10.00 per day
Quarantine - 3 Months <i>(animal vaccinated against rabies and came into contact with rabid animal)</i>	\$10.00 per day
Quarantine - 6 Months <i>(animal not vaccinated against rabies and came into contact with rabid animal)</i>	\$10.00 per day

10. DISCUSSION: BLUE EARTH PILOT PROGRAM

Ryan said they don’t know who or how many are using the program. It is about 1500 lbs. per month. The question is whether it is worth continuing to offer it at the price we are paying. Robert Hetrick asks if it is worth doing it and paying three times the amount. Shaun agrees that it is good to offer certain things to residents, but the savings to the town could be used elsewhere. Even if the program helps people, we must look at the cost factor. It was designed to encourage people to compost. Shaun thinks it is a benefit but asks if the cost could be negotiated. The consensus was to try to get a cost adjustment and if not, then end it at end of the fiscal year.

11. APPROVE MEETING DATES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2025

Shaun Manning made a motion, seconded by John Dillon, to approve the Board of Selectmen Meeting Dates for Calendar Year 2025. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING DATES – CALENDAR YEAR
2025

Held at the: Buck-Foreman Community Room – 2nd floor
265 Main Street, Portland, Connecticut

Time: **7:00 P.M.**

In accordance with Section 1-225(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the following schedule is the Board of Selectmen meeting dates for the year **2024**, as proposed on November 6, 2024.

Regular meetings: 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month (unless otherwise noted with an asterisk). The 1st Wednesday of each month will be devoted to financial matters and regarded as a regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Chapter III Section 303(5): A special Organizational Meeting will be held the second Tuesday after Election Day (11/4/2025) to signify the start of the new elected terms.

January 8* January 22*	July 16
February 5 February 19	August 6 August 20
March 5 March 19	September 3 September 17
April 2 April 16	October 8* October 22*
May 7 May 21	November 5 November 18
June 4 June 18	December 3 December 17

*New Years Day falls on the 1st Wednesday therefore the meetings in January are pushed to 2nd and 4th Wednesday; Yom Kippur begins at sunset October 1, 2025 therefore the meetings pushed to the 2nd and 4th Wednesday

12. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- **Resignations:**
 - D) Jillian Crawford, alternate Parks & Recreation Comm. (resigned 9/27/24)
- **Appointments**
- **Reappointments**

13. REFUNDS OF EXCESS PAYMENTS

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Michael Pelton, to reimburse Goodrich, Donald W & Barbara N [\$10.00]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Michael Pelton, to reimburse Bankoski, Raymond A Jr [\$49.02]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Robert Hetrick made a motion, seconded by Michael Pelton, to reimburse Miah, Manik [\$71.08]. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

14. STATUS REPORTS

Ryan Curley shared the following:

- Public Works installed radar signs on Thompson Hill and Cox Road. He thanked the police for their presence on back roads.
- Water: Talked about the referendum question that passed. The monitoring wells were installed. Three wells were done and each at a different depth, there were no surprises. They are flush with the ground. The next step is installing the production line, probably around Thanksgiving. The pump testing must be done to make sure it doesn't interfere with other wells or water systems. They need to wait because it is too dry. DEEP said to wait until we get some rain.
- We installed a transducer at a well on Cox Road and also installed one on the town well.
- He reached out to DPH to let them know of our successful referendum. The loan will be paid for by water customers only. This will allow us the 2% interest rate for the remainder of the drinking water state revolving loan.
- Through Public Works, Ryan will be mailing letters to 125 residents per new regulations regarding old service lines in town that have lead. These were installed prior to 1944. Per the new regs, we need to notify residents. We have 10 years to replace them all. Hopefully, we will do it much faster.

Jim Tripp commented that he appreciates the support for the water referendum question.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

16. BOARD OF SELECTMEN GENERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Robert Hetrick asked if we know the status of Marine 7 boat. The fire chief reached out and wants to have a meeting on it on Friday. Ryan should have something next week. Regarding the police cameras, Ryan said he doesn't have an update on that but will follow up with the captain.

Jim Tripp said there were two significant water leaks. The one on Main Street was taken care of by Burns Construction. The other one at 254 Airline Avenue will be taken care of by the water department.

Robert Hetrick asked if the Town Charter Review could be scheduled some time in the future. Ryan suggested that each member review the charter on their own and then be prepared for a discussion at some later date. Those things that are agreed upon, will then be taken to the Charter Commission.

17. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

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

18. ADJOURN MEETING

Shaun Manning made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Michael Pelton, all were in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hoy

Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk