

Fairhaven Historical Commission
Minutes
April 1, 2025

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
ROUD 2025 MAY 7 AM 11:35

Present: Nate Bekemeier, Michael Kelly, Beth Luey, Rick Martin, Natalie Mello, Michael Silva, Keith Silvia (Select Board Liaison)
Via Zoom: Alyssa Botelho (Staff Liaison)
Absent: Nicole Arruda

1. **Meeting called to order 6:33pm by Michael Kelly, Chair.**
2. **Minutes:** Motion to approve minutes from February 4 with striking one sentence (B Luey, R. Martin). Motion passed unanimously.
3. **Financial Report:** See attached 2025 Budget Balance Sheet as of April 1, 2025.
 - Motion to approve payment of invoices to Eversource and Profishant Pest Control for a total of \$660.76 [see attached listing of bills] (N Mello, B Luey). Motion passed unanimously. Reminder to folks using Academy Building to set thermostat to 50°F when unoccupied.
4. **Chair Report:**
 - *Historical Commission vacancy* – filled by Michael Silva, architect. Welcome aboard!
 - *Update of Fort Phoenix Flagpole:* Quote formally accepted (\$3339.) Removal to commence soon – one week before installation of new flagpole. Concrete base will be used again. Lighting looks to be about \$6500 – we will try to raise those funds from individuals.
 - *Keys for Historical Commission properties:* At present M Kelly has keys to the Old Stone Schoolhouse, Fort Phoenix Bunker, and the Washington Street Fire House; A Botelho & R Martin have keys to the Academy Building; and no one on the Commission has keys for the Spring Street Fire House. See discussion under item #7 below.
 - *Attendance expectations:* The Select Board has implemented a new policy indicating that 3 unexcused, consecutive absences from meetings is unacceptable. M Kelly to contact N Arruda about her absences from the last 4 meetings. If necessary, the Historical Commission will implement the new policy. It is imperative that we are consistent in applying this policy to all Commission members.
3. **Properties update:**
 - A. **Academy Building:**
 - a. Concern regarding renovations to the bathroom during peak summer use. Hoping that that work can be put off until the fall. Contractor will be consulted to determine if this is possible.
 - B. **Fire Museums:**
 - a. Washington Street – N/A
 - b. Spring Street – The Commission needs a volunteer to be responsible for this building - see below. Opportunities to collaborate with the Fairhaven Protecting Society will be pursued.
 - C. **Fort Phoenix:** N/A (see flagpole discussion above)
 - D. **Old Stone Schoolhouse:** A 2025 schedule is posted on its Facebook page. First day to Open is April 12 and will be open every three weeks, with the exception of the month of July when it will be open every weekend.
6. **House Plaque Application: None.**
7. **Discussion/Action Items:**
 1. Volunteer needed for Spring Street Firehouse: N Bekemeier and M Silva to share this responsibility.
 2. Assignment of keys: Motion Private parties that use town property need to sign a no fee contract that outlines the responsibilities for that party and the Town (B Luey, N Bekemeier). Motion passed unanimously. Currently the private parties that use Town property include the Manjiro Society (Old Stone School House), the Fairhaven Historical Society (Academy Building), Spring Street and Washington Street Firehouses (Fairhaven Protecting Society [FPS]). Alex Kuechler, from the FPS spoke indicating that there are members of FPS who currently hold keys. He wanted to make sure that multiple individuals from FPS could have new keys once locks and alarms are changed. He was assured that that is possible. Brian Messier, member of FPS, spoke via Zoom to inquire about the artifacts that are currently stored in these firehouses. The FPS was encouraged to inventory these artifacts so that they know exactly what they own. The Town makes no claim of ownership for these artifacts. A tour will be scheduled for the Commission members to see these firehouses with Alex Kuechler at a date and time to be determined.
 3. Term limits for Officers of the Commission: Motion that there should be term limits for the positions of Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk (B Luey, N Mello). Motion passed unanimously. Motion that each term not exceed 4 consecutive

years for each office (Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk) to begin July 2024 (N Bekemeier, R Martin). Motion passed unanimously.

4. Signs promoting work of Commission, when/where applicable: B Luey suggested that in the future the Historical Commission install signs when we are involved in a restoration project, similar to what the CPC does.
5. Woodside Cemetery signs: Determined that this is the purview of the DPW. Will refer this to them.

8. Committee Liaison Report:

- Community Preservation Committee – Nothing to report until after Town Meeting.

9. Commission Member Items:

- a. R Martin would like to discuss at the next meeting embarking upon an Historic Properties Survey Plan similar to what Mattapoisett has done.
- b. A Botelho is working on the Discover Fairhaven webpage and expects it to be ready at the end of April. It will be updated regularly with events. The Commission should be sure to get our events posted there.

10. Public Comment:

- a. Patrick Carr requesting an update on status of whether or not the Commission should entertain a discussion on issues that might be involved in litigation. Chair Kelly responded that he has not yet had time to confer with legal counsel. Mr. Carr continued to request our opinion on historical properties. Chair Kelly reiterated that the Commission is only responsible for certain properties and no school is on that list. He further assured Mr. Carr that if the Select Board requested an opinion from the Commission, then the Commission would deliberate at their request.

11. Regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 6:30pm

12. Motion to Adjourn at 8:07pm (N Mello, N Bekemeier). Motion passed unanimously.



TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN

Historical Commission

Budget Balances

Name	Total
Historical Commission	\$ 500.00
Academy Building	\$ 5,237.27
Fire Museum	\$ 1,070.92
Fort Phoenix	\$ 2,679.96
Old Stone School house on North Street	\$ 100.00
Manjiro House	\$ 1,000.00
Antique Fire Trucks	\$ 951.20

Grand total \$ 11,539.35

Historical Commission Gift Account	\$ 1,158	
Fort Gift Account	\$ 3669	\$3,100 for new flagpole
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 **\$660.76** Dollars and has been approved
by the Department, and you are requested to place them on a warrant for payment.

DATE: 4/7/25

Michael Kelly, Chair

Prepared by & Title

VENDOR NUMBER	VENDOR NAME	ACCOUNT NUMBER	INVOICE NUMBER	TOTAL
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-02-1241	030625	21.00
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-02-1241	030625	21.19
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-02-1241	030625	16.39
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-01-1241	030625	69.41
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-01-1241	030625	318.70
6850	Eversource	001-670-00-5201-03-1241	030625	102.69
71547	Profishant	001-670-00-5201-02-1241	116698	111.38
			TOTAL	660.76