

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



Belonging Committee

Date, Time, and Location:

June 23, 2025 * 6:30 PM

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

Meeting Overview:

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

In Attendance:

Members: Jessica Fidalgo, Chair; Alliea E. Group, Clerk; Laura Barillaro; Krystal Lunn; Rachel Medeiros; Kelly Ochoa.

Absent:

- **Ex Officio:** Officer Mary Christ, Police Department Representative; Andrew Romano, Select Board Representative.
- **Vacant Positions:** Fire Department Representative; School Department Representative; Town of Fairhaven Staff Representative.

Committee Leadership:

A motion was made by Alliea Group and seconded by Rachel Medeiros to nominate Jessica Fidalgo as Chair. The candidate accepted the nomination. A roll call vote was held; the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Alliea Group and seconded by Rachel Medeiros to nominate Kelly Ochoa as Vice Chair. The candidate accepted the nomination. A roll call vote was held; the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Kelly Ochoa and seconded by Krystal Lunn to nominate Alliea Group as Clerk. The candidate accepted the nomination. A roll call vote was held; the motion passed unanimously.

Fairhaven's Got Pride Community Picnic: We held a successful event yesterday. A special thanks to all who helped to make this event a welcoming and supportive event for all.

A motion was made by Kelly Ochoa and seconded by Krystal Lunn to spend \$248 from our gift account to pay the outstanding bill for the police detail from the 2024 Pride Celebration. A roll call vote was held; the motion passed unanimously.

The committee will send thank-you notes to those who went above and beyond to support this event.

Disability Pride: The committee is co-sponsoring, along with the Commission on Disability, a community celebration at West Island Beach on Friday, July 18, from 12:00 to 4:00 PM to highlight recent accessibility improvements, including a floating beach chair and accessibility mats. For more information, visit: <https://www.discoverfairhaven.org/event-details-registration/disability-pride-beach-day>

A motion was made by Kelly Ochoa and seconded by Alliea Group to authorize up to \$450 to support ice cream provided by Oxford Creamery for the event. A roll call vote was held; the motion passed unanimously.

Independence Day: The Belonging Committee will participate in the parade. All participants should present to Fort Phoenix by 8 AM on Friday, July 4th. For more information, please visit: <https://www.discoverfairhaven.org/event-details-registration/fairhavens-fourth-of-july-parade>

Open Positions:

Since our last meeting the appointment of Melissa Duarte as the Fairhaven Public Schools Representative has been confirmed.

We currently have an open position for a community member on the committee. To apply for the position, please visit the Town of Fairhaven website - <https://fairhaven-ma.gov/volunteer-opportunities/>

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made by Kelly Ochoa and seconded by Rachel Medeiros to approve the minutes from May 20, 2025, as amended. A roll call vote was held; the motion passed unanimously.

Juneteenth and Progress Pride Flag: A suggestion was made to purchase new banners with a landscape profile for Juneteenth and Pride. This will be discussed at a future meeting once a quote has been obtained.

Public Comments: No public comments were received during the meeting. However, a comment was submitted via e-mail prior to the meeting and will be included in the meeting minutes.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by Jessica Fidalgo at 7:08 PM.

Alliea E. Group

Signed by:

Public Comment Received via E-mail:

To: belonging@fairhaven-ma.gov

Subject: Public comment to be shared in Fairhaven and throughout Massachusetts and beyond

If we are born into this world, *we all belong* in the world. Lifestyle choices have nothing to do with equality, diversity and inclusion.

The belonging committee was schemed up as a DEI political promotion in the guise of good. And it is a promotion being used in other towns across the state of Massachusetts, as well.

We all have "free will" whether to believe in God and the Word of God and His laws of life, or come up with our own belief system, and not believe in God, is truly a free will life choice. DEI is a political gimmick proven to have caused harm to children, teenagers and employees/employers.

Diversity is a matter of diverse gifts, skills and natural talents, and using those talents for good purposes. And sharing them within our community. It doesn't matter if you're gay, transgender, black, purple or red or what race you are, we all have God given talents and gifts that we can share into the community. And we all have equal rights to share our God-given gifts with each other. All genuine good things are naturally inclusive.

With that said, I pledge Allegiance Under God, the Creator and gift giver of us all. With this, I write a letter to the chair of the belonging committee.

Dear Jessica,

I don't think all the people who elected you are aware that you don't believe in God and that you're an atheist. The reason people should know is because we Pledge our Allegiance in our town meetings and in our nation, Under God. Not under an atheist. You are on the planning board and other boards for this town, and many residents may want to know that you're against God's Plan. (I am not sure how you can deny God, because God is Life. And you live, so I am not sure why you're an atheist when you can't deny that you live) **John 1:1-4 But that is your free will choice.**

No matter how much some people may try, you will never be able to take God out of government. Without God, we would have no government. We would not even exist. We would not be able to discern right from wrong. Many of our troubles, and the corruption that carries on in this world is due to the fact that people want to do their own thing and come up with their own rules and laws, that have nothing to do or coordinate/cooperate with the natural laws that God has already created here on earth.

Also you put an ad together that **Fairhaven's got pride**, but that is not true of all residents. In fact many residents of Fairhaven do not want to be "**branded**" in their town as having *pride*, or be implied that they want to celebrate unnatural unions. This is not a judgement against lgbtq

people, because that is God's job. But many residents do not condone or believe in supporting or celebrating lgbtq's lifestyle choices, transgender, gay or otherwise.

Branding all of Fairhaven residents in your logo ad, is unconstitutional.

A better name for your logo town picnic would be **LGBTQ's got Pride Picnic**. That would be honest and true. As it is now, **"Fairhaven's got Pride logo "** in your ads, is forcibly including all residents, and that is unconstitutional, and against many of the residents, **Free Will**. I am talking about all the residents who have chosen to use their **Free will** in cooperation with God's Will, Purpose and Plan, for their lives.

That is right Jessica, we all have Free will.

If you don't believe in God, that is your free will. But thousands of residents in Fairhaven believe in God and the Word of God. We also Pledge our Allegiance Under God in this town and in our Nation.

Many residents here in Fairhaven don't believe in unnatural unions. Or condone celebrating lgbtq unnatural unions, because it is a lifestyle choice, and has nothing to do with the true meaning of equality or diversity. Whether or not people will be *included* in Eternal life, is a matter of free will and choice, also.

The DEI political promotions, through the belonging committees in different various towns throughout the Bay state, have taken out the true meaning of diversity, equality and inclusion, and have distorted the Word of God, and created their own context, which has nothing to do with Equal right principles in our constitution and laws.

DEI is a political farce and force Against God's Will of normalcy and order. So let us not be fooled by this nonsense.

Gay, or transgender people were not created out of unnatural unions. In other words, two men can not make a baby Something to remember. When God said be fruitful and multiply in **Genesis 1:28** this was through Natural Processes and Order created by God, not unnatural one's. God will not be mocked. **Gal 6:7**

There is no need to celebrate unnatural lifestyle choices. Stop trying to dupe the public in the guise of good. This is a public comment-

Michelle Costen, Fairhaven, Mass