City of Portland
Portland Fish Pier Authority Board - Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee
Agenda

Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 3:30 PM
Remote via Zoom

REMOTE ACCESS INFORMATION:

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.

Please click on the link below to join the meeting:
https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/84432037825

1. Committee Chair Comments
2. Review and vote on Meeting Minutes - March 13, 2025
    a. See attached Meeting Minutes for April 10, 2025
3. Old Business
4. Review Portland Fish Exchange Manager's Report.
    a. See attached PFEX Management report for May 2025.
    b. Upcoming changes to regulations impacting Herring and Groundfish (NMFS) or Lobster and Pogies (DMR)
    c. Expense/revenue items deviating from budget
    d. Available space in coolers.
5. Discuss changes in existing buyers and sellers.
6. Next Meeting: June 12, 2025
7. Adjournment

Draft Meeting Minutes

Portland Fish Pier Authority - Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee

April 10, 2025

3:30 PM

Subcommittee Member Attendees: Chair Tracy Pearce, Nick Alfiero, John Arnold, Mary Hudson, Matthew Moretti

Staff present: Avery Dandreta, Kaela Gonzalez, Robert Vanmeter

1. Committee Chair Comments: Chair Tracy Pearce opened the meeting at approximately 3:34 p.m. with a roll call.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes: March 13, 2025 PFEX Subcommittee Meeting.

Motion by Arnold, 2nd by Hudson

Approved 5-0 by unanimous vote by all present

3. Old Business:

Discussion around city procurement rules and potential best practices for obtaining materials, such as totes, for daily operations. The general understanding is that the Fish Exchange will abide by procurement guidelines beginning in the 2026 fiscal year. Kaela Gonzalez will share the city policy regarding purchasing with the subcommittee.

Robert Vanmeter, PFEX Manager, checks in regularly with Cassie Canastra regarding BASE (Buyers and Sellers Exchange) software. The current software is working okay at roughly one auction per week. Vanmeter clarified that the BASE software would cost 7(seven) cents per pound.

4. Review requested Portland Fish Exchange meeting materials:

Vanmeter verbally presented the Management and Financial report provided in the agenda materials. Due to work on the upcoming FY2026 Budget, the March numbers are not available at this time, but will be reported at the upcoming Portland Fish Pier Authority Board meeting. Hudson suggested providing historical data, the last two years of budget vs actual, for landings for comparison purposes, with a consensus that the subcommittee would like these further details, but it is not necessary to provide the Board with these, unless called upon.

Hudson provided an update regarding current scalloping regulations and the potential effects on April's landings.

5. Discuss and vote to recommend approval of new buyer, Atlantic Offshore Fisheries, to the Portland Fish Pier Authority Board:

Motion by Hudson, 2nd by Arnold

Approved 5-0 by unanimous vote by all present.

6. Discuss and vote to recommend to the Portland Fish Pier Authority a new tenant, Ocean's Balance, to the Portland Fish Pier.

Ocean's Balance is currently looking for a new space. The subcommittee agrees that this would not be a good fit, as space is limited and the required temperatures do not align.

John Arnold left the meeting at approximately 4:35 pm.

7. Discuss changes in existing buyers and sellers:

Question regarding changes in ownership with Nova Seafood, Vanmeter will check back in with them in a few weeks to allow them to work through their transition. Vanmeter is working to get East Coast Seafood to participate as a buyer on the auction. Continued discussion around lobster landings.

There is funding for Fishermen Feeding Mainers through September 2025.

8. Discuss the "Walk the Working Waterfront" event to occur on May 31, 2025:

The Fish Exchange has been open and available for walk-throughs in the past. Hudson will reach out to the organizer to find out more information and connect them with Vanmeter.

9. Next Meeting: May 8, 2025

10. Adjournment:

Motion by Hudson, 2nd by Alfiero

Approved by unanimous consent at approximately 4:47 pm.

PORTLAND FISH EXCHANGE

Management/Financial Report for May, 2025

GF Landings – Auction	Actual	Budgeted	Variance
February 2025 - 7	83K	225K	(-142K)
March 2025 - 8	86K	225K	(-139K)
April 2025 - 7	31K	225K	(-194K)

GF Landings – Auction	Actual	Budgeted	Variance
February 2024 - 9	223K	175K	48K
March 2024 - 7	135K	105K	30K
April 2024 - 7	93K	70K	23K

Contract Unloads - GF	Actual	Budgeted	Variance
February-April	0	0	0

Total GF Land/Unloads	Actual	Budgeted	Variance
February	83K	225K	(-142K)
March	86K	225K	(-139K)
April	31K	225K	(-194K)

Pumping	Actual	Budgeted	Variance
Feb-April	0	0	0

Financial Report	Net Income	Budgeted	Variance
February	(-$82K)	(-$7500)	(-$74.5K)
March	(-$59K)	(-$7500)	(-$51.5K)
April	(-$K)	(-$7500)	(-$K)

Financial Notes

- April deficits primarily from loss of Buyer/Seller/Boxing fees with the diminished whole fish landings.
- Current receivables are $91K. Checkbook is at a negative $1500
- 95K of $250K LOC in use

Operations Notes

- Nothing to report

Monthly Payments of Note

- Nothing at this time

Facility Report

- One of our compressors went down last week with Miller Refrigeration spending 3 days to fix. Refrigerant that was needed was over $9000. It failed again Sunday. This compressor continues to be problematic and has failed multiple times over the past 2 years that I have been with the Exchange. Both compressors will need to be replaced in the near future. The current units are called throwaways and cannot be rebuilt on site. I have Miller putting together a quote for new rebuildable compressors and install.

- Entry door to Exchange lobby needs to be replaced. It has become warped and is very difficult to open. I had Miner Dock & Door, the company that did our dock shelters, out last week, and am waiting for a quote.

- The server that manages our financial software is beginning to fail, like our server for the SeaTrak auction system. I am having Eagle quote me on replacements as well as looking at possibilities to migrate SeaTrak to a newer server.

- Security camera system for the Exchange has failed with multiple power supplies for the camera system (we have 3) needing to be replaced. Camera for the PFE auction website feed has failed and needs to be replaced as well. Seacoast Security is our security company – waiting on a quote.

Staff Report

- The Exchange has been working with Robert Half, an out of state accounting firm hired because we could not find local coverage of the GP financial system. We are managed as a part-time customer account, an arrangement that has presented several challenges, such as receiving timely reports and financial guidance. We have hired Diane Albert, a local Maine resident, to replace Robert Half. Diane has 14 years of experience at Nova Seafood, where she oversaw their accounts receivable, accounts payable, health and safety compliance, human resources, budgets, audits, and inventory management. She will be hired as an independent contractor, averaging 30 hours per month, and will work with the Exchange managing journal entries, bank reconciliations, with audits & budgets as needed. Diane is proficient in several financial software systems and has worked with Jaki and PFE during her time at Nova Seafood. Diane will work with our current account manager to gain a comprehensive understanding of current financials prior to the termination of our business with Robert Half.

- Robert Halfs hourly rate is $162.40, while Dianes hourly rate will be $80.00.

Landings Notes

- Landings down with April being a traditionally slow month. Scallop season has just finished so we hope to see landings increase in May. No auctions in May to date.

New Vessels

- We have no new vessels to announce.

New Buyers

- Nothing to report at this tim