

Fairhaven Historical Commission
Minutes
December 3, 2024

Present: Nate Bekemeier, Michael Kelly, Beth Luey, Rick Martin, Natalie Mello, Keith Silvia (Select Board Liaison), Alyssa Botelho (Staff Liaison)

Absent: Nicole Arruda, Wayne Oliveira

Meeting called to order 6:32pm by Michael Kelly, Chair.

Minutes: Motion to approve minutes as amended from November 6, 2024 (B Luey, N Bekemeier). Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report: See attached 2025 Budget Balance Sheet as of December 3, 2024.

Commission Bills:

- Motion to approve payment of invoices to Eversource and Chadwick's Awards for a total of \$1,280.64 [see attached listing of bills] (N. Mello, B. Luey). Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Report:

- Update on CPC application for the Academy Building to re-side three exterior walls, make the back door and bathroom ADA compliant. Chair Kelly appeared before the CPC on November 20th to answer members questions.

Properties update:

- **Academy Building:** N/A
- **Fire Museums:**
 - Washington Street – N/A
 - Spring Street – N/A
- **Fort Phoenix:** The flag was replaced this morning due to wind damage and the wheels have been removed from the field guns for winter storage.
- **Old Stone Schoolhouse:** The site is closed for the season. Almost 400 visitors came to the Schoolhouse this season, up 75% from last. Chair Kelly will be featured in an episode of The Magazine to air on <https://www.fairhaventv.com/> (Channel 95). Ideas were floated for possible cider press experience at this site next fall, A. Botelho to check with Board of Health to see if possible.

Discussion/Action Items:

- Notice of planned updates and repairs to Town Hall. Motion to approve minisplit installation in the East Room with a recommendation to locate the condenser so as not to be visible from the street AND to repair the weathervane and the roof. (N. Mello, B. Luey). Motion passed unanimously.
- Community Development topics (A. Botelho)
 - A process is being developed for approval of street art on town owned properties with input from the FHC, the Select Board and the Cultural Council. This is for "temporary" exhibitions/installations. She will check with New Bedford folks to learn how they developed their process.
 - Old Tyme Holiday event is scheduled for Saturday December 12 from 10:00am to 3:00pm. There will be many more outdoor activities this year. Looking for ideas for next year. Perhaps have Santa end his firetruck ride at one of the old firehouses?
- Revisit and review November 6 vote to move recurring meeting day from 1st Wednesday to 1st Tuesday of each month. Correspondence was read into the record [see attached correspondence] at W. Oliviera's request. Lengthy discussion ensued. Motion to discuss this at our next meeting on Wednesday January 8th and make a decision then. (B. Luey, N. Mello). Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Report:

- Community Preservation Committee – Next meeting January 22, 2025 when deliberations will begin on this year's round of funding awards.

Commission Member Items

- Chair Kelly will invite Edward Edminster to our next meeting to discuss his proposed Eagle Scout Project that entails painting the cannons at Fort Phoenix.

Public Comment:

- None.

Regularly scheduled meeting: Wednesday January 8, 2025 at 6:30pm

Motion to Adjourn at 7:49pm (N. Mello, B. Luey). Motion passed unanimously.



TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN

Historical Commission

Budget Balances

Name	Total
Historical Commission	\$ 500.00
Academy Building	\$ 6,660.90
Fire Museum	\$ 1,419.82
Fort Phoenix	\$ 3,161.68
Old Stone School house on North Street	\$ 100.00
Manjiro House	\$ 1,000.00
Antique Fire Trucks	\$ 1,081.92
Grand total	\$ 13,924.32
Historical Commission Gift Account	\$ 1,158
Fort Gift Account	\$ 569.45
Fort Restitution Account	\$ 0

**TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN
SCHEDULE OF DEPARTMENTAL BILLS PAYABLE**

VOUCHER #

To the Accounting Officer:

The following named bills of the HISTORICAL COMMISSION Department amount
in the Aggregate to **\$1,280.64** Dollars and has been approved
by the Department, and you are requested to place them on a warrant for payment.

DATE: 12/9/24

Michael Kelly, Chair

Prepared by & Title

VENDOR NUMBER	VENDOR NAME	ACCOUNT NUMBER	INVOICE NUMBER	TOTAL
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-02-1241	110524	21.00
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-02-1241	110424	20.98
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-02-1241	110424	16.50
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-01-1241	110524	34.34
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-01-1241	110424	41.46
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-03-1241	110424	96.36
	Chadwick's Awards	028-000-4830-0055	110624	1,050.00
			TOTAL	1,280.64

Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net <Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net>
To: Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>

Mon, Nov 18, 2024 at 12:24 PM

I have blind copied all of you as not to violate Open Meeting law.

Dear fellow Historical Commission member,

I was disappointed to read the minutes of the last meeting to find out that our meeting day has been changed to the first Tuesday of the month to accommodate our new staff liaison. Why would you change the meeting day without having the vote of a "full" Commission to make sure that day works for *all* of us?

Personally, I can not make the first Tuesday as I already have a monthly commitment on that day.

We have always met on the first Wednesday for as long as I have served on the Commission and even long before that. When I joined I knew the regular meeting day would be a Wednesday and I made sure my schedule was clear for the monthly meetings. Now we are changing the day to suit one person?

As much as I would like to remain on the Commission it seem that we are more willing to accommodate an unnecessary staff liaisons attendance instead of accommodating all of the Commission members. What is the need to have both a Select Board Liaison and a staff Liaison anyway?

I am asking for reconsideration on the meeting day and that it be placed on the December agenda and that the December meeting be held on the regular meeting day of the "first Wednesday of the month" to allow for further discussion.

Respectfully,

Wayne Oliveira

RE: December 3 agenda

1 message

Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net <Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net>
To: Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2024 at 10:45 AM

All members: Bcc

Michael,

I was the one that requested the agenda item of "Request to revisit scheduling of monthly meetings" but how am I supposed to discuss this when I have told you I cannot attend Tuesday meetings? I have further spoke with the Community Development Director who stated that she did not need to be present at our meeting to be helpful as she could review the recording and would make that know to the Chair.

I ask again why we are changing our set monthly meetings without polling ALL members to make sure they can attend since this was not the meeting day that has always used? To change a meeting day for single special circumstances that may arise from time to time is one thing but to change a meeting day to accommodate one person's attendance is wrong to the rest of the membership. I plan on checking with the Attorney General's Office to address this issue and the fact that a member is being excluded by a meeting date change and subsequent discussion.

Wayne Oliveira

-----Original Message-----

From: Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 25, 2024 9:28 AM
To: Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>
Subject: December 3 agenda

Hi everyone,

Given our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 3, I will need to submit our agenda for public posting tomorrow. Please send over any items you wish to have included.

So far I have:

Request from Town regarding planned repairs/upgrades to Town Hall.

Request from Fairhaven Office of Community Development to discuss and offer opinion regarding proposed street art concept. Also discuss role, if any, of HistComm in Olde Tyme Holiday event.

Request to revisit scheduling of monthly meetings.

Thanks,
Michael

Fwd: December 3 agenda

1 message

M Kelly <mjkelly072@gmail.com>
To: M Kelly <mjkelly072@gmail.com>

Tue, Dec 3, 2024 at 5:50 PM

From: Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>
Date: November 25, 2024 at 12:14:20 PM EST
To: Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net
Subject: Re: December 3 agenda

You do what you feel you need to do, Wayne. You state "to change a meeting date to accommodate one person's attendance is wrong for the rest of the membership," but you are asking the rest of the membership to keep a date just to accommodate your attendance. And you are one member. So explain to me how it is different?

Per the agenda, we are obviously willing to take the matter up again, given that you have raised the issue as problematic. This is in keeping with all customs and protocols of civil behavior and legal functioning. But even that clearly isn't enough for you, even though you specifically asked for precisely that action. You simply wish to create a problem where there isn't one, and cast yourself as a victim when you aren't one.

My impression lately is that nothing the commission can do will be good enough for you, unless we go back to the way things were when you ran it. That is clearly not the will of the commission, since nothing has been done without a majority vote. And remember, your vote is worth neither more nor less than anyone else's on the commission, including whomever is presently serving as chair.

It would be better for everyone, you most of all, if you would decide if you wish to be a productive member of the commission, or if your goal is simply to disagree with every action of the commission going forward. Both are within your legal rights, to be sure, though I feel you would find your role more rewarding if you were to choose the former.

If you wish to waste the AG's time with something like this, that is entirely your decision. My guess is they will ask if you took any action to get the dates changed back first, or had any proof that the change was directed at you personally, before taking the step of complaining to them. I doubt they will be amused when they learn that you have done neither, nor even given the Commission time to respond to your initial complaint. Facts matter.

Or, you could behave like an adult, wait to see what the commission decides on Tuesday, and plan your course of action from there.

I am sorry the Historical Commission is no longer run the way you want it to be, Wayne, but that has less to do with me and the Commission itself than it does with your own behavior. Indeed, my expectation was that the Commission likely would have voted to reverse the date change at our meeting next week (it was going to be my recommendation, in fact,) though your current use of threats and insults to the members may actually change that outcome.

Perhaps instead of pointing fingers, you could consider how you can best contribute to the commission you supposedly support.

Best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family.

Michael

Statement

1 message

Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net <Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net>
To: Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>

Sun, Dec 1, 2024 at 8:36 PM

Michael,

Since I can not attend this weeks Commission meeting I would like to request that this e-mail from me be read aloud during the appropriate agenda item of:

"Request to revisit scheduling of monthly meetings"

Thank you

Dear fellow members

I have asked that reconsideration of our monthly meeting day be placed on the agenda for this month. I had further asked that the meeting day remain on the customary "first Wednesday of the month" so that I could attend and state my case in person. Since I am unable to attend meetings on the first or second Tuesday of the month I have asked that this statement be read into the minutes on my behalf.

With the change of our staff liaison, the Commission voted last month to change the monthly meeting date to the first Tuesday of the month from the long-time posted day of the first Wednesday of the month that goes back some 20 plus years if not longer. When a member decides to join the Commission the date of the meeting is already set, and members make that decision to join based on whether they can make that particular meeting date.

Now, without warning, the regular meeting date is changed leaving a member to have to decide if they can continue to serve because the day of the month they signed up for has now been altered. Not everyone's schedule is that flexible depending on one's activity in other clubs or organizations that they can just switch dates around.

The second point is that the date was altered to accommodate a "non-voting" staff liaison who has stated to me that she can easily watch the recording of the meeting and give attention to any matters that need her attention. She further stated to me that she would make this simple resolution known to the Chair.

In summary, by changing the meeting day, you have accommodated a non-voting member but have excluded a "voting" member of the Commission. The decision to change any meeting day permanently should have come to the full membership and not decided on by the 5 members in attendance at one particular meeting where 2 members were absent.

To be clear this has nothing personal to do with the staff liaison as I am happy to have them help trouble shoot any issues that come up, but the Commission members participation should be the main concern of any date changes.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and I hope you will agree to return to our regular schedule of the first Wednesday of the month.

Respectfully,

Wayne Oliveira

Historical Commission Member

12/3/24, 5:47 PM

Town of Fairhaven Mail - Re: Statement



Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>

Re: Statement

1 message

Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>

Mon, Dec 2, 2024 at 12:01 PM

To: Wayne.Oliveira@comcast.net

Hi Wayne, happy to do that. Indeed, I already plan to read all of your correspondence on the matter into the record, since I feel it is pertinent.

Please note this pertinent fact as well: moving the meeting to December 3 this month was voted upon by a majority of the Commission. We therefore could not simply move it back to Wednesday without taking another vote, which is happening tomorrow per the agenda. Had I arbitrarily moved the meeting back to Wednesday based solely upon your email, I would have potentially been in violation of open meeting laws and would certainly have been acting in direct opposition to the vote of the commission. As a reminder, the chair holds no power whatsoever outside of a majority vote of the commission, and is prohibited from acting unilaterally. You should know this as well as anyone.