



Town of Fairhaven

Board of Health

Town Hall · 40 Center Street · Fairhaven, MA 02719

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April 8, 2026

PRESENT: Justine Frezza, Brian Meneses, Barbara Acksen

ABSENT: David Flaherty

1. Call to Order

- a. Chair Frezza called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Chair Frezza welcomed everyone.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Welcome and Media Notification

- a. Chair Frezza read the media and recording notifications.

4. Minutes of the Meeting

- a. **Motion:** Vice Chair Meneses made the motion to accept the minutes of the Public Meeting March 25, 2026. Member Acksen seconded. The vote passed unanimously (3-0-0).

5. Health Agent Report

- a. COVID positivity rate is 0.97% down from 3.57% for the past two weeks.
- b. Blood pressure and wellness clinics offered every Wednesday at the COA from 1-3 pm.
- c. Measles, pertussis, other childhood diseases, influenza, and RSV are on the rise. Please consult your physician regarding vaccinations.
- d. Tick and mosquito season has begun. Bristol County Mosquito Control Project will begin soon. Residents are advised to remain vigilant and check themselves, children, and pets for ticks after spending time outdoors.
- e. No Perc tests were witnessed and one Title 5 inspection was witnessed.

- f. Rodent complaints are still coming in. Please be vigilant with trash and birdseed on your property. Consult a licensed exterminator for property treatment in conjunction with neighbors if it seems overwhelming.
 - g. Fairhaven home-bound residents qualify for a free home-bound flu vaccine offered by the Southeastern MA Public Health Collaborative to provide an in-home vaccine.
 - h. Agent Flaherty attended an ICS/EOC (Incident Command System Emergency Operations Center) Training Seminar for Public Health, sponsored by the Region 5 HMCC and the PEP Coalition on March 31, 2026. This provides state and federal funding for emergency operations.
 - i. The Southeastern MA Public Health Collaborative has provided medication disposal bags, sharps containers, CPR masks, tick removers, sunscreen, and pill containers (these are available in English and Spanish). There are no longer any COVID test kits. Please visit the Health Department for any of these free items.
6. **Wastewater Treatment Plant Status** – There have been no Impact Forms submitted to date. Odor control should begin soon if it has not already. The Board requested that the Health Agent find out the date that odor control will begin.
7. **Wind Turbine Status** – Fairhaven Wind LLC. shared inspection reports. This is the first the Health or Building Departments have received inspection reports. A few Impact Forms have been received over the past couple of weeks. The Board discussed the inspection reports and the vague information provided in them. The Board would like to know who is in charge of inspecting the turbines, ensuring they are structurally sound, if the Building Department has ever performed an inspection, and what are the next steps.
8. **Discussion on Kratom** – Chair Frezza noted kratom was a topic from the MAHB Conference. Kratom leaf is natural leaf used to treat chronic pain. The synthetic version is 7-OH which is reportedly more potent than morphine. There are currently no state or federal regulations or age restriction of the product. There are some towns that have banned kratom and 7-OH. The state is currently reviewing kratom and considering potential regulations. Chair Frezza noted it may be necessary for the Town to consider adopting local regulations in advance of any state legislation. The Board requested information on what is being sold in Town and how to educate the public.
9. **Public Comment** – 2 Minute allowance by Chair on Public Health Issues
- a. Shannon Hareld of Somerset, MA – read a testimony of the positive effects natural kratom has had in her life. Ms. Hareld requested the Board consider banning synthetic 7-OH and regulating natural leaf kratom.

- b. Allison Smith, Director of Government Affairs / Global Kratom Coalition, of Washinton D.C. – works with local government to implement regulations on kratom and avoid a ban. Ms. Smith recommended to age-gate products containing kratom and ban synthetic 7-OH. Ms. Smith offered to be a resource in creating regulations in Fairhaven.
- c. Melody Woolf of Kalamazoo, MI – a consumer advocate, whom has spoken at the HHS and FDA joint press briefing regarding kratom and 7-OH. At the conference the benefits of kratom were highlighted. Ms. Woolf noted the personal benefits she has received from kratom.
- d. Misty Brown – noted she was there to represent the benefits of kratom. Ms. Brown reviewed her personal journey and kratom use. Ms. Brown commented that age restriction on kratom and banning of 7-OH are the perfect regulations to consider.
- e. Lora Romney – reviewed her testimony. A volunteer of the American Kratom Association and helps with education on kratom. Ms. Romney offered guidance on products in town and reading the ingredient labels to determine if natural leaf kratom or synthetic is present; as well as writing the regulations.

10. Invoices, Correspondence and any other business that may properly come before the Board not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting

- a. Invoices reviewed and approved.

11. Next Meeting Date – April 22, 2026 at 5:00pm

12. Meeting Adjourned – Motion: Vice Chair Meneses motioned to adjourn the Public Meeting. Member Acksen seconded. The vote passed unanimously (3-0-0).