



Peaks Island Council MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 24, 2024, 6:15 p.m.

Hybrid ZOOM/in-person meeting in the Community Center

**NEXT Regular Monthly PIC Meeting
December 18, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER: 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Scott Mohler, Jerzy Sylvester, Jess Burton, Shelagh Reiser, Peter McLaughlin, Fred Somers, Garry Fox

Absent: n/a

Number of Audience Members (AM) in attendance: 7 in person, 0 on zoom

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Mohler asked to amend the minutes to include highlighted portion. "Mohler said he would reach out to Anna Trevorow to ask if she could forward PIC's recommendation for small island lot coverage as an amendment **if, after talking to Nell Donaldson, it seems like the appropriate step.**"*

Somers motioned to accept the amended minutes of the October 23rd PIC meeting. Sylvester seconded. Motion to accept the amended minutes passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

McLaughlin congratulated Laura Glendening on winning a PIC seat via a write-in campaign.

TREASURER'S REPORT

McLaughlin pointed out two expenditures this month: \$432 for an annual pass for Mark Gorsky, the Island Institute Fellow and \$270 for needs-based tickets. The current balance is \$13,315.

Mohler made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Burton seconded. Report accepted unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & UPDATES

- **Executive Committee** –

McLaughlin said that the PIC amendment to the City Council ReCode passed city council unanimously. McLaughlin will follow up with city staff to get a summary of all the changes that affect Peaks Island from the passage of ReCode.

Question B also passed City Council and it included changes to the process for registering Short Term Rentals, including STRs on Peaks Island. Those changes do not go into effect until registrations occur in the fall 2025 for the 2026 rental year.

- **Anti-racism Committee**

No update.

- **Environmental and Sustainability**

McLaughlin said that PEAT is applying for a \$10,000 Island Institute grant to assess, implement and plan for sea level rise. PEAT will use the money to hire a landscape architect/ engineer/consultant to undertake a preliminary infrastructure plan on the parts of Seashore Avenue that are at highest risk for future flooding and erosion. Such an assessment would ideally sketch out a vision for a backshore infrastructure project to ensure future flood mitigation and erosion-protection.

- **Ferry Service**

McLaughlin shared a document that he wrote to help publicize the availability of Needs-Based Tickets.

McLaughlin said that he sent an email to Bill Needelman asking about the status of building a new bus shelter outside of Casco Bay Lines terminal. He said that Metro would like to move the bus shelter to India Street so that they don't have to come into the Casco Bay Lines terminal area but discussions continue.

Somers said the new ferry has been delayed again.

Somers said that the CBL Finance committee is looking at vehicle rates and people who are interested in being part of that conversation should attend the next Finance Committee meeting or contact Finance Committee members.

- **Housing – ReCode Zoning survey**

Glendening said that the committee is continuing their work on the shoreline zoning and plant guide.

Glendening asked McLaughlin to ask about any restrictions to the new business zone as well as any restrictions to the small island lot zoning when he is contacting the city about ReCode implementation on Peaks Island. McLaughlin said that Glendening can ask those questions to Nell Donaldson directly and CC him.

McLaughlin said that Home Start is moving forward with the Central Avenue construction. They anticipate that people will be able to occupy the apartments in June 2025, if there are no delays.

- **Island Assessment –**

Islands Collaborative Vulnerability Assessment – this will be handled in new business portion of the meeting.

- **Jetport Flight Path**

Somers reported that the Jetport has appropriated \$74,000 to pay for the design of a new flight path for flights coming into the airport. He said the hard work of the Jetport Flight Path Committee and the Noise Advisory Committee is responsible for the Jetport designing a new approach path. He cautioned that it will still take a few years to get through the FAA approval process.

- **Paper Roads**

No update.

- **Parking**

Reiser said Parking Committee met with John Peverada, head of the city's parking division, on November 15th to discuss PIC Parking Committee recommendations about the IR zone parking that were presented at the October 23rd meeting. John Peverada is retiring early January 2025. The Parking Committee is hoping to get action on some of the recommendations before he retires.

Parking committee's recommendations presented to John Peverada:

- 1) Entire Island resident zone has no 1-hour free parking zone, implement the parking app at all spaces, and allow Island resident stickers to park at parking app spots with no time limit. That would increase 33 spaces in existing IR zone.
- 2) End meter enforcement at 5pm rather than 6pm in the IR zone.
- 3) Extend the island resident zone to include 28-40 more spaces in the gray areas so that the number of available spaces would align with the number of islanders seeking parking.

These include adding spaces at:

- Eight 1-hour free spaces in the Amethyst lot.
 - The bottom half of Freedom Way – signed as a private street but the city owns half of it.
 - The bottom half of Mountfort – signed as 1-hour parking (it used to have no limit)
 - The section of Commercial Street between Franklin and India.
- 4) Reduce the number of days with odd/even restrictions.
 - 5) Improve marking to designate parking spaces more clearly.
 - 6) Ask city to provide more information about the emergency parking signs.

Peverada was familiar with the Parking Committee's recommendations but did not always agree with the Parking Committee's observations that supported those recommendations.

Peverada said metered parking times are uniform across the city, and the city includes some meters and some 1-hour parking in every parking zone. Also, no IR parking stickers in any city neighborhood allow anyone to park at any meter or app spaces, only at the 1-hour or 2-hour limit spaces.

Peverada said the upper half of Freedom Way is owned by Wex and the bottom half is owned by the city but there is some provision that may allow the city to purchase back the upper half of Freedom Way. But in the meantime it seemed possible that some IR zone parking spaces could be added to the part of Freedom Way that the city owns.

Reiser said the Parking Committee is debating whether they can argue that the IR Zone could be granted some exceptions. They are in the process of gathering data to support that argument.

Reiser said the city's policy regarding disabled parking is that cars with the placard can park for twice as long as the parking limit allows.

Mohler asked if Peverada indicated when the Ocean Gateway Parking lot is going away. Reiser said construction will begin April 1st, 2025. The Parking Committee hopes that the same percentage of spaces can be allotted to islanders. There are some spaces still available in both the Ocean Gateway Parking garage and Ocean Gateway Parking lot right now.

The City is still considering the Parking Committee's recommendations. The Parking Committee will meet with Peverada and his successor before he retires.

- **Short Term Rental**

STR ordinance timeline – covered during Executive Committee update.

- **Voter Education**

No update.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

● **Nominating Committee process (public comment)**

McLaughlin stated that there are currently six candidates for three open positions. Scott Mohler and Jerzy Sylvester are conducting interviews with applicants. They will make recommendations to the PIC. With the new ordinance, candidates can be nominated for either one or two years. The city clerk recommends that two candidates serve for one-year terms, and one candidate serve for a two-year term, which will help stagger when people term out.

AM asked what criteria PIC uses to select an appointed councilor.

McLaughlin said that the PIC decides who to select as an appointed councilor based on the skill they bring to the PIC, how much time they have to serve, whether they represent an island demographic that is not currently serving on the council.

AM asked what island demographics PIC considers.

McLaughlin said that PIC should represent all islanders, so the demographics that PIC tries to represent include Owner vs Renter, Retired vs Working, Young vs Old, Commuter vs Non-commuter, Gender, etc.

● **PIC Bylaws revisions (public comment)**

McLaughlin said that the Bylaws revisions from 2022 must be updated because of the ordinance changes that were made.

McLaughlin reviewed changes to the PIC bylaws including elaborating on the executive committee officers' responsibilities, the dissolution of the Communication and Outreach Committee, and the procedures for filling vacancies on the PIC. The changes also define the process for adding new councilors during the newly elected PIC inaugural meeting in December each year. New councilors will arrive early to meet with Bill Patnaude. They will be sworn in and join the council after swearing in. Councilors whose terms are expiring are Garry Fox, Peter McLaughlin, Sheila Reiser and Jerzy Sylvester.

All changes are outlined in the document entitled PIC bylaws (2024 revisions), available on the PIC Google Drive.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yBF5rkMm_S_kSu7E_Vv00DdDye5TaAoP/edit

Somers made a motion to approve the changes. Sylvester seconded. No Public Comment. Motion passed unanimously.

● **Committee consolidation (public comment)**

McLaughlin said the PIC bylaws state the PIC should evaluate its committees on an annual basis. He suggested the following consolidations:

1. Housing and Zoning Committee combine with Short Term Rentals Committee
2. Environment and Sustainability Committee combine with Parks and Rec Committee
3. Sunset Anti-Racism Committee
4. Sunset Jetport Flight Path Committee

McLaughlin said PIC should continue to work with and receive periodic updates from the Jetport Flight Path Committee. He noted that the Jetport Flight Path Committee is actually a community group, not a PIC committee. He said sunsetting the Jetport Flight Path Committee will happen with a future motion because he has not spoken with Basil Klosteridis (head of the committee) regarding this motion.

McLaughlin made a motion:

1. ***Combine Housing and Zoning Committee with Short Term Rentals Committee***

2. **Combine Environment and Sustainability Committee with Parks and Rec Committee**
3. **Sunset Anti-Racism Committee**

Mohler seconded. Burton said that it makes sense to sunset the Anti-Racism Committee because it hasn't met for three years and has only one member. But she asked the council to commit to being anti-racist. McLaughlin said this is a move away from the structure of having an Anti-Racism Committee but it is not a move away from anti-racism discussions and considerations.

Mohler asked what will happen to Paper Roads Committee when Fox terms off. McLaughlin said the PIC will find another chair.

No public comment. **Motion passed unanimously.**

● **Community Gathering Summary Report + Island Assessment next steps (public comment)**

Burton noted that the Island Assessment Committee is Somers and herself. Burton said that a future email should re-share the Assessment and share the outcome of the summer community gathering.

She said the next step is to bring the Assessment to the attention of the City Council so they know it exists and so they would alert the committee to any funding opportunities. Somers said that he and Burton will draft an email and run it by McLaughlin.

Burton said that Peaks Island and many other islands have joined forces to conduct an assessment of each island's infrastructure and its vulnerabilities. It is a program of the Island Institute.

AM suggested that the community involvement with Island Assessment follow up be called a "working group" rather than a committee, and that it is community-based, not PIC-based. Councilors agreed.

● **2025 Capital Improvement Project priority process (public comment)**

Somers said that the council formally submits a request each year to the city manager, asking to be included in the city's Capital Improvement Project. Last year the issues were more restrooms, sidewalks, road drainage, electric car charging station, funding for improvements contained in the Peaks Island Ferry Landside Operations Study, funding for Trott Littlejohn Park and Ball Park improvements.

This letter must be submitted the first week of December. Somers would like councilors to submit any suggestions to him so that he can incorporate them into the letter to the City Manager.

McLaughlin said that Bill Patnaude discouraged PIC from asking for funding that would increase storm preparedness because the City's FEMA application has not been resolved yet. McLaughlin said that many of the same issues as last year are still issues this year.

Fox suggested that the stairs to Sandy Beach should be included. McLaughlin said that is not a large enough project to be included as a capital improvement. Capital Improvement projects are much bigger projects.

Reiser suggested requesting more than one electric charging station. She also suggested reconfiguring traffic flow around the parking lot, including rebuilding the stairway next to the bulletin board that goes down to the parking lot. She also suggested that the sidewalk across from Island Lobster Co. be turned into additional golf cart parking spaces. She also suggested hiring a cadet to help traffic control at boat times.

McLaughlin said that the cadet program wouldn't fall under capital improvement. McLaughlin said that the letter should identify the island needs. PIC does not need to design the solutions, just make the city manager more aware of island needs.

Burton said that the introduction to the letter should acknowledge the storm damage and mention that the island is still waiting for storm damage to be repaired.

AM asked for water safety (swim buoy) and water access (dinghy dock). McLaughlin said the swim buoys is too small of a project, but the dinghy dock is a good project for the Capital Improvement Plan.

- **webcam project + FY 2025 budget (public comment)**

McLaughlin said that PIC approved the expenditure for the webcam project with the understanding that they would discuss it further at a later date. If the PIC decides not to pursue the webcam project, the money can be moved to other line items in the budget.

McLaughlin said nothing needs to be decided tonight. Somers agreed.

- **FY 2026 PIC + city budget process (public comment)**

McLaughlin presented the edited criteria for the PIC budget based on input made by the public and the councilors during the previous budget process.

Reiser said that the most important thing is to meet islander's basic needs (food, heat, etc.) and the wording should reflect that.

McLaughlin said that he is open to changes to the language and there is time to edit it. This document is not going out to the public until January 2025.

Burton suggested adding past funding amounts and projects.

Somers said some of those values will be worked out in the discussion about various projects.

McLaughlin said these criteria should be approved by December meeting, the announcement goes out to the public in January, the budget will be worked on in February.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES

Next PIC Meeting: Wednesday, December 18, 2024, at 6:15 pm in the community room and on Zoom.

Somers made motion to adjourn. Sylvester seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjournment: 8:20 p.m.