

Draft Meeting Minutes
Portland Fish Pier Authority - Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee
September 11, 2025
3:30 PM

Subcommittee Member Attendees: Chair Tracy Pearce, John Arnold, Mike Foster, Mary Hudson, Meredith Mendelson, and 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. Pearce reminded members that the subcommittee was formed to oversee the management, operation, and promotion of the Portland Fish Exchange. As well as the utilization of other infrastructures of the Portland Fish Pier.

2. Portland Fish Exchange Manager's Report

Robert Vanmeter presented the manager's report verbally. Highlights are as follows:

- 12 Auctions in August
- \$217,000 landed (budgeted \$225,000)
- \$25,000 contract unloads (budgeted \$45,000)
- Current receivables are \$206,000
- Net income for the month was \$18,500

Vanmeter canceled three lines to save money after the fee per line increased. UMaine is now using space at the Exchange for students to dissect tuna heads, paying \$550/month to the Exchange. Mary Hudson is working on a potential new buyer. Chair Pearce inquired about the overall facility status, and Vanmeter mentioned a broken bay door, a recently overhauled hoist, and the need to replace a server, which is estimated to cost \$18,000.

3. Discussion on amending the Fish Pier Exchange bylaws to mirror the City of Portland Purchasing Policy with possible vote on recommendation to the Portland Fish Pier Authority Board.

Motion to mirror the City of Portland's procurement process for purchases over \$5,000, for the interim, while a procurement policy is drafted for the Exchange.

Odlin, 2nd Pearce

Motion was withdrawn.

A significant discussion took place regarding the implementation of a purchasing policy for the Exchange. Concerns were raised about the rigidity and administrative burden of the city's policy, particularly for smaller purchases and the challenges of finding contractors. Meredith Mendelson also provided information on state and federal COVID-19 relief funds received by the Exchange and Fish Pier Authority, totaling over \$2.5 million, to provide context for current

spending. A working group (Meredith Mendelson, Tracy Pearce, Robert Vanmeter, and Kaela Gonzalez) was formed to draft a hybridized procurement policy suitable for the Fish Exchange.

4. Old Business

Vanmeter confirmed that the website has been cleaned up and the broken links have been fixed. Odlin inquired about the recent strong price of fish, attributing it possibly to USDA contracts or a lack of inventory to the south. Hudson attributes this to multiple factors including quota cuts. Subcommittee members would like clarification and to define the role of the subcommittee.

5. Changes in existing buyers and sellers.

No changes to report.

6. Upcoming changes to regulations impacting Herring and Groundfish (NMFS) or Lobster and Pogies (DMR)

Mendelson is expecting a substantial cut in the Pogie quota.

7. Next Meeting: October 9, 2025

8. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn

Hudson, 2nd Arnold

Approved by consensus

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:54 p.m.