



**Peaks Island Council
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, April 28, 2021

6:15 p.m., ZOOM meeting

NEXT Regular Monthly PIC Meeting–May 26, 2021

May PIC meeting will be a ZOOM meeting

CALL TO ORDER: 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Randy Schaeffer, Peter Eckel, Fred Somers, Peter McLaughlin, Devon Kraft, Andrea Kelly-Rosenberg

Absent: SE Rafferty

Number of Audience Members (AM) in attendance: 18

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kraft made the motion to accept the March 24, 2021 meeting minutes. Kelly-Rosenberg seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Schaeffer shared the expenditure report as of April 27, 2021 via Zoom. Schaeffer reported that the total remaining budget for FY21 is \$9,479.30.

Somers made a motion to accept the expenditure report. Kraft seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to accept the expenditure report. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & UPDATES

• **Priority Setting Committee – update on survey**

Eckel said survey will go out electronically and hard copies will be available at the library. Survey will be open for four weeks. If there are lack of responses, it will be promoted more aggressively.

• **Parking Committee – update and outreach to City Council**

Eckel reported that some Peaks Island councilors spoke at the most recent city council meeting, then sent a letter to the city councilors, and then asked Belinda Raye when the PIC Parking Committee could expect a response. Raye said the city would try to add spots to Thames Street extension, but she did not respond about adding spots to the new street (as yet unnamed) that is being created near Thames Street or about making an island resident parking lot in a portion of the \$15/day lot.

McLaughlin said he sees no reason why this issue cannot be part of the City Sustainability and Transportation Committee meeting agenda. McLaughlin said it's frustrating that the issue is not moving ahead through normal channels, and he thinks islanders may have to raise the issue at upcoming city council meetings.

Schaeffer said that public participation in addition to PIC representation at city council meetings is key to getting movement on this issue.

McLaughlin said the next meeting of the city Sustainability and Transportation Committee is May 19th.

- **Golf Cart – update**

Implementation of the Golf Cart Ordinance has been deferred until 2022 by the City Manager's office due to the pandemic.

Schaeffer said public input is also required to bring this issue to the attention of the Sustainability and Transportation Committee. He suggested informing community about the May 19th committee meeting in order to raise attention to the issues.

Somers commented that he did not understand how the pandemic has delayed the implementation of the golf cart ordinance.

McLaughlin said we should partner with the city in good faith because the city staff is not allowed to speak to City Councilors, and the councilors may not even be aware of the delay in implementing the golf cart ordinance.

- **Ferry Service Committee – update**

Somers said the board discussed the fee for the residential boarding pass, voting to make it \$10/year/pass.

The transfer bridge project will be completed by May 7th. The Machigonne II is having sea trials this week.

Terminal renovation is ongoing. Excavation work for storm water and electrical systems has been done. Most of the work this summer will focus on addition of second story. Everything should be done by end of 2021.

New ferry project RFP is going out this week. CBL plans to have the new ferry in service by the end of 2022.

Electronic reservation system for vehicles is in process with outside vendor. Intent is to replace the first-come-first-serve system with a vehicle reservation by early January 2022.

- **Environment and Sustainability – update**

First committee meeting will be Wednesday, May 12th, 6-8pm via Zoom. If you are interested in participating, contact Peter McLaughlin at peter.mclaughlin.pic@gmail.com or 339-225-2353. So far there are six members of the committee.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Jetport Noise Advisory Committee- update and preparation for 5/20 NAC meeting**

Jennifer Lavanture said the next meeting of the Jetport Advisory Committee will be held on May 20th at either 6pm or 6:30pm (to be announced). Public participation is encouraged, especially as flight volumes return to pre-pandemic levels.

Lavanture commented that implementation of additional GPS waypoints to the harbor visual approach (intended to keep flights over water as opposed to over populated sections of island) will not be implemented until December 2021 (delay from July 2021 due to pandemic).

Lavanture presented new national noise annoyance curve which will help form future noise policy at Portland Jetport.

Lavanture said the RNAV special visual approach over the Trefethen area of the island is being closely monitored as it is used by Southwest Airlines.

AM said that flights over the Trefethen area of the island are increasing, and the flight path is not being used only by Southwest Airlines. AM also asked why Pumpkin Knob is not being used as a way point in order to keep planes over Hussey Sound.

Lavanture said that RNAV is only an arrival flight path and is only being used by Southwest Airlines. Lavanture said that other planes that appear to be following the RNAV arrival path are probably flying another flight path but straying off course. She noted that there is a departure procedure that follows the same path, and that planes are louder on departure than on arrival. However, the noise impact of the departure procedure has never been part of the noise discussion. She said public should bring this up at the Jetport Noise Advisory Committee meeting. Lavanture also said there are objections to flying over Pumpkin Knob by FAA representatives, but she is working

to bring it up at the sub-committee level to see if waypoints can be moved on this approach.

Schaeffer emphasized that community participation at the Portland Jetport Noise Advisory Committee is critical to addressing noise problems associated with planes.

- **Welch Street lot – discussion of planned traffic flow**

Eckel said most public comment to him has been about change in the circulation pattern of the drop off circle. It looks like there is no lane for people to wait to pick up passengers coming in on incoming boat (as compared to dropping passengers off for outgoing boat).

Mike Tremblay, Senior Engineer of City of Portland, said they decided to reverse the direction of the drop off for a couple of reasons:

- 1) Drop off passenger directly to sidewalk (as opposed to drop off in the travel lane)
- 2) Cars can choose to drop off and leave, or drop off and park.

Tremblay said that when they were designing the traffic flow, they had not heard comments about the need to park and wait to pick people up, or the comment that with the reversed circulation pattern, people would be facing away from the boat and would not see incoming passengers as they waited in their cars.

Tremblay also said nothing is carved in stone at this point, and they would consider public comment made at this point.

AM asked if whole schematic is available for download – Tremblay provided a link – see page 3 of <https://portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30151/Peaks-Island-Full-Bid-Planset>

AM said the current traffic pattern is sufficient and doesn't need to be changed.

AM said the current traffic pattern would work if people coming out of the parking lot went around the traffic circle when they left the parking lot. If the one way flow was enforced, the current traffic pattern would be fine. AM also commented that the traffic pattern at the top of the traffic circle (as seen on the schematic) is too complicated.

AM said that traffic backing up onto Welch Street is not viable. AM also said that there is not enough drop off and pick up space as it is, and this plan adds congestion and makes it more difficult to drop off or pick up. It does not relieve the issue, it complicates the issue.

AM said that the new plan allows people to enter the parking lot from both the upper entrance to the traffic circle and the lower entrance to the traffic circle – so it seems like traffic can go anyway it wants to and it becomes chaotic. People have become used to the traffic flow we currently have and we should stick with it.

AM said current configuration allows you to see who you are picking up makes the pickup process go faster and is more efficient.

AM said changing the direction of the traffic circle is a bad idea.

McLaughlin said the core issue is that there is simply not enough space for everything that is going on in the area. But the new circulation pattern creates a head on meeting of people leaving and entering the traffic circle and that is not a good idea.

Schaeffer said that the summer crowds make it impossible to operate safely and efficiently in the area. Overflow of more than three cars will create grid lock and it is a recipe for disaster. Schaeffer advocated for city engineers to come out on weekend sometime to look for another alternative.

Somers asked why lane going down to sewage treatment plant can't be used more effectively – people park there but it is not part of the parking lot.

Tremblay said he thinks the consensus is that we should not change the circulation around the traffic circle. He said people can suggest how signage and pavement markings to help address other issues at the traffic circle via email. Lot will be paved in second week of May and markings will be shortly after that, so markings will be finalized within a week. So if people have suggestions, they should send them to Tremblay by May 5th. mtremblay@portlandmaine.gov

Schaffer asked Tremblay to redraft the schematic and deliver back to PIC prior to committing to contractor.

- **PIC Ferry Tickets and Passes – motion to solicit community input**

Rafferty was unable to attend – deferred update to next meeting.

- **City Charter Commission – what it is and why it is important – a discussion**

McLaughlin provided background information on the upcoming City Charter Councilor election. The City Charter election is May 8th. The City Charter is effectively the constitution. It creates the basic structure for city government and delineates some rights of citizens. The process is open-ended and provides an opportunity for islanders to advocate for island needs and give greater voice to island issues. One idea that has been proposed is to reduce the number of at-large representatives and have more specific neighborhood representatives, including an islands representative on the City Council, giving islanders a more direct voice in city government.

- **City Charter Commission Candidates Forum - update**

Peaks Island will host two forums – one for District One candidates (May 6th) and one for all at-large candidates (May 11th). Each candidate will have a short time to make an opening statement and then the audience can ask candidates questions directly. Both meetings will start at 6:15pm and will be held via Zoom.

NEW BUSINESS

- **PIC Procedures – discussion of need for written procedures for PIC operations**

Schaeffer said this discussion is intended to set up PIC procedures, perhaps even adopting bylaws. This discussion is important, but not time sensitive.

Somers suggested this discussion could be delayed until a later meeting in light of the late hour.

Schaeffer agreed that delaying this conversation and conducting it in a public workshop (rather than a PIC meeting) is a better route.

McLaughlin agreed that the conversation is better suited to a public workshop.

- **Need for Island Restrooms – discussion**

With fewer restrooms available on the island (Community Center restrooms are not available) and the public restroom in the parking lot is not clean, people are relieving themselves in other spaces which is unhealthy and bad for quality of life.

Kelly-Rosenberg said that if the Community Center restrooms are open, the pop-up library in the Community Center entrance would have to be discontinued.

Kelly-Rosenberg pointed out that lack of restrooms on the back shore continues to be an issue that is not addressed by opening the Community Center restrooms.

Schaeffer agreed that even if the bunker bathroom is clean and working, the portable restroom trailer in the parking lot is installed, the Community Center restrooms are open --- it is still not enough restrooms for the number of visitors who come to Peaks Island. We need to address a long term solution for providing restrooms for 4,000 visitors a day.

Somers said he would investigate what the city standards are for providing restrooms for 4,000 visitors a day.

Kelly-Rosenberg asked Bill Patnaude how Peaks Island can get porta-potties as a long term solution.

Bill Patnaude said it would have to be submitted to council by Facilities or Parks and Rec Department.

Schaeffer asked Somers and Kelly-Rosenberg to pursue a plan – they agreed.

McLaughlin said that the public restroom issue in downtown Portland -use CaresAct funding to install more porta-potties in downtown Portland. Perhaps there is an opportunity for the island to get a couple of porta-potties with the CaresAct funding.

Schaeffer said Somers and Kelly-Rosenberg will pursue the possibility of CaresAct funding for porta-potties.

- **Summer Crowds Downfront –**

Eckel made a motion:

To have PIC convene meeting with Casco Bay Lines, the Portland Police, and local crowd generating venues to discuss plans for crowd transport and management.

Somers seconded the motion.

AM said great idea!

AM said that CBL should consider how residential priority boarding affects crowd control down front.

PUBLIC COMMENT

AM said bylaws are not a great idea, unless they are very flexible.

AM asked what PIC will do with the left over budget – can it be used to pay the \$10 fee for residential boarding passes for people who can't afford them.

AM noted that there are no questions about zoning issues and ADUs in the island survey – can it be included as part of the survey?

AM asked about the dog park. Is anyone from PIC willing to show up to help advocate for the dog park at the Parks and Rec meeting? McLaughlin said he would.

AM said the restrooms are hugely important given the enormous growth of the island as a visitor destination.

AM said that both restrooms and parking are essential quality of life and public health issues.

AM asked for follow up on how island police can respond to emergency calls that involve a person with a gun. Schaeffer said that will be on the agenda for May.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES

Next PIC Meeting: Wednesday, May 28, 2021, at 6:15 pm via ZOOM.

Eckel made motion to adjourn. McLaughlin seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjournment: 8:14 p.m.