



Peaks Island Council MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 22, 2026, 6:15 p.m.

Hybrid ZOOM/in-person meeting in the Community Center

NEXT Regular Monthly PIC Meeting
August 26, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Laura Glendening, Karsten Rees, Jerzy Sylvester, Jess Burton, Norm Proulx

Absent: Jonah Bradenday, Fred Somers

Number of Audience Members (AM) in attendance: 13 in person, 0 people attending remotely.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rees made motion to accept minutes from the June 24th meeting. Proulx seconded. Rees moved to amend the minutes to include language from Jean Hoffman regarding Proulx seconded. Unanimous approval. Motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bill Patnaude has retired and there is no Island Liaison at the meeting so there is no treasurer's report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rees announced that there are three Peaks Island Council seats available in the upcoming November 3rd election. People who are interested in running can take papers out from city hall and return them with 15 signatures by July 27th. People can also run as a write-in candidate if they miss the July 27th deadline.

Next PIC meeting is Wednesday, August 26th, at 6:15pm in the Community Center and on Google Meets.

PUBLIC COMMENT (beginning of meeting)

AM asked if there is a replacement for Bill Patnaude who retired as island liaison. Rees said he has emailed the city manager to find out who would be replacing Bill Patnaude, but he has not heard back yet.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & UPDATES

• **Executive Committee**

Rees said he emailed the city manager about the island liaison position. Rees said he answered emails from the public about the ferry service. He received Fred Somers' letter of resignation and shared it with the other councilors. The seat can remain vacant until the November 3rd election or the PIC can appoint an interim councilor if they want to.

• **Environment and Sustainability**

Burton said the Environment and Sustainability Committee met with the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Committee. It was productive and the committees would like to continue to meet together.

Glendening said that Great Diamond is having a workshop on August 12th to learn about nature-based strategies to prevent erosion. Space is limited and sign up is required. The workshop is being organized by the Island Institute and the Casco Bay Island Climate Collaborative.

Rees moved to suspend the rules in order to add an item of new business. Burton seconded. Glendening said the council uses suspension of rules too often to add items of new business. Motion failed to pass with Glendening and Rees opposing the motion.

Burton provided an update from the meeting. Issues discussed by the co-meeting of Environment and Sustainability Committee and the Park, Recreation and Waterfront Committee:

- 1) Emptying overflowing the garbage cans at the ferry landing
- 2) Emptying and cleaning the restroom at Trott Littlejohn Park, and providing the emptying and cleaning schedule to PIC
- 3) Removing the debris from Ferry Beach
- 4) Removing the debris from washed out roads, and repairing the roads
- 5) Providing the ballfield mowing schedule and delivering the promised ball field equipment (bleachers, picnic tables) and providing the timeline for those deliveries to the PIC

These items will be presented as a motion at the next meeting.

- **Ferry Services and Access**

Rees said there was an informal meeting to create the Memorandum of Understanding for the collaboration with PITEA regarding administration of needs-based tickets.

- **Housing and Zoning Committee**

No update.

- **Paper Roads**

No update.

- **Parking**

Rees said there is no parking committee chair so if members of the public are interested in chairing that committee, please let one of the councilors know.

- **Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Committee**

The committee met with the Environment and Sustainability committee.

- **Safety Committee**

No update. AM asked about the “Dangerous Hill” sign at the bottom of Brook Lane. Sylvester said he would inquire.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS –

- **Request for PIC representative for Portland in Motion. (LG)**

Glendening said the city has asked a member of PIC or a Peaks Island community member is invited to weigh in on Portland in Motion plan. This is the City’s first comprehensive transportation plan in more than 30 years. The plan will establish a long-term vision and strategic direction for Portland’s transportation system. They are looking for a name of someone tomorrow. Rees said that Michele Winchester has expressed interest of being the island representative. He said no one else has come forward. Glendening asked if anyone in the audience had an interest. (no response). Rees asked Councilor Sarah Michniewicz if the island could be represented by someone from the community or if it had to be someone from the councilor. She said it could be someone from the public.

Rees made a motion to appoint Michele Winchester as the Peaks Island representative to the Portland in Motion initiative. Proulx seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Glendening will introduce Winchester to Nell Donaldson.

Burton said the link to the Portland in Motion survey didn't work. Winchester said the Portland in Motion survey link worked on her laptop but not on her cell phone. She encouraged people to take the survey.

- **Motion to send a PIC letter to PITEA regarding the Needs-Based Ticket Program. (LG)**

Glendening withdrew the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

Burton makes a motion to move Ferry dock trash maintenance and Public Works Concerns to later in the New Business section of the meeting. Rees seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Presentation from Public Regarding Public Utilities Commission Proceedings. (KR)**

Rees explained that PIC is allowed to entertain presentations from members of the public with no motion or action item attached to it. Rees said Roberts rule number 43 allows this.

Mary Lou Wendell was allotted 10 minutes for a presentation. She said that there was a 50-rate payer petition opened with the PUC regarding the new passenger ferry rates. She said there were also two 50-rate payer petitions opened with the PUC regarding the new car ferry rates. Wendell said there was also an online petition in opposition to the new ferry rates signed by 450 people.

Wendell said she applauds the motion to rescind the transfer of the PIC needs-based tickets program. She said the motion to give the money PITEA gives her pause. Wendell asked why there are conflicting motions. Wendell said she does not support PITEA administering the needs-based tickets program and is concerned that lack of publicizing the program has led to a reduction in the amount appropriated to the program. She thinks the tickets should continue to be distributed by the food pantry at New Brackett Church with clarification of the rules, and with a backup plan for people who cannot get to the church during food pantry opening hours.

Wendell is concerned about the needs-based tickets program issuing individual tickets versus passes.

Wendell is concerned that the PUC investigation has not been adjudicated yet, so moving forward with CBITD funding of the needs-based tickets program is premature at this time.

Rees asked for councilor comment. Proulx said passes are a better use of the money that the needs-based tickets program is allotted compared to individual tickets. Proulx said moving forward on the program is a good step at this time.

Margaret Kelsey also gave a presentation on the ferry ticket prices. She said that the ferry ticket rate changes are complicated and not affordable and breeches the permissions granted to the CBITD board as allowed by the law. Kelsey said the PUC investigation has just begun. Kelsey said her calculations have identified other alternatives to support ticket affordability. Kelsey said PIC should give PUC time to conduct its investigation before changing the needs-based tickets program and asked PIC to withdraw the motion to have PITEA administer the needs-based tickets program.

Rees asked for councilor comment. Proulx asked Kelsey what the timeline is for the PUC to conduct their investigation. Kelsey said she did not know. Proulx said the PIC should not sit idle while PUC is making a decision, and the interim solution of PITEA administering the PIC needs-based ticket program should be implemented in the meantime.

Sylvester asked why there are two proposals on the agenda. Glendening said that the two motions reflect two different viewpoints and discussion will help come to consensus. Rees added that the democratic process and voting will decide which of the two motions will pass.

Burton asked for clarification about when passes versus individual tickets will be issued. Rees said that both tickets and passes will be available upon request. Glendening said there was a vote at the May 27th meeting that PITEA will administer annual passes and there was no vote that PITEA will administer individual tickets.

AM thanked Kelsey and Wendell for their work. She said that in 2018, there were four sites where people could collect needs-based tickets and PIC had two councilors involved with needs-based tickets. Currently, there is no councilor involved with needs-based tickets program and that should be rectified. If the program is administered by PITEA someone on PIC should be involved.

AM said that PUC is focused on low- and moderate-income non-commuters who are paying \$16/ticket for infrequent ferry tickets. Those people do not need passes but may opt for them because of convenience.

Jean Hoffman, treasurer of CBITD said CBITD is inaugurating an entirely separate needs-based program that will be administered by PITEA to maintain affordability for islanders. PIC has a needs-based program funded by the city. Hoffman said the rate increase is necessary, there has not been a rate increase since 2008. She said meetings are open and everyone is welcome to make comments at the CBITD board meetings. PIC has control of the funds given them by the city but does not have any jurisdiction over CBITD.

AM said that there is some confusion between two issues: how will PIC use the \$2,500 given them by the city council and will PITEA be chosen to administer that program.

Michelle Winchester, president of PITEA, said that there is administrative benefit for PITEA to run the program since many procedures are already in place. She said that there is a need for both passes and individual tickets, the plan is to provide both. Data will be collected about community demand to inform future decisions.

Kelsey said the PUC investigation opened in 2025 because the annual pass was associated with discounts on car ferry ticket prices, not because of the increase in passenger ticket prices. She said that individuals don't want to submit the application for assistance because of the stigma of asking for help from fellow islanders. Kelsey said CBITD should address the affordability issue and not rely on PITEA to issue needs-based tickets.

Jennifer LaVanture, president of the CBITD board, said the founding legislation of the CBITD board said it has a duty to provide adequate, reliable, and affordable service, and to reduce reliance on operating subsidies. LaVanture said that CBITD created a menu of options to provide affordable rates for islanders, and that the monthly pass makes sense for anyone who makes over three trips a month. LaVanture noted that PIC invited the PUC petitioners to present to the council and the CBITD board representatives were not invited to make a presentation. Rees said the petitioners made their own request to make a presentation and were not solicited.

- **Motion to Rescind the May 27, 2026 vote to transfer the PIC Needs-based Ticket program and \$2,500 to PITEA (LG)**

Glendening said there were problems with the process on May 27, 2026 when PIC voted to transfer the needs-based ticket funds from FY2027 budget to PITEA. Glendening said this motion was not on the agenda so the public and councilors were not prepared to discuss this issue. Glendening said the PIC needs-based tickets has been entangled with the CBITD affordability program. Her motion to rescind the May 27, 2026 motion will restart the process so that the public and the councilors will have notice of the issue and public comment can take place.

Glendening made a motion to rescind the May 27, 2026 vote to transfer the PIC Needs-based Ticket program and \$2,500 to PITEA. Sylvester seconded.

Proulx said the needs-based tickets is a PIC initiative that has been around for years and PIC is in no way entangled with the recent CBITD initiatives. Proulx said PIC should move forward and use the money the city

gave PIC in a much better way. Proulx said the interim process involving PITEA administering the program should go forward.

Sylvester said that the discussion about the rates and PUC and CBITD is important, but at this moment PIC needs to find the best way to provide needs-based tickets and passes. Sylvester said that PIC should promote the needs-based transportation assistance program. He said that PITEA would be a good administrator of the program, but a PIC councilor should support that effort.

Rees agreed that PIC needs to promote the needs-based tickets program and sustained councilor attention is necessary. Rees said that PIC should focus on its own program before engaging with adjudicated processes.

Burton said that Rees and Somers have been working on this over the past several years, so it isn't an initiative that has been neglected. Burton said the current program hasn't worked in part because everyone is so busy, so it makes sense to partner with PITEA to attend to the initiative in a way that PIC has not been able to do. Burton asked if money is currently available to buy tickets today. Rees said yes.

Glendening said her motion is not about PITEA doing a better job, it is about the flawed process that PIC pursued on May 27, 2026. Further discussion is important and with insufficient process, the PIC needs-based program has been entangled with CBITD ticket affordability program.

AM said she supports the motion to rescind because there was not enough information given to the councilors or the public about how PITEA would administer the needs-based ticket program before the vote on May 27, 2026. The public was not given enough notice prior to the vote.

AM said that the expiration date on the individual tickets has been a problem because there were always more tickets purchased than were used.

AM said that the people using the needs-based tickets program will not care whether the funding came from PIC or CBITD, and that being able to go to one place for needs-based tickets in confidentiality makes sense.

AM said that they support the motion to rescind. They said that after rescinding the motion, PIC should make a new motion to ask the public how they feel about funds for needs-based tickets being administered through PITEA.

AM said that they support the motion to rescind. PIC should seek public input on how to make the PIC needs-based tickets run better.

AM said that CBITD committed to provide a grant of \$4,000 to a program to support tickets for islanders and contacted PITEA to administer that program on behalf of CBITD. The CBITD decision to engage PITEA with its needs-based ticket program is completely independent from PIC's decision to allocate \$2,500 to PITEA to administer the PIC needs-based program.

Winchester said that PITEA would track the funds for needs-based tickets separately, so the money remains with the needs-based tickets program. PIC money will not enter the general fund. She said that if the motion to rescind passes then PITEA is still willing to work with PIC in the future.

Glendening reiterated that the motion to rescind is not about PITEA or CBITD, it is about the process that PIC followed prior to the vote.

Sylvester said that after reviewing meeting minutes from May 27th meeting, it appears that process was followed correctly. It was posted in the original agenda, as the second part of a two-part motion. It was discussed extensively at that meeting. Glendening said that the original agenda did not mention PITEA.

Rees said that the motion did state the transfer of funds to a third party was part of the motion, and PITEA as the third-party administrator was mentioned at the previous meeting.

Proulx called the question. Unanimous support for proceeding directly to a vote.

Motion to rescind fails to pass with three opposing and Glendening supporting. (Jess Burton left the meeting prior to this vote).

- **Motion to Adopt Memorandum of Understanding. (KR)**

Rees made a motion to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding between PIC and PITEA, as seen here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1jimmlGQygtY3uU4RfWXA03TSapm1N5cl>. Sylvester seconded.

Rees summarized the MOU which is designed to add structure to how PITEA would administer the needs-based ticket program on behalf of PIC, the expansion of the program to include both tickets and passes, definition about how PITEA will track the program and report performance metrics to PIC.

Rees said that this MOU is a good step that defines how the needs-based program will move forward. With the effective date through November 2026, Rees said this document is more helpful than harmful.

Sylvester clarified that if the MOU fails to pass, PITEA will still administer the program as voted on at the May 27th meeting, but they will proceed without PIC input. Rees said that is true.

AM said that this MOU should not be used by CBITD to show precedent for a needs-based program administered by PITEA. They said that the memorandum should specifically state that it cannot be referenced by CBITD in their proceedings with PUC.

AM asked if this was a grant from PIC to PITEA? Who on the council will provide oversight of the funds? Rees said he would respond during council time.

AM asked if other organizations could contribute to the fund. Michelle Winchester said that is a future possibility but fundraising for this program is not happening now.

Rees highlighted language in the MOU that states: "This memorandum is solely an administrative services agreement and should not be understood as supporting or endorsing actions taken by the Casco Bay Island Transportation District ("CBITD"). Actions taken by the Peaks Island Council and the CBITD to expand island services are not related, and the CBITD is not a party to this agreement."

Rees said the Ferry Services Committee will be the point of contact for PITEA.

Rees said that funds can be raised if money is an issue.

Glendening asked how Rees could address her concerns and get her vote. Rees said that communication with the district will be clear about the separation of the PIC needs-based program and the CBITD needs-based program. Rees said that this MOU is an opportunity to expand the program and the relief to the community is going to be rolled out and there is a lot of benefit in adopting the MOU.

Sylvester said the MOU will be reviewed at the November meeting and PIC has the option to request that the funds be returned.

Motion to adopt the MOU fails to pass with three votes in support of the motion, and Glendening vote to oppose. (Jess Burton left the meeting prior to this vote.)

- **Ferry dock trash maintenance (JB)**

No councilor present to present this motion.

- **Public Works concerns (LG)**

Glendening said that the idea was for the public to make a list of public works concerns. Sylvester said that the items could be collected with a notice in the newsletter. Rees said this agenda item is out of order without a motion or presentation, so that it should be brought back to the council at a future meeting.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

AM said ferry dock trash maintenance was discussed at the joint meeting of Parks and Recreation and Waterfront, and the Environment and Sustainability committee. They said that not bringing this topic forward is a failing of PIC. Community members can volunteer to help but it is up to PIC to be advocates for the community. It is part of a bigger issue about city services not being provided to the Peaks Island neighborhood: infrastructure and safety concerns down front, pumping out toilets, taking abandoned boats of the beach, etc.

AM said that a communication channel should be established for the public to know how to move forward on neighborhood issues, with good communication back and forth between the public, PIC, and the city. AM also asked for more clarity about when committees meet and written details of what is discussed.

AM reiterated that the CBITD needs-based program and PIC needs-based program are independent programs.

Rees made a motion to adjourn. Proulx seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjournment: 8:53 p.m.