

FINAL Meeting Minutes

PORTLAND FISH PIER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
November 20, 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

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

Class E Director: Wesley Pelletier, District 2, Representing the City Council

Staff Present

Diane Albert, PFEX

Philip DiPierro, Facilities Manager

Avery Novak, Associate Corporation Counsel

Kaela Gonzalez, Program Coordinator

Rachel Millette, Associate Corporation Counsel

Public

There were approximately five (5) members of the public present.

Board Vice Chair Tracy Peace chaired the meeting for Board Chair Rob Odlin due to an unstable internet connection.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. September 18, 2025
- b. October 16, 2025

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes from September 18, 2025 and October 16, 2025.

O'Connell, 2nd Odlin

Approved 7-0

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

Gonzalez presented the Portland Fish Pier Authority's November 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.

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

DiPierro presented the Facilities Update. The Shore Power Upgrade project was awarded to the low bidder, Northern Electric, and is expected to start within the next month. The city is exploring a plan to run fiber from the Fish Pier to City Hall for security cameras in the Marine Trade Center and Vessel Services area, with an estimated cost of around \$20,000 plus monthly fees. The Water Resources project located in the West Parking lot has been awarded with a projected start date of July of next year and completion by Memorial Day 2027. New parking/no-parking signs and stripping were completed at the two parking areas in front of the Fish Exchange entrance. A contractor is lined up to fill sinkholes near Look's Lobster and the home birthing area. The Mavadonis Landing floats have been relocated to Sorting Pier 1 for winter storage and are available for smaller vessels. Odlin expressed concern that the floats take up valuable berthing space, especially with new, larger vessels coming in. Tech Associates will perform a general inspection of the piers and bulkhead wall, focusing particularly on Service Piers 1 and 3, to ensure safety. Staff raised an issue with a state vehicle consistently parking in a no-parking zone by the Harbormaster float and blocking a lane.

4. Portland Fish Exchange Update. *Tracy Pearce, PFEX Subcommittee Chair*

Pearce provided an update on the Portland Fish Exchange based on the November 13, 2025, PFEX Subcommittee meeting. The Fish Exchange performed better than budgeted last month. The crew is labeling new totes with the hope that more will be returned. The new condenser and compressors are running well, though the control system needs a manual update. This will be resolved when the new control system is updated in January. Cozy Harbor has been sold, and the new buyer Aquashell, will assume the lease. Odlin presented Avery Novak with questions regarding the possibility of amending the lease and timing. Lease terms can be negotiated in 2029, or proposed changes can be presented to see if they would be amendable. The subcommittee voted to recommend to the PFPA Board the approval of a new buyer, Glennfish Company. The subcommittee also discussed branding ideas that will be explored at further meetings.

Motion to approve Glennfish Company as a new buyer at the Portland Fish Exchange.

Odlin, 2nd Arnold

Approved 8-0 (Chris Mayo joined after the meeting minutes vote)

5. Discuss and vote to approve Rob Odlin, Board President, signing of letter supporting the adoption of the Fisheries Optimization Engine on behalf of the Board.

General discussion and concern over the organization responsible for producing the letter, and the need for more information to better understand the concept. More clarification is also needed regarding the appropriateness of the Board to sign something of this nature.

Motion to table the Fisheries Optimization Engine to the next meeting.

Odlin, 2nd Arnold

Approved 8-0

6. Discussion regarding review process for the Portland Fish Exchange Manager.

Evaluation Tool: Rachel Millette from the Corporation Council's office presented a template evaluation (or "rubric"), which she created based on the manager's job description and a city template.

Proposed Process: The suggested process involved:

Each individual board member completes their own evaluation.

The PFE Manager completes a self-evaluation.

All materials are shared with board members and the employee privately before the meeting.

The discussion of the evaluation takes place in an executive session with the employee present.

Discussion on Executive Session: There was debate over the format of the executive session.

Rachel Millette advised that employees generally have a right to be present when their performance is being discussed in an executive session.

Board members (Rob Odlin and Mary Hudson) recalled the previous PFE Board process involved the board discussing the review without the manager present, and then bringing him back in to relay the conversation, expressing that they were more comfortable with that format.

Rachel agreed to research the legal allowance for a preliminary discussion without the manager.

Third-Party Feedback: Board members expressed concern that they lack the day-to-day knowledge to assess some criteria, suggesting the need for third-party (360) feedback from PFE staff or other entities. Rachel confirmed this is legally appropriate and suggested a separate questionnaire might be needed for this purpose.

Resolution: The board decided to postpone the final approval of the process until the next meeting to allow for further work. Board members were tasked with reviewing the template and sending edits to Rachel, who would also research the executive session rules and potentially develop a third-party questionnaire.

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.

7. Discussion on Lobster Landings by Legal Federal Vessels at the Portland Fish Exchange.

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