



**Legislative Committee
Meeting
December 2, 2020**

AGENDA

I. Zoom Information:

- a. The Legislative Committee will hold a meeting on Wednesday, November 2, 2020 at 9:15 AM. This meeting will take place remotely using Zoom.

Virtual meetings are allowed using emergency legislation approved by LD 2167; 1 M.R.S. §403-A, that authorizes cities and towns to conduct meetings online.

Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live, a recording will be uploaded to portlandmaine.gov/livestream the next day.

For public comment, you will need to use the "raise your hand" feature. To raise your hand via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be un-muted by the host when it is time for public comment.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85258254596?pwd=UFNFeDdTaEdOYlYzQ1pzTWZJU3NKZz09>

Passcode: 793185

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +13126266799,,85258254596#,,,,,0#,,793185# or
+19292056099,,85258254596#,,,,,0#,,793185#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669
900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 852 5825 4596

Passcode: 793185

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kjVPhR4PI>

II. Call to Order

III. Approval of Meeting minutes

- a. June 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- b. June 8, 2020 Workshop Minutes
- c. June 22, 2020 Meeting minutes
- d. September 14, 2020 Meeting minutes

IV. Legislative Update

- a. Review of State legislative priorities

V. Adjournment



Legislative Committee June 1, 2020 Workshop Minutes

The June 8, 2020 remote Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 9:00 AM on Zoom.

I. Attendance/Introductions

Councilor Pious Ali (Chair), Councilor Jill Duson, Mayor Kate Snyder, City Manager Jon P. Jennings, Danielle West-Chuhta (Corporation Counsel), Dena Libner (Assistant to the City Manager), Kate Knox (Bernstein Shur), Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Shur), Rep. Dick Farnsworth, Rep. Mike Sylvester, Rep. Ed Crockett, Rep. Michael Brennan, Rep. Erik Jorgensen.

II. Approval of Minutes from 6/1/20 Meeting

Councilor Duson made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 1, 2020 Committee Meeting, vote 3-0.

III. Discussion with Portland Deletion to Augusta: Revenue Sharing and City/State Economy

Chairman Ali described the conversation Committee members had in their June 1 workshop related to relaxing rules for signature gathering.

Rep. Sylvester described a new legislative portal to assist residents having trouble receiving their unemployment claims.

Rep. Brennan described a briefing by the Commissioner of Education about the State's \$6M investment in devices to enhance 24,000 students' internet access. She also said the State is committed to maintaining the 1% increase in general focus aid to education in the next budget.

City Manager Jon P. Jennings described cuts in expenses the City has implemented to address anticipated revenue differentials. He said he hopes the City will have an FY21 budget in place by October, and that it is too early to say where the City will be on revenue in order to pass a budget any sooner.

Rep. Jorgensen described the Appropriations Committee's recent meetings and discussions of the State's fiscal situation and economy, as well as the impact on the hospitality and childcare industries. He said the Committee would likely hold a meeting where it would seek input from local governments in the next few weeks. A major hit related to the pandemic would not be seen until later in June.

IV. Meeting Schedule

The Committee and its attendees agreed to meet next on June 22, 2020 at 9:00 AM.

Councilor Duson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Snyder, vote 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM.



Legislative Committee June 8, 2020 Workshop Minutes

The June 8, 2020 remote workshop was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 8:00 AM on Zoom.

I. Attendance/Introductions

Councilor Pious Ali (Chair), Councilor Jill Duson, Mayor Kate Snyder, City Manager Jon Jennings, Danielle West-Chuhta (Corporation Counsel), Kathy Jones (City Clerk).

II. Signature Gathering for Candidates and Citizen-Initiated Petitions

Ms. West-Chuhta provided a description of the laws that govern the two different types of petition gathering. She advised that changes to either would require both an amendment to the relevant City Code (Chapter 9) and City Charter, and would require voters' approval at the polls.

Councilor Duson indicated she would like to consider what electronic signature-gathering options could be implemented in compliance with existing laws. West-Chuhta confirmed she would research the issue and follow up with the Committee.

Public attendees were asked for their questions. Em Burnett asked if signature deadlines could be relaxed, and West-Chuhta confirmed she would look into ways to facilitate a faster process with the City Clerk.

Councilor Duson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Snyder, vote 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.



Legislative Committee June 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The June 22, 2020 remote Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 9:00 AM on Zoom.

I. Attendance/Introductions

Councilor Pious Ali (Chair), Councilor Jill Duson, Mayor Kate Snyder, City Manager Jon P. Jennings, Danielle West-Chuhta (Corporation Counsel), Kathy Jones (City Clerk), Dena Libner (Assistant to the City Manager), Rep. Erik Jorgensen, Rep. Michael Brennan, Rep. Ed Crockett, Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross, Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Schur).

II. Signature Gathering: Update & Discussion

Danielle West-Chuhta and Kathy Jones presented a joint memo to Committee members regarding gathering signatures electronically and at the polls on July 14, 2020.

Councilor Ali asked Corporation Counsel to draft a recommendation to the Mayor that a special meeting of the Council be held August 31, 2020 in order to give petitioners more time to gather signatures.

III. Discussion with Portland Deletion to Augusta: Revenue Sharing

Rep. Jorgensen shared the Administration recently announced that they plan to use funds received from the federal government to backfill the unemployment trust fund, which was on track run out of funding by September. The theme of a recent Appropriations Committee Meeting was social services, including the production of meals to homeless individuals

and how organizations have changed their operations related to meal delivery in response to COVID-19.

Rep. Brennan shared that \$13M in CARES funding had been set aside by the State for municipalities to work on education, business interaction, and local operations related to COVID-19, and that municipalities were encouraged to apply for that grant funding.

IV. Adjournment

Councilor Duson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Snyder, vote 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 AM.

DRAFT



Legislative Committee September 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes

The September 14, 2020 remote Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 9:45 AM on Zoom.

Councilor Pious Ali (Chair), Councilor Jill Duson, Mayor Kate Snyder, Dena Libner (Assistant to the City Manager), Kate Knox (Bernstein Schur), Chris Coffey (Bernstein Schur), Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Schur).

Mayor Snyder provided the Committee with an update related to the Mayors Coalition and pending leadership changes related to the Coalition. Committee members discussed identifying one councilor who could be relied on to directly engage the legislature in partnership with the Mayor.

Councilor Duson raised the issue of the Maine Municipal Association's current effort to develop legislative priorities for the 2021-2022 legislative session. The Committee recommended that staff share the relevant survey with individual councilors and collect responses to share with Councilor Duson before Friday, September 18, 2020.

The Committee discussed the need to develop the City's own legislative priorities. Alysia Melnick recommended that priorities be very targeted, and that legislators have requested a very tight agenda from the City.

Mayor Snyder asked for updated related to funding for election operations in preparation of an Elections Workshop. Kate Knox described a recent Executive Order from the Governor making some electoral changes, and said a comprehensive guidance document is expected from the Secretary of State's Office which will elaborate on flexibility granted to city clerks and municipalities.

The Committee discussed meeting September 21, 2020 with Portland delegates to discuss legislative priorities. Councilor Ali confirmed he would coordinate with Rep. Ross.

Mayor Snyder made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Duson, vote 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:14 AM.

DRAFT



CITY OF PORTLAND
Jon P. Jennings, City Manager

To: Legislative Committee Members
From: Jon P. Jennings, City Manager
Date: December 2, 2020
RE: State Legislative Priorities

Health & Human Services

The Department would like to see changes to the reimbursement formula used to determine the State's portion of General Assistance. Additional legislative priorities include:

- LD 1403: An Act To Amend the General Assistance Laws Governing Reimbursement
- Recommendations submitted by the work group established by LD 459, which included 100% state reimbursement for any assistance issues as an emergency above the guidelines.
- LD 1142: An Act to Expand Transportation Services for Seniors
- LD 1258: An act to Increase Access to Transportation for Workforce and Other Essential Transportation Needs (allow non-medical transportation under MaineCare)
- LD 1410: An Act To Create Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits (supports family caregivers who need time off to care for elderly relatives)
- LD 474: An Act To Ensure the Health and Wellness of Older Residents of the State (expands funding/ access to home delivered meals programs)
- LD 1733: An Act To Ensure Comprehensive Interdepartmental Planning, Coordination and Collaboration on Aging Policy (creates a Cabinet on Aging and cabinet position to develop and coordinate state agency goals, resource use, research, and inform the State Plan on aging)

Housing & Economic Development

§6042. Maine Working Waterfront Access Protection Program

Funding this program, previously through the Land for Maine's Future Program, provides private pier and waterfront property owners to "sell" development rights for non-marine use to the State and use the proceeds for infrastructure upkeep or upgrades.

The program has not been used in Portland in the past, but has been successful in multiple coastal communities. Portland has many properties that could make use of the funds. This program has been under funded in the past which has limited its potential application to more expensive real estate, such as the piers in Portland Harbor.

Workforce Training

LD 647: An Act to Attract, Educate and Retain New State Residents to Strengthen the Workforce

Affordable Housing Funding and Programs

LD 1645: Ensure that the state continues with the state tax credit program, which supplements the federal LIHTC program.

LD 1956: This bill looks at zoning and land use to increase housing opportunities.

Sustainability

LD 1748: last session the Council supported this legislation, which would help businesses access capital to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

LD 1711: We anticipate efforts to amend this bill and will need to monitor this closely to protect our existing projects and investments

Possibly utility reform: We should track this on several fronts, including streamlined data access for customers and authorization for the creation of publicly owned utilities.

“Green Bank”: The Governor’s Office and some legislators are investigating the creation of a “green bank” to accelerate private investment in climate and resilience projects.

Police Department

Based upon our experiences this year, and with the safety and well being of our employees and their families in mind, we suggest seeking legislation to **prevent doxxing of law enforcement officers** (i.e., the posting of police officers’ private personal and family information, such as home addresses or vehicles for the purpose of harassing, intimidating and even soliciting or advocating for violence against our public servants or their families.

We recommend **requiring Maine BMV to obtain and include next of kin or close contact information on driver license and state identification applications.** This information could then be made available in a much more efficient and effective manner in order to allow public safety agencies and medical facilities access to such data during those critical incidents in

which a victim or decedent's is unidentified or their next of kin is not readily known or available. Additional information is available at <https://toinformfamiliesfirst.org/>.

Similar to the previous suggestion, **require Maine BMV to obtain and include a phone number for driver license applicants and vehicle registrants.** Again, this could be used by public safety to help more efficiently contact a licensee or registrant in the event of an emergency or other incident.

Tax Assessor

Continue to push for passing of:

- LD 560: An Act To Improve Access to Property Tax Exemptions for New Homeowners
- LD1234: An Act To Expand the Value of the Homestead Exemption to \$25,000 and State Reimbursement to 70 Percent of Lost Property Tax Revenue

Lastly, consider new legislation to **allow for an abatement of a portion of current year taxes when a property owner experiences a catastrophic loss** (fire, flood, etc.) defined as a loss of 50% or greater of the property's market value.

Finance

We recommend advocacy to keep revenue sharing percentage at current budget levels (3.75%).

Public Buildings & Waterfront

Fire Station Renovations and Replacement

Funding in the amount of 25M is needed to support renovations of 5 stations and replacement of 1 critical station. The existing stations were constructed 40-80+ yrs ago. With current residential and commercial development the need for additional apparatus and proper living quarters is needed to safely support the citizens of Portland and the men and women that live in these facilities.

Police Station Relocation

Support is needed for the relocation of the Portland Police Department. Neither the location nor the design of this facility supports the safe operation and needs of our police department and the men and women that serve our community and beyond. The facility is approaching 50 year old. It's 55,000+ square feet with 300+ employees, and includes a regional crime lab and space

for the FBI. The facility lacks safe and secure parking for officers, proper storage for evidence, interrogation rooms, SWAT equipment storage, etc.

Local/ Regional Shelter

Portland has looked into many options to replace it's existing operations. Public Buildings was recently tasked with developing a concept design and cost to construct a facility on a city owned site. This work has been completed, the cost estimate of 20M in our opinion provides substantial space and resources to address homelessness and potentially drug addiction and mental illness. We feel the approach taken for this task was done responsibly, which includes a Maine owned business to provide a bulk of the project and partnerships with the Portland Public Schools and many local agencies that are currently doing great work.

Once funding is secured this project could be occupied within 18 months.