Town of Fairhaven

DRAFT 4

3/19/2026

WARRANT

The inhabitants qualified as Town Meeting Members shall meet on
Saturday, May 2, 2026 at 9:00 am
in the Walter Silveira Auditorium at the Elizabeth I. Hastings Middle School
to Act on the following Articles in the Warrant:

WARRANT FOR THE SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026 AT 9:15 A.M.

Majority Vote needed unless stated otherwise

ARTICLE 1 TRANSFER BUDGET FUNDS FOR FY26

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of $22,453 from the wage reserve account to Public Safety, Police Salary and Wage line item for FY26 to fund FY26 cost for collective bargaining agreement or take any other action relative thereto.

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Department	Reason	Amount	Funding Source
Police	Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiation	$ 22,453	Wage Reserve Fund

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 2 SETTING SALARIES OF TOWN OFFICERS FOR FY26

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds a sum of money to fund additional salary and operating expenses for the following departments. Said sum to be added to previously voted appropriations for FY26, or to take any other action relative thereto.

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Department	Reason	Amount	Funding Source
Town Clerk	Salary – Other	$ 421.00	Wage Reserve Fund

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 3 SUPPLEMENTAL FY26 SNOW AND ICE APPROPRIATION

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of $377,929 from the Stabilization Fund to the FY26 Winter Storm Emergency Special Revenue Fund to fund costs associated with the 2026 blizzard or take any other action relative thereto.

Petitioned by: Select Board

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – 11-0-0 Favorable Vote
Vote Required: Two-thirds (2/3) Vote

ARTICLE 4 OTHER BUDGET ITEM APPROPRIATION

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of $280,000 from Surplus Revenue (Free Cash) to the FY26 General Operating Budget to fund costs associated with Union Wharf Construction or take any other action relative thereto.

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

WARRANT FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026 AT 9:00 A.M.

Majority Vote needed unless stated otherwise

ARTICLE 1 MEASURER OF WOOD AND BARK
To see if the Town will vote to instruct the Select Board to appoint a Measurer of Wood and Bark.
Petitioned by: Select Board

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 2 TOWN REPORT
To receive the Annual Report of Town Officers.
Petitioned by: Select Board

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 3 REPORT OF COMMITTEES
To hear and act upon the reports of any committees, or committee appointed in Town Meeting and to choose any committees or committee the Town may think proper and to raise and appropriate a sum of money for the expense of same, or to take any other action with relation to either of said matters, as the Town may deem necessary and proper.
Petitioned by: Select Board

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 4 GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGETS – FY27
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the amounts listed on the accompanying table to fund the Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund Operating Budget or take any other action relative thereto:
Petitioned by: Town Administrator

See Appendix A, page #### for full budget description

Dept. Name/Function Totals	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
GENERAL GOVERNMENT		
General Government Salaries & Wages	$2,034,930	$2,139,584
General Government Operating Expenses	$1,028,101	$984,030
Subtotal General Government	$3,063,031	$3,123,614

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
PUBLIC SAFETY		
Public Safety Salaries & Wages	$9,082,703	$9,128,947
Public Safety Operating Expenses	$774,938	$762,043
Subtotal Public Safety	$9,857,641	$9,890,990

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
EDUCATION		
Subtotal Fairhaven Public Schools	$25,656,166	$26,105,176
Subtotal New Bedford Regional Technical HS	$2,631,268	$2,928,534
Subtotal Bristol County Agricultural HS	$332,694	$291,510
Subtotal Education	$28,620,128	$29,325,220

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
PUBLIC WORKS		
Public Works Salaries & Wages	$1,616,297	$1,509,040
Public Works Operating Expenses	$2,753,404	$2,817,007
Subtotal Public Works	$4,369,701	$4,326,047

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT		
Board of Health Salaries & Wages	$172,559	$172,609
Board of Health Operating Expenses	$17,500	$17,450
Subtotal Board of Health	$190,059	$190,059

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Community Services Salaries & Wages	$609,716	$603,984
Community Services Operating Expenses	$1,465,606	$1,528,133
Subtotal Community Services	$2,075,322	$2,132,117

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
NON-DEPARTMENTAL		
Non-Departmental Salaries & Wages	$100,000	$0
Non-Departmental Operating Expenses	$12,240,672	$12,929,638
Subtotal Non-Departmental	$12,340,672	$12,929,638

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

	FY2026 Budgeted	FY27 Budget No Override
DEBT SERVICE		
General Fund	$945,820	$1,017,891

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 5 WATER ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the following amounts to fund the operating budget of the Water Enterprise Fund for FY27 or take any other action relative thereto:

	FY 2026 Budgeted	FY2027 Budget
Amounts Appropriated:		
Salaries and Wages	806,042	954,463
Operating Expenses	2,210,904	2,271,677
Debt Service	364,251	464,106
Subtotal Water Enterprise Appropriations	**3,381,197**	**3,690,246**
Transfer for Amounts Appropriated in the General Fund	**570,909**	**588,036**
TOTAL WATER ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET	**3,952,106**	**4,278,282**
Funding Sources:		
Water Revenue	3,454,106	4,200,000
Water Retained Earnings	498,000	78,282
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	**3,952,106**	**4,278,282**

Petitioned by: Town Administrator and Board of Public Works

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 6 SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the following amounts to fund the operating budget of the Sewer Enterprise Fund for FY27 or take any other action relative thereto:

	FY 2026 Budgeted	FY2027 Budget
Amounts Appropriated:		
Salaries and Wages	1,423,640	1,594,237
Operating Expenses	1,674,325	1,876,325
Debt Service	839,862	3,131,717
Subtotal Sewer Enterprise Appropriations	**3,937,827**	**6,602,279**
Transfer for Amounts Appropriated in the General Fund	**822,268**	**846,936**
TOTAL SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET	**4,760,095**	**7,449,215**
Funding Sources:		
Sewer Revenue	4,750,000	6,275,600
Sewer Retained Earnings	10,095	1,176,615
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	**4,760,095**	**7,449,215**

Petitioned by: Town Administrator and Board of Public Works

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 7 TOWN CABLE ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the following amounts to fund the operating budget of the Town Cable Enterprise Fund for FY27 or take any other action relative thereto:

	FY 2026 Budgeted	FY2027 Budget
Amounts Appropriated:		
Salaries and Wages	189,130	193,689
Operating Expenses	31,525	32,290
Debt Service		
Subtotal Town Cable Enterprise Appropriations	220,655	225,979
Transfer for Amounts Appropriated in the General Fund	25,565	25,225
TOTAL TOWN CABLE ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET	246,220	251,204
Funding Sources:		
Town Cable Revenue	202,079	140,000
Town Cable Retained Earnings	44,141	111,204
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	246,220	251,204

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 8 SCHOOL CABLE ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the following amounts to fund the operating budget of the School Cable Enterprise Fund for FY27 or take any other action relative thereto:

	FY 2026 Budgeted	FY2027 Budget
Amounts Appropriated:		
Salaries and Wages	127,027	163,419
Operating Expenses	21,667	17,036
Debt Service		
Subtotal School Cable Enterprise Appropriations	148,694	180,455
Transfer for Amounts Appropriated in the General Fund	15,865	21,300
TOTAL SCHOOL CABLE ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET	164,559	201,755
Funding Sources:		
School Cable Revenue	156,919	125,000
School Cable Retained Earnings	7,640	76,755
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	164,559	201,755

Petitioned by: Town Administrator and School Committee

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 9 GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PLAN

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the following sums of monies to fund the capital equipment and projects listed below, or take any other action relative thereto:

Line	Department/Project	Amount	Funding Source
	Public Works Department		
1	Town wide Gas Pump System Replacement	$100,000	Free Cash
2	Roadwork	$100,000	Free Cash
3	Street Sweeper Replacement	$200,000	Free Cash
	Fire / Emergency Management		
4	Light Tower	$16,895	Free Cash
5	PFAS Free Firefighting Gear	$133,285	Free Cash
6	Brush Truck Replacement (Unit 5)	$85,000	Free Cash
	Information Technology (IT)		
7	Replacement of Technology	$30,000	Free Cash
	Council on Aging		
8	Replace COA Tables and Chairs	$43,000	Free Cash
9	Replace Ceiling Tiles	$33,505	Free Cash
	Building		
10	Replace Vehicle	$48,000	Free Cash
	Police		
11	Cruiser Replacements	$172,066	Free Cash
12	Body Worn Camera and Taser Project	$24,748	Free Cash
	Harbormaster		
13	Harbormaster/Shellfish Warden Truck Replacement	$59,539	Free Cash
	School		
14	FHS Football Field Bathroom Project	$210,000	Free Cash
15	Tripp School Roof Replacement	$700,000	Free Cash
	Town Hall		
16	Repair West Retaining Wall	$40,000	Free Cash
	Total recommended General Fund Capital Budget	**$1,996,038**	

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 10 WATER ENTERPRISE FUND CAPITAL PLAN

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the following sums of monies to fund the capital equipment and projects of the Water Enterprise Fund listed below, or take any other action relative thereto:

Line	Project	Amount	Funding Source
1	Replace Backhoe #36	$126,000	Water Retained Earnings
2	Water Telemetry for Wells	$200,000	Water Retained Earnings
	TOTAL	**$326,000**	

Petitioned by: Board of Public Works

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

ARTICLE 11 WATER ENTERPRISE FUND BORROWING
To see if the Town will vote to borrow or transfer from available funds the following sum of money to fund the capital equipment and projects of the Water Enterprise Fund listed below, or take any other action relative thereto:

Line	Project	Amount	Funding Source
1	Wolf Island Well Replacement	$756,000	Borrowing
	TOTAL	**$756,000**	

Petitioned by: Board of Public Works

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Vote Required: Two-thirds (2/3) Vote

ARTICLE 12 SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND CAPITAL PLAN
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds the following sums of monies to fund the capital equipment and projects of the Sewer Enterprise Fund listed below, or take any other action relative thereto:

Line	Project	Amount	Funding Source
1	Vactor Machine	$100,000	Sewer Retained Earnings
2	Vehicle Replacement: Dump Truck #43	$125,000	Sewer Retained Earnings
3	West Island Sewer Plant Generator & Portable Generator	$400,000	Sewer Retained Earnings
4	Inflow & Infiltration	$250,000	Sewer Retained Earnings

Petitioned by: Board of Public Works

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

ARTICLE 13 OTHER BUDGET ITEMS - APPROPRIATIONS
13A FUNDING OF ARTICLES
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, a sum of monies for the following purposes or take any action relative thereto.

Line	Fund	Amount	Source
1	Paramedic Training Tuition	$20,000	Ambulance Fund
2	Transfer to the Ambulance Stabilization Fund	$75,000	Ambulance Fund
3	Shellfish Propagation	$18,600	Free Cash
4	Rogers School Maintenance	$20,000	Free Cash
5	Town Hall Emergency Repairs	$40,000	Free Cash
6	Transfer to Other Post-Employment Benefit (OPEB) Trust Fund	$250,000	Free Cash
7	Replacement Equipment – Recreation Center	$10,000	Free Cash
8	Compensated Absences	$75,000	Free Cash
	Total		

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

<u>13B INCREASE AND FUND COLA BASE FOR RETIREES</u>

<u>13B (Option 1) INCREASE AND FUND COLA BASE FOR RETIREES</u>

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from Surplus Revenue (Free Cash) the amount of $98,000 to increase the cost of living (COLA) base for retirees, beneficiaries, and survivors beginning July 1, 2026, from $17,000 to $18,000 consistent with the provisions of Chapter 188, Section 19 of the Acts of 2010.

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

<u>13B (Option 2) INCREASE AND FUND COLA BASE FOR RETIREES</u>

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from Surplus Revenue (Free Cash) the amount of $98,000 to increase the cost of living (COLA) base for retirees, beneficiaries, and survivors beginning July 1, 2026, from $18,000 to $19,000 consistent with the provisions of Chapter 188, Section 19 of the Acts of 2010.

Petitioned by: Retirement Board

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

Article Summary and Description

State law allows Massachusetts Municipal Retirement Systems to increase the base pension amount upon which an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) up to 3% can be applied. Currently, the Fairhaven Retirement System's COLA base is set at $17,000.

<u>Option 1</u> would increase the base to from $17,000 to $18,000. This would result in an increase in pension benefits of $30.00 per thousand-dollar increase, per retiree. The cost of this increase to the Town would be $98,000.00

<u>If Option 1 is approved, Option 2</u> would be an additional increase of the base from $18,000 to $19,000. This would result in an additional increase in pension benefits of $30.00 per thousand-dollar increase, per retiree. The cost of this increase to the Town would be $98,000.

If both Options are approved, the total increase to the Town would be $196,000.

<u>ARTICLE 14 FY27 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE APPROPRIATIONS</u>

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or to reserve for later appropriation, and to authorize the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to expend or reserve, from the Community Preservation Fund available funds and FY27 Estimated Receipts as set forth herein, the following amounts for community preservation purposes, with such expenditures to be subject to conditions to be specified in applications and award letters from the Community Preservation Committee, with each item considered a separate appropriation:

PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2027 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION BUDGET		
	APPROPRIATIONS	
		Recommended Amounts
	Reserve for Appropriation	

A.	Acquisition, creation, and preservation of Open Space, and its rehabilitation and restoration.	$70,000
B.	Acquisition, creation, and preservation of Historic Resources	$70,000
C.	Acquisition, creation, and preservation of Community Housing	$70,000
D	Emergency Reserve Account	$100,000
	Total Reserves for Appropriation	**$310,000**
	Spending Appropriations	
E.	FHA- Oxford Terrace Window Replacement- CH	$100,000
F.	BPW- Big Belly Trash -OS/R	$30,000
G.	Sustainability- Mac/Pim Native Garden-OS/R	$3,505
H.	Livesey Park Tennis/Basketball-OS/R	$70,000
I.	FIA- Millicent Library Center Street Lighting-OS/R	$25,000
J.	FHC- Historic Property Survey- H	$10,000
K.	FPS- Firetruck Restoration #1-H	$95,000
L.	Town Hall West Wall Repair- H	$320,000
M.	Millicent Library Restoration/Preservation-H	$25,000
N.	Riverside Cemetery Project-H	5,000
O.	FHS- Exterior Masonry- H	$140,000
	Administrative Spending Appropriation	
P.	To fund the Community Preservation Committee’s annual expenses for: Personal Service; Purchase of Services; Supplies; Other charges/expenditures (Estimated Receipts)	$5,000
	Total Recommended Spending Appropriations	**$828,505**

Petitioned by: Community Preservation Committee

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

Article and Project Summary and Descriptions
And, whereas Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 44B requires that the Town appropriate for spending, or set-aside for future spending, from the fund balance at least 10% for open space, 10% for historic preservation, and 10% for community housing.

And, whereas the existing reserves and recommended appropriations for open space, historic preservation, and community housing each exceed 10% of the Community Preservation Fund Estimated Receipts.
And, whereas Town Meeting may vote to delete any of the recommended amounts.

Therefore, in the event that recommended amounts are deleted, vote to appropriate as a reserve for future spending from the FY 2027 Community Preservation Fund Estimated Receipts the minimum necessary amounts to allocate not less than 10% ($70,000) for open space, not less than 10% ($70,000) for historic preservation, and not less than 10% ($70,000) for community housing or take any other action relative thereto.

A. **Open Space Reserve**: This is to reserve at least the minimum 10% of anticipated revenues to remain in compliance with the Community Preservation Act.

B. **Historic Preservation Reserve**: This is to reserve at least the minimum 10% of anticipated revenues to remain in compliance with the Community Preservation Act.

C. **Community Housing Reserve**: This is to reserve at the least the minimum 10% of anticipated revenues to remain in compliance with the Community Preservation Act.

D. **Emergency Reserve Account**: A reserve account for emergencies that need funds but fall outside of the normal CPC Application and Review process. Projects would still need to be approved by Town Meeting.

E. **Fairhaven Housing Authority- Oxford Terrace Window Replacement- Community Housing**: Replace all the original 1976 windows in the 107 apartments in this Senior Housing/Non-Elderly Disabled Development which is two levels in one building.

F. **Board of Public Works- Big Belly Trash -Open Space and Recreation**: Purchase six Big Belly Trash compactors at $5,000 each. These trash receptacles will allow for less trips to locations to empty trash by BPW staff each week.

G. **Sustainability- Macomber/Pimental Park Native Garden-Open Space and Recreation**: Purchase plants that are Native to Fairhaven and create a walkable garden space in the area of Macomber/Pimental Park which was previously a dirt bike path. Educational signage will also be installed.

H. **Livesey Park Tennis/Basketball-Open Space and Recreation**: Repair and resurface the current two tennis courts and two basketball courts at Livesey Park.

I. **Fairhaven Improvement Association-Millicent Library Center Street Lighting-Open Space and Recreation**: Purchase and install street lights to complete the lighting on center street.

J. **Fairhaven Historical Commission-Historic Property Survey- Historic Preservation**; To hire a professional preservation consultant to conduct a survey plan in order to complete a comprehensive town-wide historical inventory.

K. **Fairhaven Protecting Society- Firetruck Restoration #1-Historic Preservation**: Repair the town owned 1937 Maxim open cab fire truck. This is a mechanical restoration only: including engine, chassis, coolant systems, electrical, brakes, and fuel system.

L. **Town Hall Repairs – West Retaining Wall - Historic Preservation**: Repair the Town Hall West Retaining Wall along the William Street Side of the building. The repair would require disassembling the wall and accompanying wrought iron fence and sidewalk, rebuilding the stonework, fence, and sidewalk, and installing a new drainage system to mitigate future issues.

M. **Millicent Library Restoration/Preservation-Historic Preservation: Three-part request**: Repair the front tile mural at the entrance to The Millicent Library. Provide UV film on windows for protection of historical documents in the archives collection. Repair and remediate the mold on the walls of the tower.

O. **Fairhaven High School- Exterior Masonry/Flashing- Historic Preservation**: Scope of the work includes repointing the ventilator chimney and pair of adjacent dormers with flashing replacement, repointing the limestone cornice and the replacement of the adjoining copper gutter located on the west face of the southeast gable. There is logic in consolidating this work due to providing staging and access to the work area.

P. **Administrative services and operating expenses**: Personal Service; Purchase of Services; Supplies; Other charges/expenditures (Estimated Receipts)

ARTICLE 15 REVOLVING FUNDS

To see if the Town will authorize or re-authorize the following Revolving Accounts under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53 E ½ and to amend General Bylaws Section 2-6 to add new revolving funds under the following terms or take any other action relative thereto:

Revolving Fund	Authorized to Spend	Revenue Source	FY27 Limit
Hazardous Materials	Fire Chief	Disposal fees/charges	$100,000
Sustainability	Sustainability Committee	Fees/charges	$10,000
Hoppy's Landing	Select Board and/or Town Administrator	Fees/charges from users of Hoppy's Landing	$25,000
Town Hall Auditorium	Town Administrator	Town Hall Auditorium rental fees	$3,000
Park Utilities	Board of Public Works	User fees	$2,000
Shellfish Mitigation	Marine Resources	Mitigation fees	$25,000
Mooring Fees	Marine Resources	Mooring fees	$4,000
Mattress Recycling	Board of Health	Fees from mattress disposal	$3,000
Hoarding Remediation	Board of Health	Revenue from textile recovery boxes	$2,000
Supportive Social Day Program	Council on Aging Director	Receipts reserved for appropriation for supportive social day	$250,000
Roger A. Grimshaw Park	Council on Aging Director	Receipts from events at Grimshaw Park	$5,000

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 16 ADOPT CHAPTER 22I, OF THE HERO ACT FOR COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS AND AN ADDITIONAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

To see if the Town will vote to accept Mass General Laws Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 22I, which authorizes an annual increase in the amount of the exemption granted under General Laws Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 22, Clause 22A, Clause 22B, Clause 22C, Clause 22E, and Clause 22F by the percentage increase in the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous year as determined by the Commissioner of Revenue, to be effective for applicable exemptions granted for any fiscal year beginning on or after July 1,2026 or take any other action relative thereto.

Article Summary and Description

Clause 22I, if accepted, would increase the amount of tax exemption granted to veterans on their domiciles under Clause 22, Clause 22A, Clause 22B, Clause 22C, Clause 22E, and Clause 22F annually by a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) determined by the Department of Revenue (DOR) based on the consumer price index (CPI). This would work like the annual COLA adjustment determined by DOR that is already a local option for certain senior exemption amounts.

For example, if a Clause 22E recipient receives a $1,000 exemption and the community accepts this option, and the CPI increases by 2.5%, the total exemption amount would increase to $1,025 and continue adding the COLA each ensuing year.

Petitioned by: Veterans Service Officer

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

<u>ARTICLE 17 ADOPT CHAPTER 22J, OF THE HERO ACT FOR COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS AND AN ADDITIONAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION</u>

To see if the Town will vote to accept General Laws Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 22J, which authorizes an annual increase in the amount of the exemption granted under General Laws Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 22, Clause 22A Clause 22B, Clause 22C , Clause 22E and Clause 22F by 100% of the personal amount, subject to the conditions in Clause 22J, to be applicable exemptions granted for any fiscal year beginning on or after July 1, 2026 or take any other action relative thereto.

Article Summary and Description

Clause 22J, if accepted, provides an additional exemption up to 100% of the amount of tax exemption granted to veterans on their domiciles under Clause 22, Clause 22A, Clause 22B, Clause 22C, Clause 22E, and Clause 22F. The application of the Clause 22J additional exemption cannot reduce the tax owed below what the taxpayer would owe on 10% of the current assessed valuation of the domicile. However, unlike the general additional exemption, the exemption granted to veterans can result in the taxpayer paying less than the taxes paid in the preceding fiscal year. To implement, the city or town must vote to accept the statute and establish the additional exemption percentage before the beginning of July 1 of the fiscal year in which that percentage will first apply. The percentage voted will continue to apply in subsequent years unless and until another percentage is voted before July 1 beginning of a later fiscal year.

For example, if a Clause 22J recipient receives $1,000 exemption and the community accepts this option at 50%, the exemption would increase to $1,500.

If adopted, both clauses would work together. If a Clause 22 recipient receives a $1,000 exemption and the community accepts Clause 22I and the CPI increases by 2.5%, the total exemption amount would increase to $1,025. If the community further accepts Clause 22J and increases the amount of the tax exemption by 50%, in this example the total exemption will increase to $1,537.

Petitioned by: Veterans Service Officer

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

<u>ARTICLE 18 CIVIL SERVICE REVOCATION – FIRE CHIEF</u>

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court, in compliance with Clause (1), Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments of the Constitution, for a special act in the form set forth below, exempting the fire chief from Massachusetts General Laws chapter 31, Civil Service law and the rules and regulations relating to the same, provided that this revocation will not affect the Civil Service status of the existing fire chief as long as they occupy their current position; and provided that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Select Board approve amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court; and provided further that the Select Board is hereby authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition, as follows or act in any other manner in relation thereto:

AN ACT EXEMPTING THE FIRE CHIEF OF THE TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE LAW.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding Chapter 388 of the Acts of 1972, or any other general or special law to the contrary, the fire chief shall be exempt from chapter 31 of the General Laws.

SECTION 2. Section 1 shall not impair the civil service status of the incumbent fire chief in the town of Fairhaven on the effective date of this act.

SECTION 3. This act shall be effective upon its passage.

Explanation: On June 8, 1972, Chapter 388 of the Acts of 1972, An Act Placing the Office of the Chief of the Fire Department of the Town of Fairhaven under the civil service law, was enacted on June 8, 1972, placing the chief of the fire department under Civil Service effective upon the date of passage.

Police Officers and Firefighters, as well as the Police and Fire Chiefs are the only civil service government employees in the Town of Fairhaven. Civil Service restricts who may be on a promotional examination process as well as the timing of said process, which restricts the Town's ability to hire qualified candidates in a timely manner. Civil Service does not prescreen candidates for disqualifying matters and requires Fairhaven to extensively document why a candidate is not selected for appointment (subject to a time-consuming appeal).

Leaving Civil Service will allow Fairhaven to hire a private vendor to test candidates if the Town wishes. The Town will be able to prescreen and identify quality candidates, with college or military experience, prior experience in fire service and other types of skills that would best serve our community.

Further, the proposed change would provide the Town of Fairhaven with more control over personnel choices by allowing the Town to set its own policies, requirements and procedures for selecting a fire chief to lead the Fairhaven Fire Department. Both the Administration and the Fire Union support leaving Civil Service.

Petitioned by: Select Board

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 19 FAIRHAVEN AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c. 44, s. 55C to establish a trust to be known as the Fairhaven Affordable Housing Trust, the purpose of which shall be to provide for the preservation and creation of affordable housing in Fairhaven for the benefit of low- and moderate-income households, to support efforts to improve housing affordability in Fairhaven in general, and to fund community housing, as defined in G.L. c. 44B, and, in implementation thereof, to amend the General Bylaws by adding a new Bylaw entitled "Affordable Housing Trust" as printed in the warrant, or take any other action relative thereto.

Section 1. Statutory authority

The Fairhaven Affordable Housing Trust shall be constituted and operation under MGL c.44, § 55C, and subject to the limitations contained in this bylaw.

Section 2. Title

The Trust shall be called the "Fairhaven Affordable Housing Trust"

Section 3. Purpose

The purpose of the Trust shall be to provide for the preservation and creation of affordable and community housing in the Town of Fairhaven for the benefit of low- and moderate-income households and for the funding of community housing, as defined in and in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act, G.L. c. 44B ("Chapter 44B"). In furtherance of this purpose, the Trustees are hereby authorized, in accordance with the procedures set forth herein, to acquire by gift, purchase or otherwise real property, personal property, or money, both tangible and intangible, of every sort and description; to use such property, both real and personal, and money in such manner as the Trustees shall deem most appropriate to carry out such purpose, provided however, that all property and money held by the Trust and the net earnings thereof shall be used exclusively for the preservation and creation in the Town of Fairhaven` of affordable housing.

Section 4. Composition

There shall be a Board of Trustees of the Fairhaven Affordable Housing Trust Fund (the "Board"), composed of seven members (7) members: two (2) ex officio non-voting members and five (5) voting members. A member of the Select Board (chosen by the Select Board) and The Town Administrator or the Town Administrator's designee, shall serve as the ex officio members. The voting members shall include: five (5) members appointed by the Select Board, with a preference for members who have professional expertise in fields such as real estate law, architecture, planning, banking, finance and real estate, as well as a member who currently lives in affordable housing.

Excluding the Town Administrator, members must be residents of the Town of Fairhaven. Any Trustee who ceases to be a resident of the Town of Fairhaven shall cease to be a Trustee hereunder and shall promptly provide a written notification of the change in residence to the Board and to the Town Clerk. Any Trustee may resign in writing, signed and acknowledged by such Trustee and duly filed with the Town Clerk. If a Trustee ceases to be a Trustee hereunder before his/her term of office expires, a successor shall be appointed by the Select Board to fill such vacancy provided that in each case the said appointment and acceptance in writing by the Trustee so appointed is filed with the Town Clerk. Upon the appointment of any succeeding Trustee and the filing of such appointment the title to the Trust estate shall thereupon and without the necessity of any conveyance be vested in such succeeding Trustee jointly with the remaining Trustees. Reference to the Trustee shall mean the Trustee or Trustees for the time being hereunder.

Section 5. Declaration of Trust

The Trustees are hereby authorized to execute a Declaration of Trust and Certificate of Trust for the Fairhaven Affordable Housing Trust Fund to be recorded with the Bristol County Registry of Deeds and filed with the Bristol County Registry District of the Land Court.

Section 6. Meetings of the Trust

The Trust shall meet at least quarterly at such time and at such place as the Trustees shall determine. Special Meetings may be called by the Chair or by two (2) Trustees. Notice of all meetings of the Trust shall be given in accordance with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18 through 25. A quorum at any meeting shall be a majority of the Trustees, qualified and present in person.

The Trustees shall annually elect one Trustee who shall not be a member of the Select Board, to serve as Chairperson. The Chairperson may establish subcommittees and/or ad hoc task related committees to carry out the purposes of the Trust; the Chairperson of any such subcommittee or ad hoc task related committee shall be selected by vote of the subcommittees.

Section 7. Powers of Trustees

The Trustees shall have the following powers, all of which shall be carried on in furtherance of the purposes set forth in General Laws Chapter 44 Section 55C, except that it shall have no ability to borrow money, or mortgage, or pledge Trust assets, purchase, sell, lease, exchange, transfer or convey any interest in real property without prior approval of the Fairhaven Select Board.

(A) To accept and receive property, whether real or personal, by gift, grant, devise, or transfer from any person, firm, corporation or other public or private entity, including without limitation grants of funds or other property tendered to the trust in connection with provisions of any zoning ordinance or bylaw or any General law or Special Act of the Commonwealth or any other source:

(1) Accept and receive real property, personal property or money, by gift, grant, contribution, devise or transfer from any person, firm, corporation or other public or private entity, including but not limited to money, grants of funds or other property tendered to the trust in connection with any ordinance or by-law or any general or special law or any other source, including money from Chapter 44B;

(2) Purchase and retain real or personal property, including without restriction investments that yield a high rate of income or no income;

(3) Sell, lease, exchange, transfer or convey any personal, mixed, or real property at public auction or by private contract for such consideration and on such terms as to credit or otherwise, and to make such contracts and enter into such undertaking relative to trust property as the board deems advisable notwithstanding the length of any such lease or contract;

(4) Execute, acknowledge and deliver deeds, assignments, transfers, pledges, leases, covenants, contracts, promissory notes, releases and other instruments sealed or unsealed, necessary, proper or incident to any transaction in which the board engages for the accomplishment of the purposes of the trust;

(5) Employ advisors and agents, such as accountants, appraisers and lawyers as the Board deems necessary;

(6) Pay reasonable compensation and expenses to all advisors and agents and to apportion such compensation between income and principal as the board deems advisable;

(7) Apportion receipts and charges between incomes and principal as the board deems advisable, to amortize premiums and establish sinking funds for such purpose, and to create reserves for depreciation depletion or otherwise;

(8) Participate in any reorganization, recapitalization, merger or similar transactions; and to give proxies or powers of attorney with or without power of substitution to vote any securities or certificates of interest; and to consent to any contract, lease, mortgage, purchase or sale of property, by or between any corporation and any other corporation or person;

(9) Deposit any security with any protective reorganization committee, and to delegate to such committee such powers and authority with relation thereto as the board may deem proper and to pay, out of trust property, such portion of expenses and compensation of such committee as the board may deem necessary and appropriate;

(10) Carry property for accounting purposes other than acquisition date values;

(11) Borrow money on such terms and conditions and from such sources as the board deems advisable, to mortgage and pledge trust assets as collateral; however, the Trust borrowing shall not exceed fifteen million dollars ($15,000,000) at any one time without Town Meeting approval.

(12) Make distributions or divisions of principal in kind;

(13) Comprise, attribute, defend, enforce, release, settle or otherwise adjust claims in favor or against the trust, including claims for taxes, and to accept any property, either in total or partial satisfaction of any indebtedness or other obligation, and subject to the provisions of this act, to continue to hold the same for such period of time as the board may deem appropriate;

(14) Manage or improve real property; and to abandon any property which the board determined not to be worth retaining;

(15) Hold all or part of the trust property uninvested for such purposes and for such time as the board may deem appropriate; and

(16) Extend the time for payment of any obligation to the trust.

(B) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, Select Board approval shall be required for any of the following actions:

(1) To purchase real or personal property

(2) To sell, lease, exchange, transfer or convey any personal, mixed, or real property; and

(3) To borrow money, or mortgage or pledge Trust assets as collateral to the extent of the Trust's assets.

(C) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, the Trustees may not borrow, mortgage, or pledge greater than the current Trust assets unless approved by the Select Board.

Section 8. Acts of Trustees

A majority of Trustees may exercise any or all of the powers of the Trustees hereunder and may execute on behalf of the Trustees any and all instruments with the same effect as though executed by all the Trustees. No Trustee shall be required to give bond. No license of court shall be required to confirm the validity of any transaction entered into by the Trustees with respect to the Trust Estate.

Section 9. Liability

Neither the Trustees nor any agent or officer of the Trust shall have the authority to bind the Town, except in the manner specifically authorized herein. The Trust is a public employer, and the Trustees are public employees for the purposes of G.L. Chapter 258. The Trust shall be deemed a municipal agency and the Trustees special municipal employees for the purposes of G.L. Chapter 268A.

<u>Section 10. Custodian of Funds</u>

The Town Treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the Trust and oversee investments. The books and records of the Trust shall be audited annually by an independent auditor in accordance with accepted accounting practices for municipalities.

<u>Section 11. Duration of Trust</u>

This Trust shall be of indefinite duration, until terminated in accordance with applicable law. Upon termination of the Trust, subject to the payment of or making provisions for the payment of all obligations and liabilities of the Trust and the Trustees, the net assets of the Trust shall be transferred to the Town and held by the Select Board for affordable housing purposes. In making any such distribution, the Trustees may, subject to the approval of the Select Board, sell all or any portion of the Trust property and distribute the net proceeds thereof or they may distribute any of the assets in kind. The powers of the Trustees shall continue until the affairs of the Trust are concluded.

<u>Section 12. Amendments</u>

The provisions of this Trust can only be amended by a vote of the Fairhaven Town Meeting.

<u>Section 13. Authority regarding documents</u>

The Select Board may authorize the Trustees to execute, deliver, and record with the Registry of Deeds any documents required for any conveyance authorized hereunder.

<u>Section 14. Section titles</u>

The titles to the various Articles herein are for convenience only and are not to be considered part of said Articles nor shall they affect the meaning or the language of any such Article; or take any other action thereon.

Petitioned by: Town Administrator

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

<u>ARTICLE 20 AMEND BYLAWS CHAPTER 169 §13 REMOVAL OF SNOW AND ICE</u>

To see if the Town will vote to amend to Chapter 169-13 Removal of snow and ice by striking some of the existing language as indicated in strikethrough, or adding language as indicated in bold/underlined; or take any other action relative thereto.

Request to amend as follows:

§ 169-13 Removal of snow and ice.

The tenant, occupant, owner or agent of any building or lot of land bordering on any street, lane, square or public place shall not allow or permit any accumulation of snow or ice to remain on the sidewalk adjacent to said building or lot of land within **<u>48 hours of snow event</u>** ~~after being ordered to remove same by the Police Department. Upon~~ Failure to comply with the order **<u>will result in a fine of one hundred dollars ($100).</u>**

~~within six hours after notification, by the tenant, occupant, owner or agent above specified, it is hereby ordered that said snow or ice shall be removed by the Board of Public Works, and costs of removal shall be assessed to the owner of the building or lot of land so involved~~.

Petitioned by: Board of Public Works

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 21 CITIZENS PETITION
Affordable Housing opportunities urgently needed. This petition is for the adoption of a Municipal Housing Trust Fund MGL c.44s.55. Further explanation attached to this petition with the initials of each signature signed. Petition Brought forward on February 5, 2026 By signed Residents of Fairhaven. Affordable Housing opportunities, Urgently Needed in Fairhaven. Increasing rents and the price of homes are exorbitant, and outpacing the majority of Fairhaven residents, median (H-L) and Moderate incomes. – Median & Moderate income earners of Fairhaven have been prices out of the housing market. Massachusetts zoning laws has purposed housing to be provided for all income levels.

We petition for this Article to go on the Town Meeting warrant at the spring Town Meeting held on May 2, 2026-for the adoption of a Municipal Housing Trust Fund governed by (MGL c.44 s.55) to begin to help solve this Affordable Housing Crisis, Common known, and which has placed seniors, young adults, and residents who offer Vital Services to the community, in a financially unsustainable and displaced, position. We also request that our community preservation, CPA funds, a portion there of-at least 50%, be recommended to be held in reserve, for an approved Municipal Housing Trust Fund for FY2027.

Petitioned by: Michelle Costen

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 22 CITIZENS PETITION
To see if Town Meeting will vote to amend Division 1: Bylaws, Part 1: Administration, Chapter 56 by adding "Subsection 56-13 Service by Elected Officials" An elected official shall serve only on the board or body to which they have been duly elected. Not withstanding the foregoing, an elected official may serve on additional boards, committees or commissions solely in the capacity of a liaison, provided such an appointment is made by the elected officials appointing or governing board. An elected official serving as a liaison shall not be considered a voting member of such board, committee or commission unless otherwise expressly authorized by law or bylaw. An elected official appointed or elected pursuant to this section shall continue to serve in such capacity until the earlier of their next reappointment or re-election, unless sooner removed in accordance with applicable law or bylaw.
Petitioned by: Miles Grant

Select Board – *0-0-0 Vote*
Finance Committee – *0-0-0 Vote*

ARTICLE 23 CITIZENS PETITION
To see if Town Meeting will vote to amend Division 1: Bylaws, Part 1: Administration, Chapter 56 by adding "Subsection 56-14 Service by Appointed Officials" An individual who is not an elected official may seek appointment to and serve on no more than two (2) boards, committees or commissions concurrently, unless otherwise authorized by a specific vote of the appointing authority. Any individual appointed pursuant to this

section shall remain in their appointed capacity until the earlier of their next reappointment or re-election, unless sooner removed in accordance with applicable law or bylaw.

Petitioned by: x

Select Board – ***0-0-0 Vote***
Finance Committee – ***0-0-0 Vote***

<u>ARTICLE 24 OTHER BUSINESS</u>
To act upon any other business which may legally come before this meeting.

And you are hereby directed to serve this warrant by posting an attested copy thereof on or near the front or main entrance of the polling place for all Precincts at the Fairhaven Recreation Center, 227 Huttleston Avenue, seven days at least prior to the date of the meeting.

HEREOF FAIL NOT, and make due return of this warrant to the Town Clerk at the time and place of the meeting aforesaid.

Given under our hands this ______ day of ____________________, 2026.

X ______________________________
Charles K. Murphy, Sr., Chair

X ______________________________
Andrew Romano, Vice Chair

X ______________________________
Natalie A. Mello, Clerk

X ______________________________
Keith Silvia, Member

X ______________________________
Andrew B. Saunders, Member

SELECT BOARD OF FAIRHAVEN

Posted on the official town website, at polling location
(Fairhaven Recreation Center, 227 Huttleston Avenue)
and at Town Hall (40 Center Street).

____________________________ ________________________, 2026.
Constable

Special Town Meeting Warrant must be posted by **April 18, 2026**
(at least *fourteen days prior* to **May 2, 2026**)

and Annual Town Meeting Warrant Posted by **April 25, 2026**
(at least *seven days prior* to **May 2, 2026)**

Glossary of Terms

ABATEMENT: Abatement is a reduction of a tax liability. The Board of Assessors grant abatements for real estate and personal property taxes in cases where an individual's assessed valuation is determined to be in excess of fair market value.

ACCRUAL BASIS FOR ACCOUNTING: A method of accounting that recognizes revenue when earned, rather than when collected, and recognizes expenses when incurred, rather than when paid.

APPROPRIATIONS: A legal authorization to expend money and incur obligations for specific public purposes. Massachusetts municipal finance laws require that all general-purpose expenditures be authorized by a majority vote of Town Meeting.

There are two basic types of appropriations - operating appropriations, and special article appropriations. Operating appropriations last for one fiscal year only, and any unobligated balance is closed at the end of the fiscal year. Salaries are an example of an operating appropriation. Special Article appropriations are generally voted for a specific project, such as the completion of a capital improvement or the purchase of a piece of capital equipment. Special article appropriations are closed upon completion of the project for which the funds were voted.

ARTICLE: An article or item on the Town Warrant.

ASSESSED VALUATION: The valuation of real estate or other property determined by the Town Assessor for tax levying purposes in accordance with the legal requirement that property be assessed at "full and fair cash value" certified periodically by the Commonwealth's Commissioner of Revenue (no less frequently than once every three years).

ASSETS: Property, plant, and equipment owned by the Town.

AUDIT: A comprehensive examination as to the manner in which the government's resources were actually utilized concluding in a written report of its findings. An accounting audit is intended to ascertain whether financial statements fairly present the financial position and results of operations of the Town. The Town is required to conduct an audit annually. An outside Certified Public Accountant (CPA) audit is directed primarily toward the expression of an opinion as to the fairness of the financial statements and submission of a management letter. An auditor must be independent of the executive branch of government. A state auditor, private CPA, public accountant, or elected auditor meets this test.

BOND: A written promise to pay a specified sum of money, called the face value or principal amount, at specified dates in the future, called the maturity date(s), together with periodic interest at a specified rate. The difference between notes, usually one year or two years in length and a bond is that the latter run for a longer period of time.

BOND ANTICIPATION NOTE (BAN): A temporary note issued typically for one year. This is commonly used to defer the initial pay down of debt or to accommodate reimbursement for borrowed notes from a private source or other governmental entity.

BUDGET: The budget is the Town's financial plan for a given fiscal period. The annual budget includes an estimate of proposed expenditures, as well as a forecast of estimated revenues and other financing sources. The Advisory Committee reviews the Town's Recommended Budget in detail and forwards its recommendations to Town Meeting. Town Meeting adopts the budget by voting a series of appropriations, which may not; in the absence of an override of Proposition 2 ½ exceed the estimated total amount of revenues and other financing sources for the fiscal period.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE: A major, non-recurring expenditure involving land acquisition, construction or major rehabilitation of a facility, or purchase of equipment costing $10,000 or more with a useful life of five years or more.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP): A financial planning and management tool which: identifies public facility and equipment requirements; places these requirements in order of priority; and schedules them for funding and implementation.

CHAPTER 90: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 90, Section 34 authorizes the Commonwealth to allocate funds to municipalities through the Transportation Bond Issue for highway construction, preservation and improvement projects that create or extend the life of capital facilities. Road maintenance operations such as pothole filling and snow and ice removal are not covered. The formula for determining the Chapter 90 level of funding is based on a municipality's miles of public ways, population, and level of employment. Municipalities receive Chapter 90 funds on pre-approved projects on a reimbursement basis.

CHERRY SHEET: The State allocates a portion of generated revenue to municipalities each year for education and general governmental expenditures. The amount of state aid each community will receive is itemized in a financial statement printed on cherry colored paper (thus the name). The amount of reimbursement is a function of the State budget. Towns usually receive notification in late summer, subsequent to the beginning of the fiscal year.

CLASSIFICATION: Massachusetts municipal finance law requires that all real estate and personal property be appraised at "full and fair cash valuation" for purposes of assessing property taxes. Once the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue certifies that properties are appraised at "full and fair cash valuation" (once every three years), the Selectmen may impose a tax classification plan, whereby a portion of the residential tax burden may be shifted to the commercial / industrial class taxpayers.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT: A Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is a legally binding, written contract negotiated between an employer and a union representing employees. It defines the terms and conditions of employment—such as wages, hours, benefits, and workplace conditions.

DEBT EXCLUSION: The amount of taxes assessed in excess of the Proposition 2-1/2 levy limit for the payment of debt service costs attributable to a vote of the electorate. These funds are raised to retire the debt service for the project. They are not added to the tax levy limit for the following fiscal year.

DEBT SERVICE: Payment of interest and principal on an obligation resulting from the issuance of bonds.

DEPARTMENT: A division of the Town that has overall management responsibility for an operation or group of related operations within a functional area.

DEPRECIATION: (1) Expiration in the service life of capital assets attributable to wear and tear, deterioration, and inadequacy of obsolescence; (2) that portion of the cost of a capital asset that is charged as an expense during a particular period. Depreciation is based on historic costs not replacement value.

ENCUMBRANCE: To encumber funds means to set aside or commit funds for a future expenditure. Encumbrances include obligations in the form of purchase orders, contracts, or salary commitments, which are chargeable to an appropriation and for which a part of the appropriation is reserved.

ENTERPRISE FUNDS: Enterprise Funds, authorized by MGL Ch. 44§53F ½, are used to account for operations which are financed and operated in a manner similar to business operations and where the costs of providing goods or services are financed in whole or in part by user charges (charges for services). Services accounted for in Enterprise Funds are tangible and can be measured for determining the charge for services.

In Massachusetts, the most common types of government enterprises include utility services for water treatment and delivery, sewerage collection and treatment, and electricity generation and distribution. Less common but prevalent operations include hospitals, airports, parking, swimming pools, and golf courses.

Individual services must ordinarily be accounted for in separate Enterprise Funds. Segregation is essential for determining the total cost of services and the extent to which user charges cover that cost. Although a community may decide to recover only a portion of its costs from user charges, it is essential from a management point of view that it understands what its total costs are. Such costs include amounts for repayment of long-term debt and related interest and estimates for depreciation.

EXPENDITURE: The spending of money by the Town for the programs or projects within the approved budget.

FISCAL YEAR (FY): The Town of Fairhaven operates on a July 1st through June 30th fiscal year.

FREE CASH: Surplus Revenue (Free Cash) The amount certified annually by the Department of Revenue represents the unreserved fund balance less all outstanding tax receivables. This balance is created when actual revenues exceed those estimated and / or expenditures are less than appropriations for any given fiscal year. These funds may be appropriated by Town Meeting as a resource for the next fiscal year's operations or any other purpose authorized by state statute. Certified Free Cash is available for appropriation by Town Meeting for a lawful purpose.

FUND BALANCE: The amount by which cash, accounts receivable, and other assets exceed liabilities and restricted reserves. Monies in the various governmental funds as of June 30 that are neither encumbered nor reserved and are therefore available for expenditure once certified as part of Free Cash.

FUNDING SOURCE: The specifically identified funds allocated to meet budget requirements / expenses.

GENERAL FUND: Revenues derived from the tax levy, state aid, local receipts and available funds are considered General Fund revenues. The General Fund is distinguished from Enterprise Funds and Special Revenue Funds.

GRANT: A contribution by one government unit or outside agency to another governmental unit. The contribution is usually made for a specific purpose but is sometimes for general purposes.

LEVY LIMIT: The maximum amount of money which the Town can raise from the property tax levy, without an override of Proposition 2 ½.

LIABILITY: Debt or other legal obligation which must be paid, renewed, or refunded at some future date, but does not include encumbrances.

LOCAL RECEIPTS: A category of revenue sources including department charges for services, investment income, fines, and forfeitures, building permits and excise taxes. These revenues are not considered part of the Proposition 2 ½ Tax Levy.

MODIFIED ACCRUAL BASIS FOR ACCOUNTING: A method of accounting that recognizes revenue when it is actually received and recognizes expenditures when a commitment is made.

MOTOR VEHICLE EXCISE: All Massachusetts vehicle owners who have their vehicle(s) registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts pay an annual motor vehicle excise tax to the town. The Registry of Motor Vehicles creates a listing of all vehicles registered in Fairhaven and the book value assigned to the vehicle. The

Town uses this information to bill all owners an annual tax equal to 2 ½ percent or $25 for each $1,000 of the vehicle's value.

NEW GROWTH: In addition to a standard 2 ½% annual increase in the property tax levy, Proposition 2 ½% allows the levy to be increased further by the sum of certain qualifying new construction valuation, multiplied by the prior year tax rate. Qualifying new construction valuation is known as "New Growth".

OPERATING BUDGET: The portion of the budget that pertains to daily operations, which provide basic services for the fiscal year. The operating budget contains appropriations for such expenditures as personnel, supplies, utilities, materials, travel, and fuel and the proposed means of financing them.

OVERLAY: The amount raised in the tax levy for funding abatements granted by the Board of Assessors.

OVERRIDE: An action taken by the voters of the town to exceed the limit placed on tax revenue growth by the State tax limitation law known as Proposition 2 ½. The tax levy limit can be exceeded only if a majority of residents voting approve an override. This sum is then added to the base levy for the next fiscal year, and this becomes a permanent addition to the tax levy limit.

PROPOSITION 2 ½: A tax limitation measure passed by Massachusetts voters in 1980 which limits the growth of the total property tax levy to 2.5% per year. The total revenue allowed to be raised through real estate and personal property taxes cannot increase by more than 2.5% from one fiscal year to the next unless the residents of the town vote to approve a debt exclusion or an operating override. New construction values are in addition to this limit.

RESERVE FUND: An amount set aside annually within the budget of the town to provide a funding source for "extraordinary and unforeseen" expenditures. The Advisory Committee can authorize transfers from this budget.

RETAINED EARNINGS: The accumulated earnings of the enterprise funds.

RESOURCES: Total dollar amounts available for appropriation including estimated revenues, fund transfers, and beginning fund balances.

REVALUATION: Massachusetts municipal finance law requires that the Massachusetts Department of Revenue formally certify that property tax assessments represent the "full and fair cash valuation" of properties. The process of determining the "full and fair cash valuation" of taxable property is known as a Revaluation.

REVOLVING FUND: As authorized under M.G.L. Ch. 53 E ½, departmental revolving funds allow communities to raise revenues from a specific service and use those revenues without appropriation to support the service. The total amount that may be spent from each revolving fund must be re-authorized each year at annual town meeting. Wages or salaries for full-time employees may be paid from the revolving fund only if the fund is also charged for all associated fringe benefits.

SCHOOL BUILDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: A program started by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with a mission to partner with Massachusetts communities to support the design and construction of educationally appropriate, flexible, sustainable, and cost-effective public-school facilities.

SEWER & WATER CHARGES: The Town operates a Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund to manage these municipal operations. Users of sewer and water services provided by the Town pay charges depending upon usage. Revenue received from charges for sewer and water services is used to fully support the costs of utility operations, assessments, debt service obligations, personnel costs, and capital projects.

STABILIZATION FUND: Massachusetts General Law Ch.40, Sec. 5B, authorizes a Town to create one or more stabilization funds and appropriate funds to them for any lawful purpose. Fairhaven has two Stabilization Funds: The General (Rainy Day) Stabilization Fund and the Capital Stabilization Fund. The Treasurer shall be custodian of the funds and may invest the proceeds legally; any interest earned shall remain with the respective funds.

TAX LEVY: The total amount raised through real estate and personal property taxes. Fairhaven property owners pay taxes to the Town based on the assessed value of their real and / or personal property. Each year the Selectmen conducts a tax classification hearing to determine a tax rate. The Town Assessor adjusts real estate values in order to properly reflect fair market value. In addition to real estate, businesses may also pay a personal property tax (set at the commercial rate) based on the value of their professional equipment, furniture, and fixtures. The amount of taxes a property owner pays is determined by multiplying the applicable tax rate by the valuation. For example, if the tax rate is $10 and a property's assessed value is $100,000, the property owner will pay $10 times $100,000 / 1,000, or $1,000. Tax levy revenues are the largest source of funding for the Town. These revenues support most school, police, fire, public works, library, and general governmental services to the community.

TAX LEVY LIMIT: The maximum amount that can be raised within the restrictions imposed by Proposition 2 ½.

TAX RATE: The amount of tax levied for each $1,000 of assessed valuation.

USER FEES: Fees paid for direct receipt of a public service by the user or beneficiary of the service.