

Draft Meeting Minutes  
**Portland Fish Pier Authority - Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee**  
**July 10, 2025**  
3:30 PM

**Subcommittee Member Attendees:** Chair Tracy Pearce, Nick Alfiero, John Arnold, Mike Foster, Mary Hudson, Meredith Mendelson, Matthew Moretti, Rob Odlin.

**Staff present:** Diane Albert, Kaela Gonzalez, Robert Vanmeter

Approximately three members of the public attended.

**1. Committee Chair Comments:** Chair Tracy Pearce opened the meeting at approximately 3:30 p.m.

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

**Motion to approve Meeting Minutes from May 8, 2025, and June 12, 2025.**

Arnold, 2nd by Hudson

Approved 6-0 (Moretti and Foster joined the meeting after the vote)

**3. Old Business:**

There was discussion on previously considered ideas like a food truck day and website updates to promote the PFEX. Hudson reported that MCFA applied for a USDA grant to support three community events at the PFEX in Spring 2026 and Fall 2027. These events would involve food trucks, local processors offering samples, and tours. They expect to hear about funding in September/October. Odlin suggested advertising in Commercial Fisheries News, through the Portland Chamber of Commerce, and also posting on Facebook. Robert Vanmeter (PFEX Manager) noted that website updates for pictures would require help from iBec, and he's holding off due to budget constraints. The overall consensus was to keep community outreach as a continuous agenda item and pursue funding opportunities.

The committee discussed allowing the Fish Exchange Manager to negotiate a lower line of credit (down to \$10,000 from the standard \$15,000) for certain buyers, particularly those targeting a single species like Monkfish. Alfiero expressed concern about a company's financial stability if an extra \$5,000 was a barrier, but ultimately supported the lower limit if it brings in new buyers.

**Motion to recommend to the Authority Board that Robert Vanmeter have the flexibility to negotiate the line of credit down to \$10,000.**

Mendelson, 2nd Arnold

**Approved 7-0-1** (Foster abstained)

**Discussion:** Odlin suggested this be a pilot program with a timeframe (e.g., 60-120 days) to assess its impact, and also raised concerns about how existing buyers at the \$15,000 limit would react. Vanmeter clarified that he would continue to vet new buyers and present them to the Board, and would start discussions at \$15,000, only offering the \$10,000 flexibility if needed. He also stated that if the motion passes, they can be transparent with existing buyers about the option to lower their credit if desired. Moretti and Hudson supported giving Vanmeter the discretion to handle these negotiations.

#### **4. Portland Fish Exchange Manager's Report:**

Mr. Vanmeter presented the manager's report verbally and introduced the new accountant for the exchange, Diane Albert.

Alfiero and Vanmeter left the meeting at approximately 4:15 pm.

Discussion on possible change of time for the meeting to ensure that Robert Vanmeter can attend. There are no changes to report regarding regulations impacting Herring, Groundfish, Lobster, and Pogies. Odlin provided information from a meeting of the New England Fishery Management Council.

#### **5. Discuss changes in existing buyers and sellers:**

There may be changes with Cozy Harbor Seafood due to a bankruptcy filing, which will allow them to continue operating while they restructure and pursue a buyer. Odlin suggests pursuing funding that would help subsidize the groundfish industry and requests that Albert provide information regarding landing prior to, during, and after CARES Act funding. There was general discussion for timelines and avenues of requesting and seeking funds, with follow-up planned for next meeting.

#### **9. Next Meeting:** August 14, 2025

#### **10. Adjournment:**

**Motion** to adjourn

Arnold, 2nd Meredith

**Approved** 6-0-1(Foster abstained)

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:12 p.m.