



Fairhaven Select Board & Finance Committee Joint Meeting Minutes March 16, 2023

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, Robert Grindrod, Linda Gallant, Peter Gardner, Denise Barr, Claire Millette, Stephen Levesque and Therese Szala. Vice-Chair Lisa Plante via zoom.

Also present: Anne Carreiro, Cameron Durant, Bruce Webb, Paul Foley, Wayne Hayward, Randy Bassett, Vincent Furtado, Rene Robillard and Joshua Crabb.

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

Ms. Powers called to order the Select Board meeting at 6:38pm.

Mr. Elliot called to order the Finance Committee meeting at 6:38pm and yielded to Ms. Powers

Approve Minutes: Passed over

Ms. Ellison reviewed the departments scheduled: Human Resource (HR), Conservation, Planning and Economic Development, Board of Appeals, Weights and Measures, Building, Department of Public Works: Sewer, Water, Highway, Park and Administration. The Financial Departments will be on the March 23rd agenda.

Ms. Ellison reviewed an information breakdown showing the approximate override impact and the yearly tax rates from FY14 through FY23. The anticipated override needed is approximately eleven cents per one thousand dollars of value. (**Attachment A**). Discussion included home values and rates.

Building Commissioner Randy Bassett presented an overview of the FY24 budget for the Building Department, Weights & Measures and Zoning Board of Appeals. The budget is level funded, he answered questions related to salaries and continuing education. Discussion included developing processes for Short-Term Rentals to include inspection process with fee collection process and re-evaluating the current fee structure across all categories.

HR Director Cameron Durant presented an overview of the FY24 budget for the HR Department. The salary portion of the HR budget includes an adjustment to move the Payroll Administrator from the Treasurers Department to the HR Department. He answered questions about advertising, modernizing of processes, professional development, training requirements, payroll processes and the clerical reclassification study (**Attachment B**). Discussion also included collective bargaining, employee healthcare plans, Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC), software capabilities and employee self-service.

Conservation/Sustainability Agent Bruce Webb presented an overview of the FY24 budget for Conservation and answered questions about staffing, salaries, training, the electric vehicle charger program and the peer review process.

Planning and Economic Development Director Paul Foley presented an overview of the FY24 budget for the Planning Department, Economic Development and the Economic Development Committee. The budget is level funded and cuts were made prior to the budget book printing. He answered questions regarding advertising types,

for example, bylaws, rezoning and public hearings. Discussion was also had about professional, outside consulting services. Wayne Hayward mentioned concerns about training needs post-Covid. Mr. Foley added that grant funding has provided the salary for the part-time CDBG administrative assistant, Economic Development has accounted for about six million dollars in funds through grants over the last three years for development projects.

Department of Public Works Superintendent Vincent Furtado and Sewer Superintendent Rene Robillard presented an overview of the FY24 budget for the Sewer Department. Contract negotiations have not been completed with the Sewer Department yet. They explained enterprise funds. Discussion also included impacts of inflation on tools, equipment and maintenance costs, mandatory training and licenses, DEP regulations, plant upgrades and other regulations. They have used zoom and online classes wherever possible to minimize training expenses. Staffing changes in the future will include a night shift employee moving to the day shift and for FY25 a vacant position to fill. Expenses do reflect the use of legal services, Labor and Town Counsel when needed.

Capital projects for the Sewer Department include inflow and infiltration required by the state, portable pump and pump station improvements voted in at the last town meeting.

Mr. Furtado and Highway Superintendent Joshua Crabb presented the FY24 budget for the Highway and Park Departments. Mr. Crabb answered questions related to salary, retirement payoffs, the need for a new hire in the garage skilled in computer repair or uptraining existing, communication expenses needed for running the drainage pump, inflation impacts on tools, equipment and other materials, maintaining state standards, signage expenses, staffing levels and gas.

Capital projects for the Highway Department include roadwork and reconstruction, repaving a portion of the COA parking lot and a backhoe (current backhoe is over 20 years old). Mr. Crabb explained the pilot program on cold in place recycling for road repairs and the need to test in different areas to gauge the results and how to revise the current processes if successful.

A list of Town vehicles will be requested from the insurance company and provided to the Board and Finance Committee.

Mr. Crabb addressed the FY24 Park Department budget needs and answered questions about staffing and the Capital projects for trash collection and the bikepath overlay.

Mr. Furtado presented the DPW Administration budget for FY24, it is level funded and the office supply expense reflects the increase in the cost of paper. He answered questions about dues and professional gatherings

The Capital project for the DPW Administration is the HVAC upgrade for the administration building. The current system is thirty to forty years old and cannot be repaired properly.

Mr. Furtado presented the FY24 Water Department budget and answered questions about retirement payouts, staffing, water meter replacement status and the engineering fund (it is a two-thousand-dollar allocation for the Select Board to use at their discretion for professional services). The budget is level funded.

Capital projects included a federal government required lead service inventory study, and two water main replacement projects.

Ms. Ellison reviewed the upcoming departments for March 23. Finance Committee meets on March 21 at the DPW building.

Finance Committee adjourned at 10:04pm

The Select Board adjourned at 10:04pm

Attachments:

- A. FY24 Budget Override projection
- B. Collins Center Clerical Study

The change to our tax rate if the override passes is approximately \$ 0.11 per \$1000

Our tax rate is presently \$9.95 per \$1000
 Next year's anticipated tax rate will be \$9.73 per \$1000
 if override passes then new rate will be \$9.84 per \$1000
 A difference of \$0.11 per \$1000

- the same amount will be for debt exclusion

The amount paid will be based on the property valuation. For example if you have a home valued at \$250,000, your tax bill would be \$2460 a year.

Additionally if we added another \$0.11 to account for a debt exclusion, the tax rate would be the same as it is this year - \$9.95 per \$1,000. With the same property value that would be \$2,487.50 per year...

Below are the past 10 years of tax rates; this year being the lowest in 10 years; even with the override, the rate is less than past years.

FY YEAR	RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL
2014	\$ 11.50	\$ 23.21
2015	\$ 12.15	\$ 24.50
2016	\$ 12.18	\$ 24.45
2017	\$ 12.04	\$ 24.27
2018	\$ 11.75	\$ 23.76
2019	\$ 11.67	\$ 23.47
2020	\$ 11.06	\$ 22.04
2021	\$ 11.29	\$ 22.53
2022	\$ 10.22	\$ 20.39
2023	\$ 9.95	\$ 19.78

Q&A: to school

Q regarding \$40K change that was made related to software; was it added to the "District Leadership & Administration" line item, meaning, absent that change, that line item was actually down by \$5000?

	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	Change (\$)	Change (%)
District Leadership & Administration	\$ 166,650	\$ 201,700	\$ 35,050	21.03%
School Leadership	\$ 38,925	\$ 58,125	\$ 19,200	49.33%

A: We had a reclassification in that line (-38,000) for accounting software and a reclassification of (+71,050) for student information system software. Which is a net difference of +33,050. There was also a minimal increase in another sub-line that also contributed to the 35k difference.

CLASSIFICATION REVIEW TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN, MA

JANUARY 2023

Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management

McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GLOBAL STUDIES

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Executive Summary

The Town of Fairhaven (the Town) retained, the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management (Collins Center) to conduct a classification review of its unionized clerical and administrative positions to evaluate the “relativity” of the positions and make recommendations on the appropriate classification structure.

Position Descriptions

The Collins Center started with an evaluation of the Town’s current classification system in order to improve its viability. In order to facilitate this evaluation, the Town made available existing copies of positions descriptions. Position classification questionnaires (questionnaires) were distributed to incumbent personnel for all municipal positions, as necessary for the purposes of the study. The questionnaires elicit information including but not limited to the nature of the work performed, the complexity and scope of responsibilities and the requirements needed to fill the position.

The Collins Center interviewed each of the employees to learn about the positions, the essential functions and responsibilities for each position. The Draft position descriptions have been provided under separate cover for edits and comments.

Rating of Positions for Classification & Internal Equity

The Collins Center used a point factor rating method to objectively evaluate all relevant positions. The application of an objective position evaluation system that is consistently applied to each position is critical in assuring the internal equity of the classification plan. The evaluation system utilized by the Project Team is one that has been successfully implemented in many municipalities and other governmental organizations in the Commonwealth. Each position was assigned a point factor in a series of categories, including those listed below, and the total points determined the groupings of positions. These categories include:

Supervision Received	Supervision Exercised	Accountability
Judgement	Complexity	Personal Contacts
Confidentiality	Education/Licenses	Experience
Work Environment	Physical Requirements	Motor Skills Requirement
Physical Skills Requirements	Vision Requirement	Occupational Risks

Discussion

Evaluating similar positions can be challenging. All of the review positions have many factors in common. All provide customer service and all support department operations which makes delineating grades and differences difficult. However, the universal, objective application of the rating systems enables the Collins Center to make recommendations. The Collins Center learned of the history of the classification structure by speaking with the Human Resources Director and the incumbent employees. The Town has seen many changes in staffing and understanding the history of the positions and some of the departmental organizational structure proved insightful. While history is helpful, it is important to create a structure that represents the current circumstances, not a previous or a potential structure.

A few positions are noteworthy:

Treasurer/Collector Department. The review of the Treasurer/Collectors office revealed a need for an adjustment to the classifications within the department. The work of the Assistant Collector/Treasurer is primarily the work of an Assistant Collector. The work of the Financial Assistant is typically performed by an Assistant Treasurer. Some of the work of the Administrative Assistant could be shifted if positions are realigned. As seen in the Recommended Classification Structure (below), the Center recommends changing the Title of the Assistant Collector Treasurer to Assistant Collector and changing the title of the Financial Assistant to Assistant Treasurer. If done, and duties are realigned the current description and classification of the Administrative Assistant should be evaluated.

Principal Clerk – “B” Level. The review of positions across the municipality reveal that the historical “entry level” or “junior” position no longer is applicable. The employees in a department are all cross trained to support the operations of the department. While some employees are assigned specific duties within a department, every department is “ all hands on deck” and staff are expected to do whatever is necessary to get the job done. As such, the Centern recommnets the Town adopt the universal position of Administrative Assistant across departments to enable cross training, sharing of duties and reposnsibilities without wonder “what grade” a position is, or “who can the work be given to”. The nuances in the level of work no longer justify the hierarchical structure that is currently in place.

Recommended Classification Structure

The Collins Center recommends the following classification structure.

Dept	Title	RECOMMENDED	Current Grade	Recommended Grade
Treasurer/Collector	Assistant Coll/Treasurer	Assistant Collector	E	E
Treasurer/Collector	Financial Assistant	Assistant Treasurer	D	E
Town Clerk	Assistant Clerk	Asst Town Clerk	B	E
Payroll	Administrative Assistant	Payroll Coordinator	D	D
Human Resources	Administrative Assistant	Benefits Coordinator	C	D
Highway	Administrative Assistant	Financial Assistant	C	D
Board Of Health	Administrative Assistant	Administrative Assistant	C	C
Treasurer/Collector	Administrative Assistant	Administrative Assistant	C	C*
Building	Administrative Assistant	Administrative Assistant	C	C
Marine Resources	Administrative Assistant	Administrative Assistant	C	C
COA	Principal Clerk	Administrative Assistant	B	C
Select Board	Principal Clerk	Administrative Assistant	B	C
Water	Principal Clerk	Administrative Assistant	B	C

Dept	Title	RECOMMENDED	Current Grade	Recommended Grade
Sewer	Principal Clerk	Administrative Assistant	B	C
Treasurer/Collector	Principal Clerk	Administrative Assistant	B	C
Assessors	Principal Clerk	Administrative Assistant	B	C

**Note: Position will need to be reevaluated once final duties of Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Collector are finalized.*

Conclusion

The Collins Center would like to thank the Town for welcoming the Collins Center and the Project Team specifically. We believe the recommended position descriptions and classification plan will serve the Town well for many years to come.