



**Town of Fairhaven  
Massachusetts  
Office of the Select Board**  
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July 28, 2025

In the past few weeks, our Interim Town Administrator as well as Select Board members have received concerns and complaints brought forth regarding public behavior towards volunteers on various Town Boards, Committees and Commissions (“boards”). We have a **zero-tolerance policy for harassment, disrespect, or poor treatment** of individuals serving on our appointed and elected boards. These individuals generously contribute their time and expertise to serve our community, and they deserve to be treated with courtesy, professionalism, and respect at all times.

The Select Board is committed to supporting volunteers and members of each of the Town’s boards as well as fostering a respectful environment for civic engagement. While constructive feedback and differing opinions are part of a healthy democracy, personal attacks, harassment, or inappropriate public conduct are unacceptable. If a member feels that public behavior has crossed the line into disrespect or intimidation, we encourage them to document the incident and bring it to the attention of the Chair and/or Town Administrator. Depending on the nature of the behavior, further steps—including legal or law enforcement consultation—may be warranted.

While we expect the public to uphold these standards, it is of **utmost importance that our board members lead by example**. The tone of public discourse is shaped by the behavior of those who serve, and it is our responsibility to demonstrate integrity and professionalism. This standard applies not only during official meetings but also at public events and in all forms of communication, including social media.

The Select Board will take any instance of harassment or misconduct seriously and will address such behavior in accordance with our policies. We are committed to fostering a respectful, constructive environment where volunteers and officials can focus on the work of improving our community without fear of mistreatment. It is also important to note that there are times when the Board is limited in its ability to act or respond due to applicable laws, such as those related to personnel matters, confidentiality, or open meeting requirements. While this can be frustrating to the public or to individuals seeking immediate action, the Board is bound by legal obligations that must be followed.

The Board remains focused on the work of governing in a way that reflects our shared values of transparency, accountability, and mutual respect. We ask the community to help us model civil discourse and constructive participation in local government.