

**Legislative/Nominating
Committee Agenda**
January 17, 2023



MEMBERS
Mayor Kate Snyder, Chair
Councilor April Fournier
Councilor Pious Ali
Councilor Regina Phillips

REMOTE ACCESS INFORMATION:

This meeting will be conducted remotely via Zoom pursuant to the Remote Meeting Policy adopted by the Portland City Council. Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live either in person or via Zoom, a recording will be available in the [Agenda Center](#) following the meeting.

For public comment via Zoom, you will need to use the "raise your hand" feature. To raise your hand via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be unmuted by the host when it is time for public comment.

To join the meeting, please visit <https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/87377216395>

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Minutes from the Meeting of January 10, 2023

III. Legislative Update

- a. Discussion re: 2023 Federal Policy Priorities
- b. Review of proposed State legislation (Bernstein Shur)

IV. Other Business

- a. Discussion: 2023 Work Plan (Kate Snyder, Chair)

V. Adjournment

**Legislative/Nominating
Committee Meeting 01.10.23
Minutes
January 10, 2023**



MEMBERS
Councilor April Fournier, Chair
Mayor Kate Snyder
Councilor Pious Ali

I. Call to Order

Chair Kate Snyder called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM

Mayor Kate Snyder (Chair), Councilor April Fournier, Councilor Regina Phillips, Councilor Pious Ali, Dena Libner (Chief of Staff), Danielle West (Interim City Manager), Kate Knox (Bernstein Shur), Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Shur) and Chris Feeney (Bernstein Shur) were present.

II. Approval of Meeting minutes

a. Draft minutes from the January 3, 2023 Meeting

Councilor April Fournier made a motion to Approve the minutes from the January 3, 2023 meeting, seconded by Mayor Kate Snyder, vote (4-0).

III. Legislative Update

a. Review of Proposed State legislation (Bernstein Shur)

Committee members reviewed new bills produced by the Revisor's Office and advised Bernstein Shur on which they would like tracked over the course of the 131st Legislative session. Staff plans to provide additional feedback on bills determined to be operational priorities within the coming weeks.

The Committee requested that new LDs be sorted by Council priority in the future.

IV. Other Business

a. For Review: Delegations of the 131st Legislature

Mayor Snyder provided a list of the delegations of the 131st Legislature to Committee members for their review.

V. Adjournment

Councilor Regina Phillips made a motion to Adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor April Fournier, vote (4-0).

LEGISLATIVE/NOMINATING COMMITTEE
POLICY PRIORITIES

Support Rep. Pingree's Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act (HR 6693)

Asylum seekers are currently required to wait 365 days to apply for Work Authorization after submitting their Asylum application. This waiting period delays self-sufficiency and, in many cases, represents an additional six months of General Assistance. A wait time reduction benefits Maine's economy, helps address our workforce shortage, and enables new Mainers to be self-sufficient. This bill, introduced by Rep. Pingree in February 2022 and referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship, would reduce the wait to 30 days.

Mandate universal background checks

With larger-city crime and violence having found its way to Maine, the importance of addressing firearm violence and safety has never been greater. Universal background checks would be a valuable tool for reducing gun-related violence and deaths, reducing avenues and options for access by prohibited persons who may otherwise exploit the private sale loophole every day, putting all of our communities at risk.

Funding Support to Dredge Portland Harbor Berthing Resources

The City of Portland, in partnership with the City of South Portland, the Portland Harbor Commission, and the State of Maine Department of Transportation, was unsuccessful in a third application for federal funding through the 2022 RAISE (formerly BUILD) Grant Program to dredge public and private berthing resources in Portland Harbor. Total project costs are estimated at \$32-34 million.

While virtually all urban harbors require dredging to mitigate sedimentation caused by natural drainage and stormwater runoff, Portland Harbor's berthing resources are challenged by legacy contaminants and have not been dredged in decades. Recent economic studies emphasize that berthing resources underpin a harbor-wide economy with a \$1B annual impact. Dredging will stabilize losses and expand the

potential of the harbor for fisheries, tourism, aquaculture, and emerging opportunities in the “Blue Economy”. Congressional support for the Portland Dredge Project will be critical for it to succeed.

Funding Support for Police Headquarters Relocation

Portland’s 50-year-old headquarters no longer provides the capacity needed to effectively provide the type and level of law enforcement and requests for service seen today. The current building faces maintenance issues, and houses both a regional crime lab and a regional communications center. In addition, it provides space for a federal “safe streets” task force. Federal support is needed to help the department keep pace with growth and challenges in our region.

Funding Support for Fire Stations

In 2017, a consultant determined that at least five of Portland’s fire stations need to be completely replaced due to cramped quarters, small lot, age, and required environmental upgrades. As a result of these challenges, we are unable to add additional or larger apparatuses; increase staffing; conduct onsite training; meet ADA requirements; meet living quarters best practices; address potential plumbing and heating systems hazards.

Funding for Workforce Development Training

Increased federal support for training in the skilled trades to develop a more robust talent pipeline, as well as to provide new economic opportunities for minority and low-income populations.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNDING PRIORITIES

- **[The HOME Investment Partnerships Program](#)**: This is a vital resource to ensure the continued creation and maintenance of affordable housing. When construction is completed on recent HOME-funded projects, 275 new units of affordable rental housing will be added to the Portland market.
- **[The Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\) Program](#)**: This is often the only resource available to fund public infrastructure in lower-income neighborhoods and provide social services to the most vulnerable residents in our community. Recent CDBG projects include road and lighting improvements in the Bayside neighborhood, community policing, and the provision of homeless case workers and housing specialists.

- **Certified Local Government Funding**: The City relies on this funding to support staffing levels in its Historic Preservation Program; we have also been awarded a number of CLG grants for other projects, such as to help fund the restoration of historic Lincoln Park's cast iron fence and granite piers. Local private nonprofit organizations, such as the Tate House and Mechanics Hall, also rely on this vital funding source, and the Historic Preservation program has assisted with CLG grants for local nonprofits. CLG grants remain an important resource.
- **Byrne Justice Assistance Grant, COPS and Project Safe Neighborhoods (all via Department of Justice)**: These programs are critical to enhancing the safety and quality of life in our communities, as well as the safety and wellness of the officers protecting them.

DRAFT



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Memorandum

To: Portland, City of
From: Bernstein Shur
Date: January 11, 2023
Re: New Legislative Bills Report

Please find below the new legislative documents (LD) printed this week that we have flagged to be of possible interest to your organization. Please indicate to us which bills you would like included on your tracking report.

Thank you.

[LD 130](#) (SP69)
An Act to Eliminate Senior Citizen Property Tax Stabilization and Expand the
Homestead Property Tax Exemption
