



FAIRHAVEN SELECT BOARD

Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2024

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
ROUD 2024 FEB 14 AM 10:28

Present: Chair Leon Correy, Select Board member Keith Silvia, Select Board member Robert Espindola and Town Administrator Angie Lopes Ellison

Not Present: Vice-Chair Charles Murphy Sr., Clerk Stasia Powers

Mr. Correy opened the meeting at 6:30p.m.

A Moment of Silence was observed for Dexter Scott King

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to take Action Item B1 out of order. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

UNSHELTERED FAMILY VOLUNTEERS

Ms. Ellison called the volunteers forward to be recognized by the Board. She thanked the individuals and organizations. Due to the approach and community volunteer support, Fairhaven has become a model for the state. Council on Aging Director Martha Reed addressed the Board and also thanked everyone and highlighted the efforts of People Acting in Community Endeavors (P.A.C.E.) Executive Director Pam Keuchler, Kelly Ochoa who helped form the South Coast Welcome Corps, the Dawicki Family and Northeast Maritime Institute.

Mr. Correy read the proclamation (*Attachment A*)

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to approve and graciously thank and submit this proclamation to the many organizations, agencies and staff who worked diligently with and for the migrant and unsheltered families as read. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

The Board asked about compensation from the State to the Town. Ms. Ellison explained that at this time the State does not provide reimbursement for staff; the governor's office has a proposal to the legislature to get a portion of the hotel taxes for the towns involved. The school may receive some funding from the Department of Secondary Education (DESE).

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Ms. Ellison reported on:

- Staff Updates: Departments are staffed and continue with training.
- 40R Update: Paul DiGiuseppe provided an update to the Board and Attorney Adam Costa attended via zoom and provided an overview. Atty. Costa advised the Board there are typically three phases, identification, planning design and legal after which the application is sent to the state and if confirmed the preliminary letter from the state is taken to town meeting. At town meeting the article would be to vote to adopt the zoning bylaw.

The Board asked if a draft was available and Mr. DiGiuseppe said the target date for submittal to the state is in February.

The Board asked about flood insurance challenges and updates. Atty. Costa said if changes are made this could delay the paperwork and timing to get to the state.

- Department Head Updates: Recreation Center Director Kelley Ramirez provided an update on personnel, their focus on customer service and outreach, winter programs, enrollment for summer programs including one at Livesey Park that includes free lunch as part of the federal lunch program, booking for private use, ARPA funds for the playground, increase in followers on social media, initiatives to boost revenue and become more self-sustained.

The Board asked about the curtains and potential for pickleball at Livesey Park and thanked Ms. Ramirez

for her work.

Mr. Correy advised everyone to book early for events because their calendar fills up quickly.

Council on Aging (COA) Director Martha Reed addressed the Board with an update on the department including the digital literacy grant they received, programs on mobility, AARP tax preparation-the appointments start in February with a waitlist and they do try and fill all appointments with surrounding area resources, American Sign Language class in the spring, working on a Social Day Grant to expand the program and they will have a Valentine Dance on February 14, 2024. All information on the web and their social media page.

The Board asked about volunteers and Ms. Reed advised they have about twenty-five volunteers who contribute approximately four-hundred and fifty hours a month. Mr. Correy added it is a great opportunity for students who need to complete service hours. The Board also asked about subsidies and veterans. Ms. Reed advised that when they complete intake with a client they look over eligibility for other programs and make referrals as needed including veterans. The Board mentioned the supper clubs and Ms. Reed said there are two, senior single supper club and an LGBTQ+.

Veterans Service Officer (VSO) Michael Jenney presented an update on the VSO office including the chapter 115 program, assistance applications with clients, certifications and recertifications, wreaths across Fairhaven wrapping up, starting work on the Memorial Day parade. The VSO office is getting out in the community working with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) on transportation, partnering with the Fairhaven Police on opioid related support and the COA.

The Board thanked Mr. Jenney.

- Union Wharf Update: The project has started and will be a long process.
- Broadband 101 and Digital Equity: A zoom and broadcast will take place on January 30, 2024. The information is online and all are asked to participate.
- Department Fees: Each department has been reviewing to propose increases. Many fees have not changed in several years and will be formalized in a future meeting.
- Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Municipal Finance Course: The Town has applicants interested in participating including the Assistant Town Administrator and staff from Public Works, it is an MMA sponsored course and helps the Town build our own staff.
- Other: Ron Fortier resigned from the Cultural Council, we have updated the web under volunteer opportunities.

Town Hall updates within the building and offices, efficiency lighting in some offices, using students from the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School (GNBRVTHS) for moulding within offices and they will be casting off the existing spaces. The shed to be built for elections at the COA parking lot will be a project of the students at GNBRVTHS. Ms. Ellison said any work is to restore or fix issues and not a full re-do.

Mr. Espindola asked about using Town Hall for a Broadband Coalition meeting on February 14, 2024 during Town Hall office hours as covered in a previous committee liaison update. Ms. Ellison agreed this will be a great way to showcase Fairhaven.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (ZBA): ASSOCIATE MEMBER APPOINTMENT

Amy Goyer addressed the Board about her interest in serving on the ZBA as an associate member.

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to appoint Amy Goyer as an Associate Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term to end May, 2025. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

11TH ANNUAL WEST ISLAND 5K RUN/WALK

The Board had no questions on the event. The organizers will contact Police, Fire and Public Works for other event details and their approval.

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to approve the 11th Annual West Island 5K Run/Walk to be held on April 21, 2024 and to allow free parking at Hoppy's Landing for said event as outlined in the proposal pending approval by Police, Fire and Public Works. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM RENTAL REQUEST: NEW BEDFORD BALLET, MARCH 9TH AND 10TH

The applicant addressed the Board regarding the event request. March 9, 2024 is rehearsal and on March 10, 2024 there will be two performances. It is open to the public, tickets will be sold to benefit the New Bedford Ballet, a 501 (c)(3).

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to approve the use of Town Hall Auditorium for the New Bedford Ballet on March 9th and 10th, 2024 as written in the application. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

CALL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ON SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2024

Ms. Ellison advised the Board that this is the formal call to set the date for Annual Town Meeting.

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to set and call the Fairhaven Annual Town Meeting on May 4, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

2023 SELECT BOARD ANNUAL REPORT SUBMISSION

Ms. Ellison asked for a volunteer from the Board to draft the report.

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to appoint Ms. Powers if she accepts, to write and review the Select Board Annual Town Report for approval of the Board. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING POLICY

Ms. Ellison explained to the Board that this policy is a grant obligation and to inform the Board that a reminder of the policy was sent to Town departments and to have public awareness.

FINANCIAL POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

Ms. Ellison said the Financial Policy Review Committee was sent the draft Mr. Espindola presented. They reviewed and created a mission statement (*Attachment B*).

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to approve the Financial Policy Review Committee charge and mission statement as written. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (EDC) MISSION STATEMENT

Ms. Ellison advised the Board that the EDC Chair Cathy Melanson revised the information within the mission statement to reflect the removal of associate members. The Board discussed EDC representation on the Broadband Study Committee and/or Lagoa Friendship Pact and at this time there has been no interest expressed from within EDC to join either.

Motion: Mr. Espindola motioned to approve the recommended changes to the Economic Development Committee charge and mission statement as written. Mr. Silvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously (3-0-0).

2024 GOAL SETTING

This item was tabled

COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Espindola reported on:

The Broadband Study Committee, The Massachusetts Broadband Coalition and The Livable Streets Committee,

New Bedford Harbor Superfund Project Update (*Attachment C*)

Mr. Silvia reported:

The Commission on Disability reorganized with Eleanor Chew as the Chair, Pam Whynot as Vice-Chair and Donna Lavallee as Secretary. Mr. Silvia thanked Marcus Ferro for his time on the Commission. The Board congratulated Mr. Ferro on his engagement.

Mr. Correy reported:

February is Black History Month, follow the Belonging Committee on upcoming activities. He also reminded everyone that there is a Digital Equity 101 remote webinar on January 30th, see the post on the Town website for the link.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jessica Fidalgo, 47 Union Street, Chair of the Belonging Committee said they are working with the library to hold events during school vacation week in February and they will be posted on social media. She thanked Mr. Correy and Mr. Murphy for attending the MLK, Jr. event in New Bedford.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Mr. Correy reminded everyone to get involved and volunteer. He also said the MLK, Jr. event in New Bedford was well attended and seems to be growing. Also, as Gang Starr said, "The mind is a terrible thing to waste."

Mr. Espindola asked for clarification on upcoming meeting dates. Ms. Ellison said the list from the packet was for regularly scheduled Select Board meetings and joint with Finance Committee will be additional. The next is targeted for Wednesday, February 7, 2024 and will be confirmed.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled Select Board meeting is on Monday, February 12, 2024 at 6:30p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was tabled

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Select Board Clerk (ah)

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Unsheltered Family Volunteers Proclamation
- B. Financial Policy Review Committee Mission Statement
- C. Committee Liaison Report – Robert Espindola

Approved on February 12, 2024

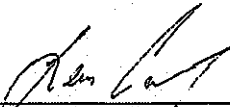


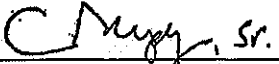
**Town of Fairhaven
Massachusetts
Office of the Select Board
Proclamation**

- Whereas:* On behalf of the Fairhaven Select Board, we express our profound gratitude to the employees, volunteers, and residents who played an instrumental role in rendering invaluable assistance to the unsheltered migrant families arriving at the Seaport Inn on October 6, 2023; and,
- Whereas:* the exemplary selflessness exhibited by these individuals in aiding over one hundred unsheltered persons, many of whom came to Fairhaven without proper supplies, serves as an inspiring testament to the true spirit of community and compassion, through volunteer funded resources; and
- Whereas:* we extend due acknowledgment and commendation to the faith communities within Fairhaven, recognizing their collective effort in gathering, processing, and distributing donations, making a profound impact on the lives of those in need; and
- Whereas:* the Fairhaven School Department's prompt adaptation ensured a secure and educational environment for students amidst challenging circumstances, deserving commendation; and
- Whereas:* heartfelt appreciation is extended to Health Agent David Flaherty for ensuring that the families' living arrangements were to public health standards and all procedures were followed for their wellbeing; and
- Whereas:* we commend Fire Chief Todd Correia along with Stephanie Ograa, Barbara Sullivan, Sharon DeGagne and all the public safety and civil defense volunteers who played a pivotal role in providing space and facilitating the distribution of resources, and their unwavering commitment to serving our community is truly commendable; and
- Whereas:* our recognition further extends to various community groups, including but not excluding Walt's Closets, Catholic Charities Diocese of Fall River, Joseph Lopes from Mass Hire, Amazon's BOS 7 distribution center, the Immigration Assistance Center and Helena DaSilva Hughes, the YMCA Full Plate Project and Gifts to Give for their significant and meaningful assistance; and
- Whereas:* we extend a special thanks and heartfelt recognition to the Dawicki Family and Northeast Maritime Academy for their invaluable contributions, providing transportation services, baby supplies, and laundry services for the residents; and
- Whereas:* we recognize Kelly Ochoa for forming the Southcoast Welcome Corps, and all its members for their efforts to welcome and support the families hosting various engagements; and
- Whereas:* P.A.C.E. (People Acting in Community Endeavors) has displayed remarkable leadership in assisting the Town by providing residents with translators and access to social services, with a special commendation to P.A.C.E. Executive Director Pam Keuchler for her outstanding leadership; and
- Whereas:* special recognition is accorded to Council on Aging Director Martha Reed for her exceptional coordination of the Town's response and the dedication of all volunteers, acknowledging their leadership and tireless efforts instrumental in providing essential support to those in need; and

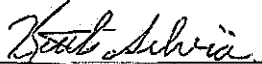
Now, therefore, We, Leon E. Correy III, Charles K. Murphy, Sr., Stasia Powers, Keith Silvia and Robert J. Espindola, the Select Board of the Town of Fairhaven, recognize the above-named individuals and organizations for their tireless efforts.

Given under our hands and seal on this day, 22nd of January,
in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Four


Leon E. Correy III, Chair


Charles K. Murphy, Sr., Vice-Chair


Stasia Powers, Clerk


Keith Silvia


Robert J. Espindola





FAIRHAVEN FINANCIAL POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Charge and Mission Statement

Mission Statement

The Financial Policy Review Committee is an Ad Hoc Committee overseen by the Select Board, including the following members.

- Two members of the Select Board -appointed by the Select Board
- Two members of the Finance Committee –appointed by the Finance Committee
- Two members of the School Committee -appointed by the School Committee
- A Staff-member Designated by the Town Administrator

The committee has been instituted for the sole purpose of evaluating the Towns Financial Policies and recommending changes that will place the Town on a path toward the following:

- Better decision making by leadership.
- Highlighting the cost of government
- Balanced and meaningful fee policies
- The capacity to meet current and future budget and capital needs
- Financial transparency
- Promoting or sustaining the Town's credit rating
- An effective system of internal controls that ensures the legal use of financial resources.
- Cooperation and coordination with other governments and the private sector in the financing and delivery of services.

Draft policies should be presented to Select Board no later than June 1, 2024.



FAIRHAVEN FINANCIAL POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Charge and Mission Statement

Check list to ensure that is included in our policies.

- Development and monitoring of General Fund and Enterprise Fund Budgets
- Capital Improvement Planning
- Long range revenue and expense forecasting
- Debt Management
- Financial Reserves (Free Cash, Stabilization Funds, Retained Earnings, others)
- Health Insurance Trust
- Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Liability
- Enterprise Fund Operations
- Grant Administration
- Investments
- Risk Management Program (Fraud prevention)
- Other elements that may be identified by this committee, the Select Board or Town Management.

Resources.

Division of Local Services, Department of Revenue, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and other similar organizations

Approved January 22, 2024

Bob Espindola Committee Liaison Report 1-17-2024

The BROADBAND STUDY COMMITTEE. I was asked to meet with a representative of CTC, the consulting company the Town has been working with on Digital Equity issues, to answer questions about the status of the Broadband grant originally planned for the Fairhaven Housing Authority and about the status of the Town with respect to the Municipal Light Plant designation.

CTC is due to complete a report in the coming weeks and they want to include mention of those efforts in their report.

I explained that the FHA project has been withdrawn and the Town is considering an alternate proposal for an Economic Development project in the business district.

I also explained that the formation of the Municipal Light Board is on hold pending decision on whether the Town, if it were to advance to building a Town wide Fiber project, if it would be built and operated under an Enterprise Fund model.

The BROADBAND COALITION is due to meet on January 25th. Plans are underway to coordinate a visit from Gigi Sohn on February 14th. Her Bio, from the Benton Institute says "Sohn is one of the nation's leading public advocates for open, affordable and democratic communications networks. For nearly thirty years, she has worked across the country to defend and preserve the fundamental competition and innovation policies that have made broadband Internet access more ubiquitous, competitive, affordable, open and protective of user privacy. In addition to her position at Benton, Gigi is the Executive Director of the American Association for Public Broadband." The Coalition is looking for a site to host Ms. Sohn locally for a hybrid meeting.

LIVABLE STREETS COMMITTEE met on Thursday, January 18th. Update will be provided during the Select Board meeting.

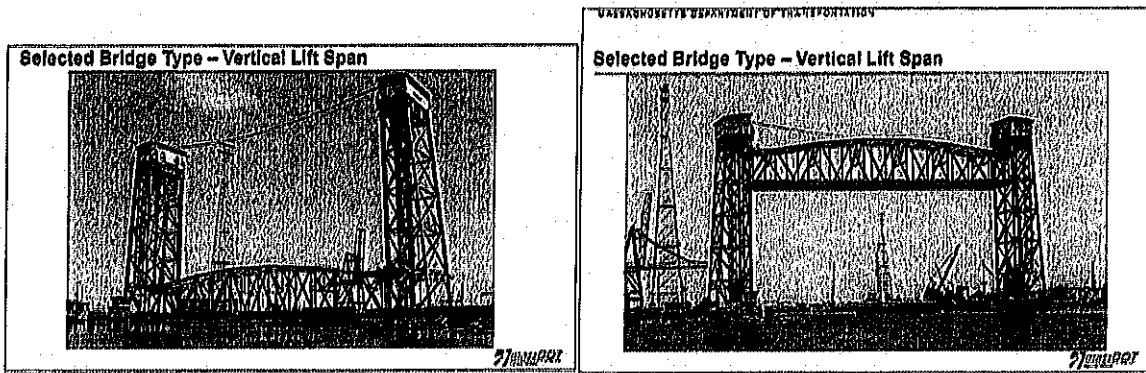
The Committee, along with the South Coast Bikeway Alliance, promoted participation by the cycling community at the Mass DOT meeting on January 9th. I attended the meeting, and note that several other Town Representatives were in attendance, including Director of Planning & Economic Development, Paul Diguiseppe, Harbor Master Tim Cox, Will Gardner from the Liveable Streets Committee and fellow board member Keith Sylvia.

There were many comments about the importance of ensuring that the bridge design includes separated bike and pedestrian facilities. Members of Mass DOT, after hearing similar comments along those lines from many people at the meeting, confirmed that their design would include provisions for that. That was the first time that Mass DOT committed to that.

The full presentation from the meeting can be found at the following link and here are a few slides from that presentation.

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/massdot-public-information-meeting-presentation-new-bedford-fairhaven-1924/download>

Examples of Vertical Lift Bridge



Rendering of Vertical Lift Bridge on existing roadway

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 32

Selected Bridge Type - Vertical Lift Span

- Tower height above roadway: ~190 feet
- Proposed two opening heights: 80 feet - daily and 138 feet - maximum
- 76-foot-wide bridge
 - 4 lanes of traffic with railing separated sidewalks on either side

massDOT

Next Steps

6

25% Design Level
Submission and
Approval

2024

7

75% Design Level
Submission and
Approval

8

100% Design Level
Submission and
Approval

9

Construction
Project
Advertisement

2027

10

Construction

It's not too late to comment ...

How to Stay Involved

- Email: MassDOTMajorProjects@dot.state.ma.us
- Visit project website
 - <https://www.mass.gov/new-bedford-fairhaven-swing-bridge-reconstruction> or use QR Code
- Visit MassDOT for information on hearings
 - <https://www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings>
- Write to Carrie Lavalley, P.E. Chief Engineer
MassDOT
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116
Attention: Major Projects, PROJECT FILE NO. 612557



New Bedford Harbor Superfund Project Update.

I attended a virtual meeting on January 17th hosted by the EPA regarding the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Project.
For anyone interested, the EPA will post the presentation is posted at the following link and the New Bedford Government Access will have the full recording of the meeting.

<https://www.epa.gov/new-bedford-harbor>