

Town of Fairhaven
Town Hall - 40 Center Street - Fairhaven, MA 02719



Belonging Committee

Date, Time, and Location:

March 18, 2025

Remote Only via ZOOM: 1-929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 892 1866 8394; Passcode: 686316

Video Recording Available on Fairhaven TV: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/11514976>

Meeting Overview:

Call to Order: The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and updated Zoom requirements were reviewed.

Quorum/Attendance

In Attendance:

- **Members:** Jessica Fidalgo, Chair; Laura Barillaro; Alliea E. Group, Clerk; Rachel Medeiros; Kelly Ochoa;
- **Ex Officio:** Officer Mary Christ, Police Department Representative; Andrew Romano, Select Board Representative.
- **Guests:** Chief of Police, Daniel Dorgan.

Absent:

- **Members:** August Baker
- **Vacant Positions:** Fire Department Representative; School Department Representative.

Approval of Prior Minutes: A motion was made by Kelly Ochoa and seconded by Jessica Fidalgo to accept the minutes from January 8, 2025, as revised. A roll call vote was held, and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

A motion was made by Rachel Medeiros and seconded by Alliea Group to adjust the agenda to start with the conversation regarding collaboration with the Police Department. A roll call vote was held, and the motion passed unanimously.

Collaboration with Police Department:

The committee welcomed our new *ex officio* member serving as our liaison with the Fairhaven Police Department, Officer Mary Christ. The committee engaged in a discussion with the Police Department to explore potential opportunities for collaboration on educational initiatives

aimed at enhancing residents' understanding of the Department's role in promoting community safety and awareness of available reporting mechanisms. Laura Barillaro will coordinate with Fairhaven SEPAC and PTO to schedule an event for guardians/parents and children within the school system. Jessica Fidalgo will work to organize a Belonging Committee event.

Women's History Month: The Committee will be co-hosting with the Millicent Library a special storytime event on Saturday, April 5th, 2025, at 11:00 AM. The event, called "Storytime with a Queen," is a special election where children vote for their favorite princess. The winning princess will then read aloud at the storytime event the book *Princess and the Pea-tition* by Kim Nguyen. Voting is open through March 26th at the library's children's room. The event is open to the public and registration is available on the library's website. The Millicent Library is inviting people to cast their votes and encourages dressing up as your favorite princess for the event.

Calendar: This discussion was postponed to our next meeting.

Upcoming Events:

Pride: The committee will co-host an event in honor of LGBTQ+ Pride, Fairhaven's Got Pride Community Picnic on Sunday, June 22nd, 4-8 PM outside Town Hall.

Juneteenth: A motion was made by Kelly Ochoa and seconded by Alliea Grouppe to apply to the Fairhaven Cultural Council for a grant to support an event for 2026.

Disability Pride: The planning committee has yet to meet for this event; more information will be provided at our next meeting.

Recreation Center Lunch Program: This discussion was postponed to our next meeting.

Old Business

Flag Banner Requests to Selectboard: The Selectboard approved our request to hang flags/banners in honor of LGBTQI+ Pride and Juneteenth for the month of June on the exterior of Town Hall.

Items not previously anticipated/board member comments:

Open Meeting Law: The Open Meeting Law expires on March 23, 2025; Alliea Grouppe inquired as to whether there was a plan for the State Legislature to extend this law. Andrew Romano indicated that the State Legislature is working to extend this law for an additional two years, and a vote is expected to be held this week.

KidsFest: The committee will need to discuss at a future meeting whether we would want to host an event similar to the KidsFest events held previously.

Open Positions on Board:

Community Member; Liaison with Fire Department; and, Liaison with School Department. If anyone knows someone interested in serving on the Belonging Committee, please direct them to the application on the town website.

Public Comments: No members of the public were present; no comments were made.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by Jessica Fidalgo at 7:30 PM.

Alliea E. Groupp

Signed by: