



## CONNECTICUT Port Authority

NOTICE OF  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Tuesday, January 27, 2026  
12:00 PM**

**Location: VIRTUAL**

**Zoom link was provided.**

*\*Please Note: In addition to the minutes below, an audio recording of this meeting can be found on the Authority's website at <https://ctportauthority.com/governance/>*

### **Board Attendance**

Chair Paul Whitescarver; Vice-Chair Grant Westerson; Gaffney Feskoe; John Johnson; Kristin Urbach; James Donegan; Doug Dalena; Kaelie Moran; Thomas Gill; Dave Pohorylo; Paul O. Robertson; Brian Thompson; Paul Hinsch; David Kooris; Felix Reyes; Harry Rilling; Sally Kruse

Absent: Christine Xenelis; Thomas Patton

Staff/Other: Michael O'Connor; Fayola Haynes; Jill Dowling-Moreno; Melissa Root; Anthony Afriyie

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman of the Board Paul Whitescarver called the meeting to order at 12:00pm.

#### **2. Approval of minutes of the October 21, 2025 Regular Meeting, November 18, 2025 Special Meeting, and January 16, 2026 Special Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Motion to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2025 Regular Meeting of the CT Port Authority Board of Directors made by John Johnson, seconded by Kristin Urbach. So, VOTED with NO opposed and NO abstentions.

Motion to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2025 Special Meeting of the CT Port Authority Board of Directors made by Gaffney Feskoe, seconded by John Johnson. So, VOTED with NO opposed and abstentions by Thomas Gill and Dave Pohorylo.

John Johnson noted that the date at the top of the minutes for the January 16<sup>th</sup> meeting needs to be corrected from 2025 to 2026. Jill Dowling-Moreno noted she would make that correction.

Motion to approve the minutes with correction for the January 16, 2026 Special Meeting of the CT Port Authority Board of Directors made by John Johnson, seconded by Grant Westerson. So, VOTED with NO opposed and abstentions by Thomas Gill and Dave Pohorylo.

3. **Public Comment**

None

Harry Rilling noted his attendance.

4. **Finance Committee Update**

*(Begins at 5:40 of the audio recording)*

Finance Director Fayola Haynes provided a brief summary of the CT Port Authority's (Authority) financials for the first six months of the fiscal year as discussed at the January 20, 2026 Finance Committee meeting. Paul Whitescarver introduced Item 4(b).

**(a) FY 2026 Q2 Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) Report**

*(Begins at 10:35 of the audio recording)*

Hear and act on a recommendation to authorize submission of the FY 2026 Q2 quarterly financial report to the Office of Fiscal Analysis.

Motion to approve the FY 2026 Q2 Office of Fiscal Analysis Report made by John Johnson, seconded by Gaffney Feskoe. So, VOTED with NO opposed and NO abstentions.

Executive Director Michael O'Connor noted Sally Kruse was in attendance.

**(b) FY 2026 Budget Modifications**

*(Begins at 7:38 of the audio recording)*

Hear and act on a recommendation to authorize the acceptance and adoption of the Proposed FY 2026 Annual Operating Budget Modifications.

Fayola Haynes reviewed the proposed budget modifications for FY 2026 of six items resulting in a net zero modification.

Account #	Account Name	Original Budget	Actual to Date	Revised Budget	Change
51602	Legal Fees: External Matters	\$100,000.00	\$94,120.00	\$160,000.00	\$60,000.00
51710	Advertising/Promotional Items	\$75,000.00	\$1,186.00	\$25,000.00	(\$50,000.00)
51720	Marketing & Bus. Dev: Meals	\$1,500.00	\$990.00	\$4,500.00	\$3,000.00
52050	Dues & Subscriptions	\$20,000.00	\$23,594.00	\$27,000.00	\$7,000.00
52260	IT Support	\$30,000.00	\$14,870.00	\$35,000.00	\$5,000.00
59000	Contingency	\$50000.00	\$0.00	\$25,000.00	(\$25,000.00)
	<b>Net change in FY 2026 Budget</b>				<b>\$0.00</b>
	<b>Existing Operating Surplus before Depreciation &amp; Amortization</b>				<b>800,866.00</b>
	<b>Proposed adjustments to FY 2026 Budget</b>				<b>\$0.00</b>
	<b>Revised Operating Surplus before Depreciation &amp; Amortization</b>				<b>\$800,866.00</b>

Motion to approve the budget modifications made by John Johnson, seconded by Gaffney Feskoe. So, VOTED with NO opposed.

**(c) FY 2025 Annual Financial Report pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-123(a)**

*(Begins at 9:26 of the audio recording)*

Hear and act on a recommendation to authorize the submission of the 2025 Annual Financial Report pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-123(a).

Motion to approve the 2025 Annual Financial Report pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-123(a) made by John Johnson, seconded by Gaffney Feskoe. So, VOTED with NO opposed and NO abstentions.

Paul Whitescarver introduced Item 4(a).

## 5. **Human Resources Committee Update**

*(Begins at 11:40 of the audio recording)*

HR Committee Co-Chair John Johnson summarized the quarterly personnel status report and noted that it lists 5.5 employees at the end of the quarter with 1 additional position estimated to be filled before the end of the fiscal year. Michael O'Connor noted that the additional position would be for a Project Manager related to the proposed rehabilitation of Pier 7. He also noted that it is included as a proposed modification to the Schedule of Positions, would be anticipated around May, would not significantly impact the budget for this fiscal year and would be reflected in the proposed budget for next fiscal year which is anticipated for presentation to the Board in April.

### **(a) Quarterly Personnel Status Report to the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA)**

*(Begins at 13:25 of the audio recording)*

Hear and act on a request to authorize submission of the quarterly Personnel Status Report to the Office of Fiscal Analysis.

Motion to approve the Quarterly Personnel Status Report to the Office of Fiscal Analysis made by John Johnson, seconded by Grant Westerson. So, VOTED with NO opposed and NO abstentions.

### **(b) Schedule of Positions and Total Staffing Levels FY 2026**

*(Begins at 14:09 of the audio recording)*

Hear and act on a recommendation to approve modifications to the Schedule of Positions and Total Staffing Levels for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2026.

Motion to approve the Schedule of Positions and Total Staffing Levels for FY 2026 made by John Johnson, seconded by Doug Dalena. So, VOTED with NO opposed and NO abstentions.

## 6. **Grant Updates**

### **(a) Small Harbor Improvement Projects Program (SHIPP)**

*(Begins at 15:00 of the audio recording)*

Michael O'Connor noted that the updated policies and procedures for SHIPP were approved by the Board at the January 16, 2026 special meeting. He noted that the Request for Applications (RFA) for SHIPP Round 5 was released on January 21, 2026 and announced online including on the Authority's website, social media channels and via email. He also noted timelines including the deadline for applications of February 20, 2026, which will be reviewed by the Authority and then go to a subcommittee of the Board, with proposed selections anticipated to go to the full Board within the next 60 days. He noted the amount approved by the Bond Commission in December of \$5,289,000 for SHIPP. John Johnson asked about the funding limits and Michael O'Connor provided additional details noting the cap of \$400K for municipal projects with a

50% matching grant, and \$250K for private entities. He also noted the benefit of the funding having already been approved allowing the Authority to offer an additional round if all available funding is not used for the current round. He noted that funding for SHIPP ends this fiscal year and that funding for SHIPP for next fiscal year is a legislative priority. Michael O'Connor noted Melissa Root streamlined the SHIPP process and created the online application.

**(b) EPA Clean Ports Program – New London State Pier Shore Power Project**

*(Begins at 19:00 of the audio recording)*

Michael O'Connor noted that the agreement with Zinus for the mobile cable management system is being finalized and provided additional details regarding the system and requirements. He noted the project is within budget and that the Authority will expend \$300K towards the equipment, and another \$300K towards construction.

**(c) PIDP Grant for Groton Marine Terminal**

*(Begins at 21:12 of the audio recording)*

Michael O'Connor noted that the Authority sponsored the PIDP grant application for Groton Marine Terminal through Buckeye in September and have not heard any information regarding results but anticipate hearing in the next few months. He provided additional details regarding the next notice of funding opportunity anticipated in April, available funding for the current opportunity and the budget included in the grant application to cover the Authority's expenses to manage the grant.

**7. Executive Director Update**

*(Begins at 23:06 of the audio recording)*

Michael O'Connor provided an overview of activities over the past year including continued and increased community engagement, providing input into the state's freight plan, dredging operations, participation as a panelist at the Port Electrification Conference in New Jersey, EPA Clean Ports grant, participation as a member of Nuclear Energy Maritime Organization (NEMO), Annual Public Hearing held at Southern CT State University in December, participation at the North Atlantic Ports Association (NAPA) semi-annual meeting in December in Virginia, continued discussions regarding Pier 7 and a proposed MOU with CT-DEEP, renewal of CT State Marine Pilot Licenses, meetings with Senator Blumenthal, Congressman Courtney and Senator Murphy's staff and discussions regarding dredging, shipping and funding opportunities for Pier 7 rehabilitation, SHIPP, legislative breakfast, and meeting with the Bridgeport Regional Development Commission.

He provided updates for 2026 including that the Annual Public Hearing will be held in June this year; the next NAPA meeting will be held June 3-5, 2026 in New London which will include a tour of New London Harbor with details to be shared with the Board closer to the event; the recent Executive Order from Governor Lamont regarding permitting and licensing processes noting that the Authority will review its process for issuing and renewing of marine pilot licenses; the Authority's legislative request for removal of pilot licensing fees; details of the SHIPP legislation section that relates to a town that previously had their SHIPP application approved by the Authority's Board of Directors but did not receive approval of funding from the Bond Commission due to dredging work having already been completed, noting his meeting with the First Selectman of Guilford and working with them regarding reimbursement of funds for dredging; and the Authority's plan to hold three legislative breakfasts in different regions throughout the State in early December with notifications to go out to legislators after November elections.

There was discussion regarding development around Bridgeport Harbor, including discussion of the PIDP Grant application submitted by Bridgeport Port Authority. Michael O'Connor noted continued discussions with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding upcoming dredging needs and priorities throughout the state. He asked that communities in need of

dredging contact the Authority so that they may help with prioritization and communication with USACE.

**8. MOU with Gateway New London**

*(Begins at 34:00 of the audio recording)*

Hear and act on a request to authorize the Executive Director to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Gateway New London LLC in support of ILA training.

Michael O'Connor provided an overview of the draft MOU with Gateway New London for reimbursement of costs associated with the training of New London's ILA workforce for work at State Pier for up to \$100K or 50% of costs per year. He noted the benefit of enhancing safety and operations at State Pier and the funding previously provided by the Authority for training of the ILA workforce as an ongoing need. John Johnson asked about the type of training and Michael O'Connor noted it includes training for crane operators to move nacelles, blades and other electronic devices used to move materials on the pier.

Motion to authorize the Executive Director to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Gateway New London LLC in support of ILA training made by Grant Westerson, seconded by John Johnson.

Michael O'Connor provided additional details regarding timing and budgeting for this item.

So, VOTED with NO opposed and NO abstentions.

**9. Old Business**

None

**10. New Business**

*(Begins at 38:03 of the audio recording)*

Gaffney Feskoe asked if there are any plans for discussions with Genesee & Wyoming and Michael O'Connor noted that there would be discussions with them regarding the future of rail connection at State Pier.

Paul Whitescarver noted that the annual Ethics Training to be provided by the Office of State Ethics to Board and staff members would take place immediately following the Board meeting.

**11. Adjournment**

*(Begins at 40:42 of the audio recording)*

Motion to adjourn made by Gaffney Feskoe, seconded by Grant Westerson. So, VOTED with NO opposed. Meeting adjourned at 12:41pm.