

FINAL Meeting Minutes

PORTLAND FISH PIER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
October 16, 2025, 3:00 PM

Remote Meeting Format on the Zoom Platform

PFPA Board Members Present

Class A Directors: Groundfish Harvester or Representative

Mary Hudson

Tracy Pearce

Class C Directors: Representing the seafood industry of the State of Maine

Rob Odlin, Representing the Lobster Industry

Matthew Morretti, Representing the Aquaculture Industry

Class D Director: Representing the Public at Large

John Arnold

Class E Director: Representing the City Council

Wesley Pelletier, District 2

Ex-Officio Members of the Board of Directors:

Representing the Commissioner of the Maine DOT

Chris Mayo

Representing the Commissioner of Maine DMR

Meredith Mendelson, Department of Marine Resources

Representing the Portland City Manager

Brendan O'Connell, Finance Director

PFPA Board Members Unable to Attend

Class B Directors: Nick Alfiero, Representing Groundfish Buyers

Tim Merrill, Representing Groundfish Buyers

Staff Present

Diane Albert, PFEX

Avery Dandreta, Associate Corporate Counsel

Kaela Gonzalez, Program Coordinator

Robert Vanmeter, PFEX Manager

Public

There were approximately six (6) members of the public present.

Board Chair, Rob Odlin, opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Kaela Gonzalez requested that Item #9 be moved up to accommodate Associate Corporation Counsel, Avery Dandreta.

1. Financial Update. *Kaela Gonzalez, Program Coordinator*

Gonzalez presented the Portland Fish Pier Authority's October 2025 Financial Statement, noting that revenue is on target for the fiscal year and expenditures are higher than expected due to a contribution to the Portland Fish Exchange. Also noted was the expected use of \$200,000 for the Shore Power Upgrade project.

2. Facilities Update. *Phil DiPierro, Project Manager*

DiPierro presented the Facilities Update. The shore power upgrade project had a pre-bid meeting with six contractors, and bids are due by October 29th. They are still working on the security camera setup, likely opting for a standalone system due to the cost of bringing in a city network line. The water resources project in the west parking lot went out to bid last month, and a project update is expected within the next month or two. Fender system maintenance is ongoing, and efforts are being made to remove accumulated debris along the bulkhead wall. Robert Vanmeter confirmed that most of the debris in the parking areas for striping has been cleared.

3. Portland Fish Exchange Update. *Robert Vanmeter, PFEX Exchange Manager*

Vanmeter presented an update on the Portland Fish Exchange for September. Landings for auctions were 230,000 pounds (budget 175,000), and contract unloads were 6,000 (budget 50,000). The total combined was 236,000 pounds, with a variance of 11,000 over budget. The net budget for the month was a positive \$8,164. The line of credit and cash reserve remain untouched. The condenser for the refrigeration system is set to ship out tomorrow, with installation scheduled for the week of October 27th. The operating system control panel is expected in early January. He also mentioned a 30-day trial for a new part-time employee and efforts to bring a new buyer, American Pride, on board. Vanmeter also reported a \$3,000 expense for cleaning up abandoned diesel and oil drums that leaked.

4. Discussion and possible vote on Draft Portland Fish Exchange Purchasing Policy.

Meredith Mendelson explained that the draft policy, a shorter version of the city's procurement policy, was developed with input from Pearce, Gonzalez, and Vanmeter. It proposes that purchases over \$20,000 require three written quotes (with exceptions for emergencies or sole sources), and purchases under \$20,000 encourage two written quotes, giving the manager more discretion.

Motion to accept the draft Purchasing Policy for the Portland Fish Exchange as recommended by the Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee and to review purchases under \$20,000 in January of 2026.

Hudson, 2nd Arnold

The Board had a general discussion regarding the policy. Vanmeter answered questions regarding typical purchases.

No Public Comment

Approved 9-0

5. Discussion and possible vote to accept proposed responsibilities for the Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee.

Mendelson explained that the goal of defining the responsibilities is to reduce duplication between subcommittee and full board meetings by having subcommittees report out to the full board. Pearce suggested that the Fish Pier Authority Board bylaws might need to be amended to reflect these new responsibilities and questioned whether fee structure discussions should fall under the Fish Exchange Subcommittee or the Finance Committee. Hudson, who drafted the responsibilities, emphasized the intent to streamline discussions and focus the PFE subcommittee on operations, with finance handling larger picture items.

Motion to accept the proposed responsibilities for the Subcommittees as presented in the meeting materials.

Mendelson, 2nd O'Connell

Vanmeter is comfortable presenting highlights from his report to the full board, with the full report available in the meeting packet for review. Pearce plans to discuss where grants would fall within the responsibilities. The Board discussed allowing members time to further review the document and provide feedback.

Motion was withdrawn.

6. Discussion regarding applying for a Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP) Grant.

Odlin initiated a discussion about the Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP) grant. Chris Mayo clarified that the SHIP grant cannot be retroactive, so it can not be used for the shore power project but could fund other future projects. The grant is a two-step process: a letter of intent with a site visit, followed by a detailed application with a strong budget and timeline. It is a 50-50 reimbursement-style grant, capped at \$250,000 per project, but larger projects can be phased into separate submissions. Mayo also highlighted the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) grant, a federal program with awards up to \$4-5 million and an 80-20 split, which could be matched with SHIP grant funds to significantly reduce the City's contribution to large infrastructure projects. Mendelson also mentioned other federal funds available for working waterfront development and energy efficiency.

7. PFPA Board to Conduct a Review of the General Manager of the Portland Fish Exchange at the next regular meeting.

Odlin would like to conduct a job review of the PFX General Manager at the next meeting. City HR staff and along with Corporation Counsel, are working to create a rubric for the Board and a self-evaluation for the General Manager. Mendelson requested time to discuss as a Board before conducting the review. The Board will be forwarded the current job description (which contains some dated information) and all other materials once available.

8. Board and Staff discussion on items not on the Agenda

Gonzalez provided an update on the Portland Harbor Dredge project. The CAD cell was completed this spring, and dredging of the piers, wharves, and marinas will begin in December and continue for two seasons. A turbidity curtain will be installed around the CAD cell in November. The city is coordinating with owners regarding float and vessel movement. Odlin stressed the fishing community's cooperation for displaced boats. Mendelson suggested a future board discussion on liability for non-tenant boats on city piers.

9. Discussion of request from Waterfront ME on lease amendment.

Due to a recent development with the tenant, Cozy Harbor, the Board will also receive an update from Dandreta in Executive Session.

Motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)F and 5 M.R.S.A. 13119-A to review proprietary confidential information associated with the Waterfront ME lease, and 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)C and 405(6)E to discuss the Board's rights and responsibilities as it relates to the Cozy Harbor lease.

Hudson, 2nd O'Connell

No Public Comment

Approved 8-0, the Board entered Executive Session at approximately 3:05 pm. (Moretti joined the meeting in Executive Session)

Motion to end Executive Session and return to the public meeting.

Arnold, 2nd Mendelson

Approved 9-0, the Board re-entered the public meeting at approximately 3:29 pm.

10. Next Regular Meeting Date: November 20, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.

11. Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Hudson, 2nd Mendelson

Approved 7-0 (O'Connell and Mayo left prior to the vote)
The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:09 p.m.

Attachments included in the meeting packet:

Portland Fish Pier Authority October 2025 Financial Update

October Facilities Update

October Portland Fish Exchange Update

Draft PFEX Purchasing Policy

Draft Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee

Information on SHIP Grant Program