

**PORTLAND FISH PIER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
April 9, 2026, 3:30 PM**

**Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee Meeting  
Remote via Zoom**

Please use the meeting information below to join the meeting:

<https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/86089659755?pwd=PPraMhuo5jHtg1ICxv2JV1XeWSv2cb.1>

To submit written public comment on an Agenda item, please send an email to [edd@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:edd@portlandmaine.gov). Submissions must be received by 12:00 p.m. the day before the Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee meeting to guarantee their inclusion in the Agenda packet.

- 1. Committee Chair Comments**
- 2. Approval of March 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
  - a. See attached minutes from March 12, 2026  
**Action Item - Public Comment**
- 3. Portland Fish Exchange Manager's Report**
  - a. Fish Exchange Manager's Report
  - b. Expense/revenue items deviating from the budget
  - c. Available space in the coolers
- 4. Discussion on funding opportunity for Portland Fish Exchange through SEA Maine funding.**
  - a. To further shape the SEA Maine Application, the subcommittee will receive a presentation from Energy Experts ME that will cover information regarding the roof, as well as options within the grant budget.
- 5. Discussion on alternatives to a line of credit for buyers.**
- 6. Old Business**
  - a. Intern for social media/website: public relations
  - b. Landing incentive project (fee reduction)
- 7. Other items not on the agenda.**
- 8. Next Regular Meeting Date: May 14, 2026**
- 9. Adjournment**



Draft Meeting Minutes  
**Portland Fish Pier Authority - Portland Fish Exchange Subcommittee**  
**March 12, 2026**  
3:30 PM

**Subcommittee Member Attendees:** John Arnold, Mike Foster, Mary Hudson, Meredith Mendelson, Matt Moretti, Tracy Pearce, and Rob Odlin.

**Staff present:** Kaela Gonzalez, Heather Moretti, Avery Novak, Robert Vanmeter

Approximately two (2) members of the public attended.

**1. Committee Chair Comments:** Committee Chair Pearce opened the meeting.

**2. Approval of January 8, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion** to approve Meeting Minutes for January 8, 2026.

Arnold, 2nd M. Moretti

**Approved** by consensus (Odlin not present at time of vote)

**3. Portland Fish Exchange Manager's Report**

Robert Vanmeter presented the manager's report verbally. Highlights are as follows:

- 8 Auctions in February
- 205K landed (budgeted 175,000)
- No contract unloads (budgeted 0)
- 650K in pumping YTD (budgeted 1.2M)
- Current receivables are \$153,000
- Checkbooks are at \$89,000
- Checkbook average \$55,00 (Low of \$41,00, High \$105,00)
- Currently using \$70,000 from LOC
- \$50k from cash reserve currently in use.

The FY 2027 budget was submitted to the City. The audit has been completed by the City and will be presented to the Board when available. Of the 204,480 pounds landed, 110,800 pounds were sold during normal bidding, 70,000 pounds were sold as after-auction sales, and 23,656 pounds were refused by the seller and sold off-site. The new control system installation for the condenser and compressor is underway. One part-time employee left, and there is another who has started and is in their 30-day trial period. The 22,000 sq. ft. cooler has space available for cross-docking or storage.

Vanmeter confirmed that PFEX employees must be clocked in while lumping on a vessel for insurance purposes. The boat is charged for lumping, and the money is paid to the employee.

#### **4. Review of multi-tiered fee system with possible vote to recommend to the Portland Fish Pier Authority.**

A conceptual plan to offer discounted fees or rebates (e.g., a 2-cent rebate for a 200,000-pound threshold) for high-volume landings was briefly discussed. The goal is to incentivize boats to land more frequently and increase revenue. The group decided to table but will conduct scenario planning with landing numbers to assess the financial impact and address concerns about disadvantaging the current small-boat fleet.

#### **5. Discussion on funding opportunity for Portland Fish Exchange through SEA Maine funding.**

Heather Moretti proposed applying for this \$75,000–\$300,000 grant, with solar energy being the main focus to reduce the \$15,000 monthly power bill. Vanmeter noted past concerns that the existing roof might not support the weight of solar panels. Heather will reach out to a solar company for a free assessment and will research energy efficiency audits (like through CMP) as another grant option.

Two applications (one for each service pier) were submitted before the deadline, requesting about \$1.6 million each. Total available funding for the program has increased to \$17 million.

#### **6. Old Business**

Vanmeter expects to find out by the end of March/beginning of April if the PFEX was granted a student intern to help with marketing and social media exposure. The city will host Walk the Working Waterfront on Saturday, June 13th. Heather Moretti asks the subcommittee to brainstorm ideas, including setting up a marine debris art demo in the net yard and hiring a food truck to sell haddock sandwiches.

#### **7. Other items not on the agenda.**

Efforts are underway to fill the two open ground fish buyer seats, with potential interest from the new GM at Cozy Harbor, Mike Alfiero (Harbor Fish), and George Bronco (Nova Seafood).

To address dangerous icing on pathways to slips on Pier 1, Vanmeter is getting quotes for a gutter system and a handrail for the winch doghouse. Staff anticipate fishermen leaving in April for the scallop season/slow months and have several projects lined up for the crew to tackle during that time. The committee debated offering a scallop meat count service to boat captains as an industry standard to build relationships and potentially attract more state water fishery boats. Vanmeter noted the exchange is not currently set up for this, and it would require investment in smaller scales and handling supplies. It was decided to wait for Heather Moretti to gauge interest from the fleet before moving forward with action items.

#### **8. Next Meeting: April 9, 2026**

#### **9. Adjournment:**

**Motion to adjourn**

Mendelson, 2nd Arnold  
**Approved by consensus**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:05 p.m.



**PORTLAND FISH EXCHANGE**

**Management/Financial Report for April, 2026**

<b><u>GF Landings – Auction</u></b>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
March <b>2026 – 7</b>	135K	75K	60K
<b><u>GF Landings – Auction</u></b>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
March <b>2025 - 7</b>	85K	225K	(140K)
<b><u>Contract Unloads - GF</u></b>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
March <b>2026</b>	31K	0	31K
<b><u>Total GF Land/Unloads</u></b>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
March 2026	166K	75K	91K
<b><u>Pumping</u></b>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
2026 YTD	650K	1.2M	(480K)
<b><u>Financial Report</u></b>	<u>Net Income</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
March 2026	\$	(\$17,855)	\$

**Financial Notes**

- \$70K of \$250K LOC currently in use.
- \$50K Cash Reserve available
- Current receivables are \$114K consisting of rent, buyer fees, berthing, net yard use, bait storage, barrel storage & warehousing
- Current checkbook is at \$84K before payments to vendors, fleet, and payroll
- High checking balance for the month was \$130K, a low of \$21k, and an average of \$85k.

## **March Auction Sales**

- Of the 134,843 pounds landed at the Exchange for the month of March, 85,605 pounds were sold during the normal bidding process to one of our Exchange buyers - seat holders.
- 30,505 pounds were scratched or not bid on, but still sold through the auction as After Auction Sales.
- 21,669 pounds were refused by the seller to be sold on the Exchange auction platform. All scratch and or no bid fees are applied and the fish is given back to the seller to do with as they will. As stated in the Exchange rules and regulations, 'Refused or No Bid fish remains the property of the seller and may be removed or left for the next auction.'
- 64 pounds were left on the floor for the next auction.

## **Operations Notes**

- Several vessels in the fleet are currently scalloping. The Eleanor J, Josephine L, and DD Mae II are actively fishing for the Exchange
- The F/V Eleanor J has completed two redfish contract unloads for Tri-State totaling over 55,000 lbs., generating more than \$11,000 in revenue for the Exchange. An additional trip is expected this week.
- The Operations Manager and team have established routine projects for the spring slow season. Some of these efforts include scraping interior and exterior surfaces for paint touch-ups, pressure washing equipment, buildings, and dock shelters, cleaning roofs and gutters, and repairing or replacing damaged or worn polyethylene plastic sheeting for offload chutes.
- To improve efficiency for the upcoming fishing season, an additional offload station will be reactivated across from the existing station on the east side of the extension pier. This will eliminate vessel repositioning delays and provide operational redundancy.

## **Facility Report**

- The new control system installation is nearing completion. This week, crews began wiring the compressors, condensers, and evaporators to the new panel, marking the final phase of the installation.

### **Staff Report**

- The recently hired part-time employee for the fish crew has accepted a different employment opportunity and will not be continuing with us at the Exchange. We wish him well in his future endeavors.
- Thomas Bailey joined the team on Monday, April 6, as a part-time Office Administrator. A Maine native recently returned to the state, Thomas is pursuing a business degree through evening classes at SMCC and brings prior IT experience to the role. He will be working closely with our Office Manager to learn daily tasks and provide added support for office operations.

### **New/Returning Vessels**

- Nothing to report

### **New / Returning Buyers**

- Nothing to report