



TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS
Community Preservation Committee
 Town Hall · 40 Center Street · Fairhaven, MA 02719

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Held both at Town Hall & Remotely via Zoom

1. Administrative Business

- a. **Chairman's Welcome Media Notification:** Jeff Lucas, Chair, opened the meeting at 6:00 PM and welcomed all.

b. **Quorum/Attendance:**

Present: Jeff Lucas, Ann Richard, Karen Isherwood, Terrance Meredith, Roger Marcoux, Beth Luey, and Gary Souza were present at Town Hall.

Natalie Mello was present via Zoom.

Recording Secretary Stephanie Fidalgo was also present for this meeting.

Travis Rapoza and Planning Director Paul DiGiuseppe were not present for this meeting.

c. **Minutes:**

The minutes of October 11, 2023, were approved the night before.

d. **Correspondence:**

Ms. Fidalgo summarized an email she had received that afternoon from Stuart Saginor of the Community Preservation Coalition, noting the delay in receiving the CPA 2023 Trust Fund Distribution from the state. The State match for the year was projected at 20%, down from 38% the year prior. Mr. Lucas noted that there was a chance of receiving more depending on the State budget but agreed that the Committee should only plan for a 20% match.

2. General Business

a. **Review of available funding**

Earlier that day, Mr. Lucas, Ms. Fidalgo, and Mr. DiGiuseppe met with Town Accountant Anne Carreiro to discuss the CPC's available funding. On the next page is a table summarizing the funding, divided into confirmed funds and estimated funds. The confirmed funds covered the Undesignated Fund and the Open Space, Historic, and Community Housing Reserved Funds. The estimated funds included the FY25 Estimated Receipts and the Estimated State Match. While the existing emergency fund was noted at \$150,000, it was not used in the calculations for the FY25 Working Funds.

| CONFIRMED FUNDS | ESTIMATED FUNDS |
|-----------------|-----------------|
|-----------------|-----------------|

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|---|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| Undesignated Funds (Confirmed) | \$ 468,975.00 | FY25 Est. Receipts (Based on Previous Estimated Receipts) | \$ 510,148.00 |
| Open Space Reserve (Confirmed) | \$ 6,594.00 | Estimated State Match (Calculated at a 20% Match) | \$ 97,113.00 |
| Historic Reserve (Confirmed) | \$ 6,560.00 | | |
| Community Housing Reserve (Confirmed) | \$ 125,480.00 | | |
| | | | |
| CONFIRMED TOTAL | \$ 607,609.00 | ESTIMATED TOTAL | \$ 607,261.00 |
| TOTAL WORKING FUNDS: \$1,214,870 | | | |

Ms. Isherwood noted that the working funds were over \$600,000 less than the amounts requested. Mr. Lucas also brought up the allocations of approximately \$70,000 to \$75,000 that would need to go into the reserve funds, the \$15,000 allocation for administrative costs, and a suggested \$12,000 to \$18,000 allocation into the emergency fund as other expenses to consider. Ms. Carreiro had also advised Mr. Lucas to be conservative with the allocations.

Additionally, following the public hearings of the prior night, Ms. Fidalgo updated the funds requested list as follows:

Historic Preservation:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Fairhaven High School – Boiler Room Roof Replacement | \$ 92,700 |
| Millicent Library – Electrical Upgrades | \$ 385,672 |
| Town Hall – Town Hall Repairs Retaining Wall, Stairs, Doors, Exterior Caulking | \$ 370,000 |

Open Space:

| | |
|--|------------|
| BBC – Carvalho Woods Conservation Project (Also under Rec) | \$ 110,000 |
| BPW – Walnut Street Sidewalk (Also under Historic) | \$ 175,000 |
| BPW – Phoenix Rail Trail Handicapped Accessible Table (Also under Rec) | \$ 5,000 |
| BPW – Macomber Park BMX Track | \$ 277,000 |

Recreation:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Cushman Park Pathways | \$ 36,000 |
| Fairhaven Tennis Association – Cushman Park Court Repair and Resurfacing | \$ 65,000 |
| Fairhaven Tennis Association – Livesey Park Court Repair and Resurfacing | \$ 111,300 |
| Fairhaven Rec Center – Recreation Center Playground Rehabilitation | \$ 113,000 |

Community Housing:

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Fairhaven Housing Authority – Window Replacement at Anthony Haven | \$ 100,000 |
| Total Requested Funds: | \$ 1,840,672 |

Secretary's note: The requested funds for the High School Boiler Room project were incorrectly listed and calculated on the night of the meeting at 93,700. The correct amount of 92,7000 is used above.

From the night prior, the total for the BMX Track was rounded up to \$277,000 and the Cushman Park Court Repairs were lowered to \$65,000 to reflect the Fairhaven Tennis Association's \$10,000 pledged contribution.

The revised total requested funds then came to \$1,840,672.

Mr. Lucas then opened the public hearings.

3. Public Hearings

a. Town Hall - Town Hall Repairs - Repairs to the Retaining Wall, Stairs, Doors, and Exterior Caulking (\$370,000 request)

Mr. Kevin Fournier presented the proposal to the CPC. He focused on the bowing retaining wall which had been identified as an issue in 2018, with the condition worsening since. He estimated it would only be 2 to 3 years before the wall collapsed. As for the front stairs, as noted in the FY24 funding round, the steps have instabilities and underlying issues. Mr. Fournier wanted to see those issues addressed before an emergency repair was required, as was the case with the Williams Street side steps the year prior. The doors on the Williams Street side of the building were also showing issues with rot and had not been treated in the past 10 to 15 years. The caulking would be a preventative measure to reduce water seepage into the building.

Ms. Luey asked if Mr. Fournier had other sources of funding, and he replied that he had some funds for the smaller projects and would also be seeking funds from Capital Planning for the retaining wall. Mr. Souza asked if there were considerations for other grants or income streams to help with Town Hall repairs, and Mr. Fournier answered that he was seeking out other grants but as noted was focused on receiving funds from Capital Planning as well.

Ms. Richard inquired about the use of ARPA funds, and Mr. Fournier that he did have a reserve of ARPA funds for building repairs. On the stairs, Mr. Fournier covered his plans for temporary repairs but explained that more extensive work would have to wait until after the winter.

Ms. Mello had some questions about the differences between the quotes provided to the Committee and the amounts requested. Mr. Fournier explained that the \$300,000 request as compared to the \$250,000 quote provided by the Spencer Preservation Group for the retaining wall was to help cover any additional contingency costs the project may incur. Similarly, the stair repairs had been quoted at \$9,500 but he was concerned that there may be additional issues found with the stairs once the steps were removed and built in an additional contingency. He promised that any funds not used would be turned back to the CPC.

Mr. Lucas asked about the cost of repairing the Willaim St. side stairs, and Mr. Fournier estimated between \$16,500 to \$17,500. Mr. Lucas also inquired about what would happen if the CPC could only partially fund the request and which aspect would Mr. Fournier would prioritize. Mr. Fournier chose the retaining wall as his main priority.

b. Fairhaven High School - Boiler Room Roof Replacement - Replace the boiler room's existing ballasted EPDM roof with a new PVC roof. (\$92,613 original request, \$92,700 amended request)

Superintendent Tara Kohler, School Business Manager Nicole Potter, and Doug Manley from the Spencer Preservation Group presented to the Committee via Zoom. Ms. Kohler explained that the boiler roof was originally planned as a second phase of the ongoing roof and gable repairs, but the leaks in the roof made the project a higher priority and thus why the High School was coming to the CPC to help fund the repair. The roof was last worked on during the 1996 renovations to the school and the existing ballasted EPDM roof needed replacement. Mr. Manley explained that a new PVC roof would be a better product to help protect the roof.

Mr. Meredith inquired about the PVC roof lifespan with Mr. Manley noting that the roof had a 40-year warranty. As for the funding of the project, the total \$187,226 required would be split between the CPC and the School's Trust fund, with the CPC amount requested being \$92,700.

Ms. Richard asked if the school had considered adding solar panels or a green roof as part of this project. Mr. Manley answered that while those were not in the estimate, they were possible future options. He also covered the energy efficiency of the new roof. She also asked about how the old roof would be disposed of, with Mr. Manley explaining that the rocks and EPDM would be recycled. He also informed the Committee that they had not found asbestos at the project site.

Mr. Lucas reminded the applicant that the Community Preservation Act would require that the trust fund money be spent first before any CPC funds. Ms. Richard asked what would happen if the CPC could not grant the full request, and Ms. Kohler emphasized the urgency of the project and that other funds would have to be sought to cover it.

- c. **Millicent Library - Electrical Upgrades** - Upgrade to an 800-amp electrical system, create a new main electrical room, and replace and relocate the panels as necessary (\$385,672 request)

Library Director Kyle DeCicco-Carey was joined by Library Board of Trustees members President Kathy Lopez, Treasurer Bob Kenworthy, Assistant Treasurer Jane Risch, and John Whalen to present to the Committee. Mr. Lucas suggested rounding up the request to \$385,700 for easier calculation.

Mr. DeCicco-Carey shared a PowerPoint presentation covering the library and the project history with the Committee. Due to the dangerous heat and humidity experienced in 2022, the library hired C.A. Crowley to conduct an existing conditions study on the HVAC and electrical systems. This study found several code violations with the electrical system as well as issues with the existing boiler.

Mr. Kenworthy outlined the discussions between the library and Electrical Inspector Paul Raposo, particularly the issues with the Federal Pacific Electric panels which are over 50 years old and need replacement. A similar review was issued by the town's insurance company in January. The library also had MAK Electric conduct a follow-up study and then decided to work with GGD Electrical Engineers for design development and construction documents.

Mr. DeCicco-Carey also covered an issue from 2021 with heating blower motors that had burned out, with the aging panels being a key factor in the failure. The blowers had since been replaced.

Mr. Kenworthy then presented the estimates to the Committee, breaking down the costs by specific service and vendor. In total, the project would cost \$485,672. The library Board of Trustees had approved to reserve \$100,000 which left the CPC request at \$385,672. He also stressed the urgency of the project given the safety concerns.

The Committee asked about the scope of the project, with Mr. Kenworthy explaining that it would cover the electrical system capacity upgrade as well as the panel relocations. While the addition of an HVAC system was also a consideration, it was outside the scope of this project. He did cover how the system upgrade would reduce the chance of further issues such as the blowers burning out as well as allow the library to replace the boiler.

Ms. Luey asked about the possibility of changing to heat pumps, which Mr. Kenworthy agreed was worth investigating. Mr. Meredith asked if Federal Pacific was held liable for the issues caused by their panels, and Mr. DeCicco-Carey outlined the history of investigations into their safety issues.

Mr. Lucas inquired if the library was seeking other funds. Mr. DeCicco-Carey replied that they were working on a grant proposal for the Mass Cultural Council's Cultural Facilities Fund for a matching grant. However, as the application process had yet to close, he did not expect to receive news of being awarded the grant until the next fiscal year.

- d. **BBC - Carvalho Woods Conservation Project** - To purchase a conservation restriction on a 5.75-acre vacant lot at 144 Shaw Road (\$110,000 request)

Allen Decker with the Buzzards Bay Coalition presented the project to the CPC. He recounted the previous funding granted for the Carvalho Farm property during the FY18 funding round. He then went over the proposed Carvalho Woods property, showing it on a wider map in relation to other conservation areas along with the proposed trail map. Given the wetland areas on the property, the BBC would be careful to have the trail make a minimal impact on the area. They also had applied for a matching grant from the state but were waiting for confirmation of the award.

The \$80,000 of the requested CPC funds would go towards allowing the Conservation Commission to purchase a conservation restriction on the lot through the BBC while the remaining \$30,000 would go to other project costs such as public access amenities. The BBC would also oversee vegetation management and potential habitat restoration on the property. The plan also included a small gravel parking lot on the southeast corner of the property for access to both Carvalho Woods and Carvalho Farm alike.

Ms. Luey asked about the funding for the project and Mr. Decker explained that both the state grant and the CPC funds were critical to the project. Ms. Richard asked about the Conservation Commission's support of the project, and they had issued a letter of support for the state grant. Mr. Lucas inquired about the woods, wetlands, and stream on the property as well as if the trail would allow bikes. Mr. Decker explained that while bikes would be allowed on the trail, no motorized vehicles would be allowed.

- e. **Fairhaven Rec Center - Recreation Center Playground Rehabilitation** - Address the issues with safety and drainage, establish better maintainability, and increase ADA compliance at the Rec Center playground (\$159,230 original request, \$113,000 amended request)

Recreation Director Kelley Ramirez presented the project to the CPC. Before going into the details of the project, she informed the Committee that the Recreation Center had also applied for ARPA funding for the project and she was hopeful that it would pass. If so, she would rescind the CPC application.

After receiving feedback from the CPC on the project, she met with Highway Superintendent Joshua Crabb, and they found that moving the playground would be cheaper and more feasible than trying to rework its

current location. The project would now focus on repairing the existing equipment, relocating it to the east behind the senior center, and adding a rubberized surface to the new area. This reduced the project costs to only \$113,000 as compared to the original \$159,230.

Ms. Luey inquired about meeting ADA accessibility requirements, and Ms. Ramirez covered the new ADA-accessible equipment to be added along with the rubberized surface. Mr. Souza asked if the fees collected by the Rec Center were retained for their use and Ms. Ramirez answered that they went to the Town's general fund. Ms. Richard asked what would happen to the existing playground site and Ms. Ramirez explained that there would be fill added, the area would be re-loamed, and they could investigate addressing the drainage issues.

When going through the slides, Ms. Fidalgo and Ms. Ramirez pointed out how the new playground location would connect to the existing path along the east of the Senior Center.

After the close of the public hearings, Mr. Lucas returned to Ms. Carreiro's recommendation to the CPC to keep their spending on projects to \$850,000. Mr. Souza suggested that members take time to visit different project sites.

Ms. Richard also suggested forwarding any remaining questions for the applicants ahead of the December 6, 2023, meeting. She particularly wanted further information on the budgets of applicant organizations, specifically citing her questions about the Fairhaven Tennis Association. Ms. Mello assured that questions about budgets would be well-received by non-profit organizations. Ms. Richard would also like to see a question about funding added to the applications for the next funding round.

Ms. Fidalgo requested that questions be submitted by the following week, given the proximity of the December meeting.

4. Tentative Future Meeting Schedule

As noted at the last meeting, the next meeting will be December 6, 2023, at the normal meeting time of 6:30 PM.

5. Other Business

There was no other business for this meeting.

The motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Richard and was seconded by Mr. Meredith. The motion passed unanimously via roll call vote. (8-0) The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie A. Fidalgo
Recording Secretary,
Community Preservation Committee

Minutes Approved on December 6, 2023