

FAIRHAVEN SELECT BOARD

Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2024

Present: Chair Stasia Powers, Vice-Chair Charles Murphy Sr., Clerk Andrew B. Saunders, members Keith Silvia and Andrew Romano and Assistant Town Administrator of Finance/Town Accountant Anne Carreiro

Ms. Powers opened the meeting at 6:30p.m.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Ms. Carreiro reported:

- Staffing Update: Interim Town Administrator (TA) Search, the deadline for applications is 4:00p.m. on December 4, 2024. The Committee met and reviewed resumes and discussed questions on November 27, 2024, the next meeting is December 9, 2024, interviews are being scheduled. Mr. Saunders added that they will be working to send recommendations to the Board as soon as possible. He also made a statement to clarify his reference to an exchange between Ms. Carreiro and Mr. Osuch that happened when resumes were picked up and the first meeting date was set; he said it would be better described as “banter” between people who have known each other for twenty to thirty years catching up.

Ms. Carreiro said that the interim Human Resources Director will be moving forward with staffing of an administrative assistant for Planning and Conservation. There are also two candidates for the Grant Writer position.

- Town Hall events: Alyssa Botelho sent a message about upcoming events at Town Hall, an EDC Holiday Business Mixer on Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 5:00p.m. and the Olde-Tyme Holiday is Saturday, December 14, 2024 from 10:00a.m. to 3:00p.m.

ACTION / DISCUSSION

Assessors: Tax Rate Presentation and Set Rate

Assessor Joanne Correia addressed the Board and reviewed the Fiscal Year 2025 Tax Rate Classification details (*Attachment A*). Ms. Correia explained there are no Open Space properties and Fairhaven has not adopted the Residential or Small Business Exemption in the past.

The Board asked about the factor of 88.21 referred to in the memo (*Attachment A*) and if the rate was in line with past years. Ms. Correia will send the Board additional information on the factor; the Gateway system is used for the calculation based on the data entered. Ms. Correia advised the Board that the vote since 1990 has been to adopt the maximum shift.

Public Comment:

Diane Hahn of Francis Street addressed the Board, she asked why the value of homes has not gone up and what is the impact of additional businesses coming to Town. Ms. Correia said the process of home valuation has many factors and is a lengthy process; the residential tax rate is based on residential home values with the next recertification is in 2027 which includes the Department of Revenue reviewing all properties.

Motion: Mr. Romano motioned to adopt the shift of 1.75, a vote of 88.21. Mr. Saunders seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

Motion: Mr. Romano motioned to adopt the residential exemption. Mr. Saunders seconded. The motion failed (0-5-0).

Motion: Mr. Romano motioned to adopt the small business exemption. Mr. Saunders seconded. The motion failed (0-5-0).

Public Safety: Crosswalk Safety Initiative and Speed Control

Lt. Kevin Swain from the Fairhaven Police Department presented an overview of current initiatives (*Attachment B*). Lt. Swain also advised of collaboration with other groups and departments like Highway and Livable Streets, increasing social media presence and public service announcements. The Board mentioned concern areas and streets. Lt. Swain advised the Board to contact him with concerns or examples of safety issues.

Interim Town Administrator Planning

Ms. Powers opened a discussion about interim TA planning and next steps. She asked the Board to send sample questions to Ms. Hart by December 6, 2024 for the Board to use when interviewing finalists. The Board scheduled a meeting for Monday, December 23, 2024 to conduct finalist interviews and Ms. Carreiro will notify candidates once the Committee has identified finalists. The Interim TA Search Committee will put forth a minimum of two candidates.

Re-Establish Southeast Coordinating Council on Transportation (SERCCOT) Survey

Ms. Powers reviewed the request for the completion of a survey (*Attachment C*) and suggested asking the Livable Streets Committee to review and complete. Based on the due date this week, Ms. Hart will forward the correspondence to Will Gardner, Chair of Livable Streets to complete.

Select Board 2025 Meeting Calendar

The Board reviewed the list of proposed dates in 2025 for meetings based on their current schedule of the second and fourth Mondays (*Attachment D*). The Board added July 28, 2025 and August 25, 2025.

Motion: Mr. Romano motioned to accept the 2025 meeting calendar with the addition of July 28, 2025 and August 25, 2025. Mr. Saunders seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS / COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Romano reported:

Thank you to Keith Silvia, Frank Fostin and Nils Isaksen for the work outside Town Hall with the wreaths and Trees. He forwarded a request from the Center for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to the Belonging Committee regarding completing studies; there is a cost associated with the work. Mr. Romano distributed a flyer from Better Community Living regarding an Open House on Thursday, December 12, 2024 from 2:00pm-5:00pm.

Mr. Saunders reported:

Ms. Carreiro covered the interim Town Administrator search update.

Ms. Powers reported:

The next meeting of the Bristol County Advisory Committee will be this week.

Mr. Murphy reported:

No meetings to report on. Thank you to the Fairhaven Fire Department; the Thanksgiving weekend was busy with checking carbon dioxide levels at various facilities.

Mr. Silvia reported:

Thank you to the Council on Aging staff for serving Thanksgiving dinners. Ms. Silvia asked each Board member to contribute twenty dollars for a prize for the decorated trees around Town Hall. Ms. Botelho will set up a ballot box for voting the day of Olde-Tyme Holiday.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Diane Hahn of Francis Street addressed the Board. She recommended a minora contest. She also said she wanted to offer her opinion on the Select Board yielding their to the citizens of this Town for the purpose of public discourse regarding issues that will affect not only themselves but their fourth to fifth generation families, their friends, neighbors and others in the sixteen thousand residents in town. She said she has been outspoken as a towns person for twenty years and has voiced her opinion, had numerous meetings of the Select Board, School Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Health meetings and Town Meetings. The only public meeting where she has been limited to only two minutes is Select Board meetings, a few times she has gone over in agreement of the majority

of the Board. She said she strongly believes that each member of the public willing to spend hours upon hours keeping up with the issues in town on an ongoing basis and those who need an immediate response must be allowed five minutes for their comment and another five for discussion with the entire board. The townspeople need to be awarded more time to address and have a discourse with this Board.

The Board thanked Ms. Hahn for her comments.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Powers read from a flyer that the MassDOT sent on a virtual public information meeting about the Fairhaven/New Bedford Bridge replacement project. The link to view will be updated by MassDOT closer to the meeting, it has been shared online (*Attachment F*).

The next regularly scheduled Select Board meeting is Monday, December 16, 2024 at 6:30p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 7:38p.m.

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

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Assessors: Tax Rate Presentation
- B. Select Board Traffic Safety Meeting Presentation: Lt. Kevin Swain
- C. SERCCOT Survey
- D. 2025 Select Board Meeting Date draft
- E. Better Community Living Handout: Andrew Romano
- F. MassDOT Fairhaven / New Bedford Bridge Replacement Update: Virtual Event Flyer

Approved on December 16, 2024



Town of Fairhaven
Massachusetts
BOARD OF ASSESSORS

40 Center Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719

Attachment A

Amanda L. Robinson, MAA, Chair
Daniel Lane, Member
Sharon Simmons, Member

Joanne Correia, Principal Assessor
Phone: (508) 979-4023, x-8111
Email: jcorreia@fairhaven-ma.gov

December 2, 2024.

To: Select Board

From: Board of Assessors

Subject: Tax Rate Classification

As required by law, the Select Board must vote on the minimum residential factor, residential exemption, Open Space Discount and the small business exemption. We have provided examples of the CIP (Commercial, Industrial & Personal Property) shifts for the residential factor in the attached presentation. Our recommendation is to adopt a shift of 1.75 which would be a vote of 88.21.

For Fiscal Year 2025, this will result in a small rate increase in both rates as illustrated below:

FY2025 Residential Property	\$9.32/1000
FY2024 Residential Property	\$9.23/1000
FY2025 CIP Property	\$18.48/1000
FY2024 CIP Property	\$18.37/1000


The average single-family home value for FY2025 is $\$410,731 \times \$9.32/1000 = \$3,828.01$

The average single-family home value for FY2024 was $\$397,455 \times \$9.23/1000 = \$3,668.51$

If a single tax rate was approved, the tax rate would be $\$10.56/1000$ for all property. The average residential value of $\$410,731$ would result in a bill of $\$4,337.32$ vs. $\$3,828.01$.

Board of Assessors:


Amanda Robinson, MAA, Chair


Daniel Lane


Sharon Simmons

Tax Classification Hearing

FAIRHAVEN SELECTBOARD

Four Items to Vote On:

Tax Rate Shift

Open Space Discount

Residential Exemption

Small Business Exemption

Impact of Tax Shift

Residential Tax Examples:

Value	Single Tax Rate Bill	Adopted Shift Tax Bill	Savings
\$200,000	\$2,112.00	\$1,864.00	\$248.00
\$300,000	\$3,168.00	\$2,796.00	\$372.00
\$400,000	\$4,224.00	\$3,728.00	\$496.00
\$500,000	\$5,280.00	\$4,660.00	\$620.00

What if....Scenario Worksheet

CIP Shift	Residential Factor	Residential Rate	Commercial/Industrial/PP Rate
1.7000	0.8900	\$9.40	\$17.96
1.7100	0.8884	\$9.38	\$18.06
1.7200	0.8868	\$9.37	\$18.17
1.7300	0.8853	\$9.35	\$18.27
1.7400	0.8837	\$9.33	\$18.38
1.7500	0.8821	\$9.32	\$18.48

Open Space Discount

There is no property within the Town that is classified as Open Space.

Residential Exemption

The Select Board may grant a residential exemption to all Class One, Residential properties that are the principal residence of the taxpayer. The Town of Fairhaven has not adopted a residential exemption in the past.

Small Business/Commercial Exemption

The Select Board may grant a small commercial exemption to Commercial properties that are occupied by businesses with an average annual employment of no more than 10 people and an assessed valuation of less than \$1,000,000. The Town of Fairhaven has not adopted a small commercial exemption in past years.

Selectboard Traffic Safety Meeting 12/2/2024

Objective:

To improve road safety, reduce speed-related incidents, and enhance community compliance with traffic laws through strategic enforcement, education, and collaboration.

Traffic Safety officer: Officer Scott Coelho

Traffic Complaints-

Traffic complaints are received telephonically, through email, and direct messaging through the department website. Once a complaint, or tip is received a traffic study is conducted, in which we measure speed over a duration of time in a specified targeted area. Data is then collected and analyzed and an educated determination is made whether or not the data supports the traffic complaint. If it is determined that there is a speeding issue, or another traffic-related issue that needs to be addressed, directed patrol traffic enforcement is then conducted that is supported by data.

Police response to traffic complaints and enforcement

- Directed patrols for speed enforcement/traffic safety in targeted areas
- High visibility patrols to deter speeding and other traffic violations
- Increased presence of static speed signage throughout town in problematic areas
- Increased presence of digital speed signage with radar feedback
- Increase installation of Rapid Flash Beacons (RFB's) at crosswalks
- Traffic calming programs
- Public safety announcements and social media campaigns

Directed patrols are a proactive policing strategy that involves increased police presence and enforcement in targeted areas where violations are known to occur.

Traffic calming measures are physical changes to roads that aim to reduce negative effects of motor vehicles and to improve overall safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Currently there is a pilot project in the planning phase for Sconticut Neck Road.

Traffic calming pilot program on Sconticut Neck Road-

Multiagency collaborative with the Livable Streets Committee, Fairhaven Board of Public Works Highway Department and the Fairhaven Police Department. The pilot project's goal is to examine different measures of physical changes that can occur to reduce the negative effects of motor vehicles and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as improve the overall livability of the neighborhood. The current main objective is to slow down the speeds of motor vehicles traveling on Sconticut Neck Road from Orchard Street to Rockland Street. The distance of the pilot program is .1 miles (528 Feet).

Initial proposed design elements include: Green painted bike lanes with stenciled symbols, white lane buffers, signage at key crossings and the possibility of flex posts or strategic barriers for lane demarcation. The project is slated for early spring 2025.

Proposal for additional speed signage throughout the town-

Initial request was for additional speed signage for Howland Road and New Boston Road. Currently on Howland Road there is only one speed sign, which is located on the southside of road, west of Main Street. Through the Massachusetts Municipal Road Safety grant, the Fairhaven Police Department was able to purchase a speed alert radar message sign. The sign will be installed on New Boston Road. The Fairhaven Police Department has requested that Highway Department install additional static speed signage throughout the entire length of the roadway.

Currently there are five digital speed signs with radar feedback deployed throughout the town. In addition, there are five more digital signs waiting for installation

For the additional signs to be installed, the **Fairhaven Police Department will have to cover the cost of materials for the sign bases. Materials include concrete, rebar, and sauna tubes. Estimated costs of materials is approximately \$2,000-\$3,000.** The BPW will install the bases and absorb the costs of labor.

In an effort to increase the amount of speed signage throughout the town a traffic study will more than likely have to be conducted. Current proposals for streets to be included in the traffic study are:

Alden Road

Howland Road

Sconticut Neck Road

New Boston Road

Bridge Street, east of Route 240

The study will be used for the purpose of establishing speed zones and sign ordinances.

Current equipment utilized to aid in traffic-related issues

Digital speed signs with radar feedback-

Deployed: (5)

(1)- Sconticut Neck Road: @ Camel Street

(1)- Sconticut Neck Road: @ Orchard Street

(1)- Route 6: @ Fairhaven High School

(1)- Route 6: @ Pierce's Point (eastbound)

(1)- Alden Road: @ Faith Avenue (southbound)

In inventory: (5)

-Waiting for base installation (Base= sauna tube, rebar, concrete)

Fairhaven Highway Department to install

Fairhaven Police Department to cover costs of materials (estimated costs \$2,000-\$3,000)

To be deployed:

(1)- New Boston Road: @ North of Charity Stevens Lane

(1)- Bridge Street: @ S Curves (eastbound)

(1)- Howland Road: @ Houle Street (eastbound)

(1)- Main Street: @ Anthony Haven (southbound)

(1)- Green Street: @ Farmfield Street

Other measuring devices utilized in speed and traffic enforcement include, portable handheld radar measuring devices and radar measuring devices installed in police cruisers.

Additional targeted traffic enforcement is made possible through state grant funding.

Municipal Road Safety grant through the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)

Speed enforcement

Impaired driving

Distracted Driving

Crosswalk decoy program

Future traffic enforcement and traffic deterrent measures

- Evaluations and proposals for future traffic calming projects
- Increased static and digital speed signage throughout the town
- Public safety announcements and social media campaigns relevant to traffic-related issues
- Establishment of a traffic enforcement division. Additional budgetary funding would be needed to support an increase in department personnel, so that a dedicated enforcement unit of one to two officers could be implemented. The unit would add on to the one officer that is currently assigned as a traffic safety officer on an intermittent basis.

Attachment C

Mon, Nov 25, 2024

Good Morning,

The Southeast Coordinating Council on Transportation ([SERCCOT](#)) collaborates with community leaders, town officials, non-profits, advocates, and businesses to address transit obstacles and opportunities in Southeastern Massachusetts. This council is an opportunity to share resources, highlight transportation barriers, and collaborate on building transit solutions within our communities.

If you are interested in re-establishing SERCCOT, we would truly appreciate it if you filled out our survey to find the best meeting time: [SERCCOT Survey](#). This survey will take 5-10 minutes to complete. We are looking to start hybrid meetings in December with transit-accessible and ADA-inclusive locations. Please take this survey by December 6th if you would like to join SERCCOT.





If you have any questions or would like to learn more about joining us, please reach out to our Public Transit Specialist: Dan Brogan (dbrogan@srpedd.org)

Thank you so much for your time and everything you do to work with our neighbors in the region.

In Community,
Dan



Dan Brogan he/him
Public Transit & Youth Engagement Specialist

 dbrogan@srpedd.org
 508-685-6178 (Text/Call 9:00am-7:00pm)
 508-824-1367 ext. 241
 88 Broadway, Taunton, MA 02780

Dial 711 to use MassRelay

SRPEDD's phone system is accessible to employees outside of the office; however, due to our hybrid work schedule, the best way to contact us is via email.

Public M.G.L. 66 10

From: Daniel Brogan
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 7:47 AM
Subject: Re-Establishing SERCCOT Survey

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Thank you so much for your time and everything you do to work with our neighbors in the region.

In Community,
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SRPEDD is an Equal Opportunity Employer. SRPEDD considers e-mail to be a public record under the Massachusetts Public Records Law.



**Town of Fairhaven
Massachusetts**
40 Center Street · Fairhaven, MA · 02719

Re: Select Board 2025 Meeting Calendar

To align with the Board's meeting cadence and the current meeting protocol, the following proposed meeting dates for 2025 are broken down by the first and second half of the year:

First half of 2025

- Monday, January 13, 2025
- Monday, January 27, 2025
- Monday, February 10, 2025
- Monday, February 24, 2025
- Monday, March 10, 2025
- Monday, March 24, 2025
- Monday, April 7, 2025 – *Election Results*
- Monday, April 14, 2025
- Monday, April 28, 2025
- Monday, May 12, 2025
- **Tuesday, May 27, 2025**
- Monday, June 9, 2025
- Monday, June 23, 2025

Second half of 2025

- Monday, July 14, 2025
- Monday, August 11, 2025
- Monday, September 8, 2025
- Monday, September 22, 2025
- **Tuesday, October 14, 2025**
- Monday, October 27, 2025
- Monday, November 10, 2025
- Monday, November 24, 2025
- Monday, December 1, 2025 (set tax rate)
- Monday, December 15, 2025



YOU'RE INVITED TO

ALDEN ROAD OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY DECEMBER 12TH

2PM - 5PM

211 ALDEN RD

FAIRHAVEN MA 02719

Tour our brand new Community and Family Support facilities. Better Community Living (BCL) serves individuals and their families in the Greater New Bedford Area with intellectual/developmental disabilities, as well as autism.

Questions? Contact Peggy Smith at
peggy_smith@bettercommunity.com or
508-999-4300 ex. 190



Fairhaven / New Bedford Bridge Replacement of the US Route 6 over the Acushnet River Bridge. Virtual Public Information Meeting

What is happening?

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is pleased to provide an update on the Fairhaven and New Bedford Swing Bridge replacement project. The virtual event will provide an update to allow attendees to ask questions about the selected bridge type. The meeting will consist of a formal presentation as well as a question-and-answer period. All views and comments will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

How will this affect you?

The Swing Bridge is a critical transportation link over the Acushnet River between Fairhaven and New Bedford. The proposed project includes the replacement of US Route 6 over the Acushnet River movable span. This is an opportunity in the preliminary design process (25% design) for the public to learn about and comment on the selected bridge type. For those unable to attend the virtual meeting the public information meeting will be recorded. The video will be posted to the study website at www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events after the event.

When

Thursday, December 19, 2024
6:00 PM

Attend

www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events



To ensure its meetings are accessible, MassDOT reasonably provides: translation, interpretation, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services. To request such services, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer at 857-368-8580 or MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us. For adequate time to process such request, please make them as early as possible, ideally 10-15 days prior to the event.

Project inquiries may also be emailed to massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us. Please submit any written statements regarding the proposed undertaking to: **Carrie A. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116; Attention: MAJOR PROJECTS, PROJECT FILE NO. 612557**