

Fairhaven Historical Commission
Minutes
August 5, 2025

Present: Members: Eleanor Chew, Beth Luey, Rick Martin, Alex Kuechler. Natalie Mello (Select Board Liaison)

Absent: Alyssa Botelho (Staff Liaison)

1. Meeting called to order by Eleanor Chew, Clerk

2. Reorganization: Eleanor explained the options for reorganization as the chair and vice-chair had resigned. 1 The clerk could lead the meetings until we have a fuller board. 2. We can elect a chair temporarily for 2 or 3 months until we have a fuller board or 3. we can do a long-term reorganization. The reasons why to consider electing a chair is that the chair has the authority to enforce rules and behavior, but the clerk does not. After discussion the consensus was to elect both for the long-term.

A motion was made to elect Rick Martin as Chair. It passed with a roll call vote. (B. Luey)

A motion was made to elect Beth Luey as Vice-Chair. It passed with a roll call vote (R. Martin)

Eleanor explained the information she shared was shared after talking to George Samia and indirectly to town counsel. Beth thanked Eleanor for filling in and setting up the meeting.

Rick Martin stepped in as the chair leading the rest of the meeting.

3. Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes for July 1 and July 10 were approved. (B. Luey/E. Chew) Vote was 3 yes and 1 abstention. (A. Kuechler)

4. Financial Report: Motion to approve payment of invoices to Eversource, and others. (E. Chew/B. Luey). Beth asked for an explanation of the charge from Chadwick's and Eleanor explained it was for plaques for the streetlights around town hall and the library.

5. Correspondence: Eleanor read the letter from the Attorney General's Office regarding the Open Meeting Law Complaint that had been filed on March 10, 2025, stating there was no open meeting law violation.

6. Properties Update:

a. Academy Building: Beth noted that the garden was taken care of by the Green Lanterns Garden Club. Eleanor said she talked to Kevin Fournier, and he is going to remove the shrubbery that is blocking the visitor and HP parking signs. The urns are from the Oxford School. Beth will contact Jennifer Frates re: the siding and work. Rick talked about deep cleaning the building and it was decided this made more sense once we were ready to reopen in the spring.

Fire Museums: Washington St: No report. Spring St: No report Motion to appoint Alex Kuechler to oversee the two firehouses. It passed unanimously. (B. Luey/E. Chew)

School House: Rick asked about keys. Eleanor said these keys are in the SB Office. A motion was made to appoint Rick to oversee the School House. It passes unanimously. Beth commented that in the past volunteers outside of the commission opened the schoolhouse. (B. Luey/E. Chew)

Fort Phoenix: A motion was made to appoint Eleanor Chew to oversee Fort Phoenix. It passed unanimously. Eleanor said the lights are in Mike Jenney's office and he is working with Kevin Fournier to secure an electrical quote and he will give us the information so we can vote on the expense. The money can come out of the gift account; another account Mike J. has and the rest out of the budget. The money for the plaques came out of last year's budget to free up the money in the gift account and the gift account has approximately \$400.00 left for the plaques. (A. Kuechler/ B. Luey)

A motion was made to authorize Mike Jenney to find an electrician and to bring the quote to us. It passed unanimously. (E. Chew/A. Kuechler). It was suggested that we publicize the need for funding for the lights but that we have money designated for the fort in general.

Rick asked if we could have associate members and Natalie said she had joined as an associate member.

7. House Plaque Applications: No applications received

8. Discussion/Action Items:

a. Nimrod Cannon: Eleanor said the cannon is the towns as the SB voted to accept the gift. We need to find a place for it as NEMI would like it removed soon, and the Whaling Museum has a case for it. A motion was made to have Alex and Eleanor work on the coordination of finding a new place and movement of the cannon: (B. Luey/R. Martin). Matthew McDonald, Fairhaven Village Militia shared about the history of the cannon saying the plan was for it to be at the fort once. It was explained the last analysis showed the cannon is too fragile to be outside and needs to be encased.

b. Militia Letter: Matt McDonald spoke to the letter he sent last month explaining he wrote the letter to apologize on behalf of the militia for the incident that took place on July 4th. He expressed his concern that this would backfire on the militia and wants to mend connections. Rick said we understand the value the militia brings to the town. Eleanor read the last paragraph of the letter and said we wanted to figure out how to work together. She offered to work on connections with Matt as she is overseeing the fort. Approval for this was given by consensus.

c. Appointment to CPC Liaison: Rick asked about the letter he sent to the CPC and Beth said she would check on it. There is an opening for us as Nate resigned reopening the liaison position on this board. It was decided by consensus to wait until next month to appoint a representative.

9. Committee Liaison Reports:

a. CPC: No report as the first meeting is August 20th.

b. Lagoa Society: Rick said they met last night. Their next meeting is September 15th. They are participating in Harbor Fest on the 23rd and marching in the Feast parade on September 1st with their banner

10. Commission Member Items: None

11. Public Comment: None

12. Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 6:39 p.m.

Eleanor read a letter from MA. Historical Commission regarding the Rogers School saying she did not understand what we should do with the letter as it did not affect us. Doug Brady, from the Rogers School Reuse Committee shared this was informational for us as they had applied for this determination. This was read under the 48 hour provision as we did not receive it until the day prior to the meeting.

13.Motion to adjourn: The motion to adjourn passed. (E. Chew/ B. Luey)

Respectfully submitted,

Eleanor Chew
Clerk