



Peaks Island Council MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 26, 2025, 6:15 p.m.

Hybrid ZOOM/in-person meeting in the Community Center

NEXT Regular Monthly PIC Meeting
April 23, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: 6:18 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Scott Mohler, Shelagh Reiser, Karsten Rees, Laura Glendenning, Jess Burton, Norm Proulx, Fred Somers (via Zoom)

Number of Audience Members (AM) in attendance: 9 in person, 1 on zoom

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Proulx motioned to accept the minutes of the February 26th PIC meeting. Reiser seconded. Motion to accept the minutes passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Patnaude reported that the only expenditures this month was for needs-based tickets (\$165.60) and for the annual subscription to Maine Island Coalition (\$200). The current balance is \$7,086.84.

Glendenning said that she would like to get \$20 for hard copies of PIC minutes for the folder kept in the library. Patnaude said that expense could come out of the Administration Expenses but he would need an invoice.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT (beginning of meeting)

AM asked when the boat at ferry beach would be removed. Patnaude said a barge is going to move the boat to the boat ramp at Centennial Beach and then it will be moved to a location on the island where it will be worked on.

AM asked when stairs to Ferry Beach will be repaired. Patnaude said that he has reached out to the contractor who will be building the stairs at Sandy Beach first. Assuming work is of good quality, the same contractor will be tapped to build the stairs at Ferry Beach.

AM thanked Laura Glendenning for making hard copies of the minutes and making them available in the library.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & UPDATES

• Executive Committee –

Patnaude said the FEMA application is still in process. The roads on Peaks Island have been looked at twice and there was an agreement on what needs to be fixed. Because the road is within 200 feet of the ocean there are a lot of permitting issues with the state and the federal government.

Patnaude said the city will likely use funds dedicated to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects to pay for some of the storm damage repairs. This will delay the CIP projects. When FEMA reimburses the city for storm damage repairs, the CIP projects can begin.

- **Environmental and Sustainability and Parks and Rec Committee**

Timmi Sellers said that PEAT will have opportunity for public to work at Trott Littlejohn Park within a month.

- **Ferry Service**

No update. Glendening asked about the increase in the car ferry tickets. Somers said there is no vote on the vehicle rates at the upcoming meeting. The fare increases are still being discussed in the finance committee.

- **Housing and Zoning Committee – ReCode Zoning survey**

Glendening said that the committee will be looking at short term rentals and ADUs on Peaks Island and looking at increasing affordable housing on Peaks Island.

Also looking at items that were not included in recent ReCode with the intention of drafting amendments, including:

1. Reducing lot coverage allowance in IR-2 from 60% to 45%.
2. Looking into the city's recommendations about lot size required to divide off a "small lot" of 3,000 square feet. City recommends a requirement of the initial lot size at 23,000 sq foot vs PIC request of 15,000 square feet.
3. Investigating the establishment of a soft business zone and the associated regulations.

Glendening said that the committee meetings are open to the public and they are also looking for additional committee members.

- **Island Assessment** –

Somers said that he and Burton have been working with Island Institute about climate resilience and conducting a vulnerability assessment for the island. Phone call will be held on April 9th.

- **Paper Roads**

No update.

- **Parking**

- New head of the City Parking Division will be starting on April 7th.
- The Ocean Gateway Parking Lot lottery is on hold for a 12-18 month period while construction of the new park is underway. Ocean Gateway parking lot has spaces available.
- Spring cleaning in the Casco Bay Garage at the end of April and replacement parking on that weekend will be at the Custom House Garage.
- The Parking Committee is going to work on educating islanders about the time limit for parking in the Welch Street parking lot on Peaks Island.

- The city has tagged bikes down front that are “abandoned.” The bikes will be removed and will be at the transfer station for 30 days, after which they will be donated to a local bike program.

- **Voter Education**

No update.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Community room access**

Glendening said that community members have been inquiring about having the public bathrooms available on Thursdays, even if it means hiring another person to clean the bathrooms on Thursdays.

Glendening also said that use of the community room in the afternoons is restricted because the after-school program uses the community room. Glendening said that the after-school program could be moved back to the school, but it would require the school system to hire a second school custodian that would be in the building during the afternoons. Glendening would like to find out if there is a desire for the community to use the community room in the afternoon.

Glendening made a motion to send a letter to the city’s Parks and Recreation Department to keep the community center lobby open on Thursdays by hiring a Thursday custodian to clean the lobby bathrooms and to ask the city to facilitate moving the after-school program to the school, including hiring a second school custodian if that is required. Rees seconded.

Proulx asked if this is one letter or two letters? Glendening said the after-school program is administered by the city’s Parks and Rec department and she would talk to Rose Ann Walsh to find out who is in charge of the community room lobby.

Public comment:

Patnaude said that one custodian could fulfill both positions.

AM said that Ryan French is hiring four people to become part time Parks and Recreation people so that the room can be opened and closed for organizations. AM said that Ryan wants to see the room used more.

AM said that there is going to be a coffee hour on Thursday, April 10th and that would require the bathrooms to be open.

AM asked if after-school program has been asked about moving to the school.

Glendening said she can follow up with the after-school program. She dropped the motion for this month and bring the motion back to the board next month with additional information.

- **Traffic study on Welch Street**

Rees said he talked to Peter McLaughlin about getting cadets back to the island to help traffic flow on Peaks Island. McLaughlin said it would be hard to get a cadet out to the island because they are not a city employee.

Rees said that city neighborhoods can submit a request for a Traffic Calming Study. He proposed that PIC make that request.

Proulx said that PIC could ask the city representative to bring the request to the city for them.

Somers said that the Landside Study that the City did a few years ago included a comprehensive assessment of the traffic and pedestrian flow at the ferry landing on Peaks. Somers said there is a proposal in the study to re-design Welch Street and he suggested that PIC start by looking at that study and discussing those recommendations before starting a new look at the problem.

Reiser said that the redesign of Welch Street is a long-term solution but the problem also demands a short-term solution.

Sarah Michniewicz, city councilor, said the council recently passed a resolution called Vision Zero, a plan to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries to zero. She suggested dovetailing into that resolution for an opportunity to make sure Peaks Island's traffic flow issues near the ferry are addressed.

AM said that Peaks Island's cadet was from the police department, separate from the Portland Downtown cadet program. AM said some of the cadets were very helpful, it depended on the individual.

Patnaude said there were funding issues with the police cadet. The police department was paying 4/5 of the pay for the cadet and PIC was paying 1/5 for the cadet. When PIC said they felt the police department should fund the entire thing, the program went away.

AM asked what responsibility the island police officers have to help control the traffic at the boat. Proulx said that during the summer on weekends, the police at the boat help control the crowds that are turned away from full boats.

AM said that PIC used to invite Danny Rose to meetings for a quick police report. PIC should ask police to attend monthly meetings to address items such as this.

- **Amending Budget for needs-based tickets**

Rees said he would like to consider monthly passes as an option for needs-based tickets. If people are using four or more needs-based tickets each month, a monthly pass would be more economical and give people unlimited rides per month.

Proulx said that he talked to the food pantry administrators who said that there are currently plenty of tickets to cover the current demand. Administrators also said that they could not logistically manage monthly passes.

Patnaude said it would also be logistically difficult for him to provide needs-based tickets.

Rees proposed that the FY2025 budget request use the language "needs-based tickets or passes" instead of just "needs-based tickets" to provide the option for initiating a monthly pass program.

Somers said he thinks the language does not need to be that precise.

Proulx and Rees will work on how to logistically make needs-based passes work.

PUBLIC COMMENT

AM asked whether PIC will continue the paper roads committee. Barbara Carter said the committee is still putting all the collected information into a spreadsheet. Since this requires walking the paper roads, it was delayed during the winter. Proulx asked what the city's position on paper roads is? Carter said that the city says, "We're not looking at that now." Carter also said the issue should be addressed during Re-Code and the smaller buildable lots because people may build on top of paper roads.

AM said that there is a CBL meeting scheduled for April 2, 2025 at 7:45am to review the car ferry ticket price proposal.

AM said that there is going to be a proposal for redesigning Franklin Street. As that proposal moves forward, PIC should be involved since the Congress Street/Franklin Street intersection is used daily by many islanders.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES

Next PIC Meeting: Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at 6:15 pm in the community room and on Zoom.

Mohler made motion to adjourn. Proulx seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjournment: 7:52 p.m.