



**Fairhaven Select Board & Finance Committee
Joint Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2023**

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
ROUD 2023 APR 21 PM 2:22

Select Board Members Present: Chair Stasia Powers, Vice-Chair Leon Correy, Clerk Robert Espindola, Select Board member Keith Silvia, Select Board member Charles Murphy Sr., and Town Administrator Angie Lopes Ellison.

Finance Committee Members Present: Chair Padraic Elliot, Peter Gardner, Claire Millette, Linda Gallant, Robert Grindrod, Stephen Levesque and Therese Szala.

Also present: Rich Bienvenue, Derek Frates, Martha Reed, Steven Rosa, Tim Cox, Tara Kohler and Pam Kuechler

Not present: Finance Committee Vice-Chair Lisa Plante, Finance Committee member Denise Barr

The meeting was videotaped by Cable access and Zoom meeting application.

Ms. Powers called to order the Select Board meeting at 6:36pm.

Mr. Elliot called to order the Finance Committee meeting at 6:36pm and yielded to Ms. Powers

Approve Minutes:

Motion: Mr. Murphy made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 1, 2023, Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0)

Motion: Ms. Millette made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 1, 2023, Mr. Grindrod seconded. The motion passed unanimously (7-0-0)

Ms. Ellison reviewed the departments scheduled: Cable Access, Finance Committee, Council on Aging (COA), Information Technology (IT), Marine Resources and School.

Ms. Ellison advised the budget book is being worked on, anticipating full copy for Thursday, March 16. Three items on the Capital Plan include borrowing recommendation and debt exclusion, the debt service would begin FY25. These are the Middle School Roof, the COA/Recreation Center Roof and the Millicent Library HVAC and more information will be provided as it is available.

Questions were asked about a roof warranty, the amount added with the debt exclusion, long-term planning and impacts from the future plans for a Public Safety Complex.

Mr. Bienvenue explained with the current figures, the override potential impact to residential taxpayers is estimated at an additional of eleven-cents (\$0.11) more per one-thousand dollars (\$1,000) of assessed value.

COA Director Martha Reed presented an overview of the FY24 budget for the COA. It is level funded across categories using a comparison of projections and past year actuals. She responded to questions on salaries, clerical reclassification, vehicle age, vehicle maintenance, gas estimate, education, the population served by the COA, staff job titles, services offered, use of gift fund and the challenges facing the population served at the COA.

Cable Access Director Derek Frates presented an overview of the FY24 budget for Cable Access. He explained his department is funded primarily through revenues received from Comcast. He answered questions regarding

videographer salaries. Discussion included the number of meetings and also duties needed for managing the Town website due to the skills within the department staff.

Harbormaster Tim Cox presented an overview of the FY24 budget for Marine Resources. He addressed questions related to increases in equipment and vehicle cost, salaries, gas, miscellaneous costs, office supplies, dues and continuing education, staffing numbers, propagation of shellfish process, the useful age of his current equipment including boats,

Mr. Elliot asked if a complete list of the Town's assets could be provided.

Interim IT Director Steven Rosa presented an overview of the FY24 budget for the IT Department, it is level funded across categories. He answered questions about staff salaries, training and tuition reimbursement requirements and the consolidation of internet billing to IT's budget. He discussed a plan to review all GIS Software to check for redundancy and consolidation potential as well as printer consolidation and phasing out of individual printers. The Capital Budget includes equipment replacement necessary for outdated equipment that can no longer receive security updates. He addressed questions about shared server use between departments and cloud-based options.

School Superintendent Tara Kohler and School Committee Chair Pam Kuechler presented an overview of the FY24 budget for the School Department. (*Attachment A*). Ms. Kohler answered questions about the student population, use of grant funds including the Esser Grant which is ending, out of district costs, special education circuit breaker program, transportation costs, student activities, class size, English language learner trends, tutoring support needs, Chapter 70, athletic activities, unified athletics, security consultant need, grant usage, legal services and returning from Covid.

The School's capital budget included discussion on the middle school roof. The portion in need was last done in 1980 and is not covered by the warranty on the portion last done.

Ms. Ellison presented an overview of the FY24 Finance Committee budget. She addressed questions regarding reserve fund transfers, salary reserve shortage and pending labor contracts with police, fire and sewer.

Mr. Elliot asked for an alternate budget to review if the override fails. Suggestion had been made previously to ask each department to cut one percent and have department heads indicate what services to cut.

Mr. Bienvenue explained with the current calculations of the \$450,000 budget deficit, the override potential would be eleven (\$0.11) cents per thousand (\$1,000) dollar of home value.

Ms. Szala asked for a clarification of the figures related to Chapter 70, school funds and special education circuit breaker. Mr. Bienvenue will review.

Next joint Select Board and Finance Committee meeting is Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 6:30pm.

Finance Committee adjourned at 9:31pm

The Select Board adjourned at 9:31pm

Attachments:

- A. School Department FY24 Budget presentation