



Town of Fairhaven

Board of Health

Town Hall · 40 Center Street · Fairhaven, MA 02719

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April 22, 2026

PRESENT: Justine Frezza, Brian Meneses, Barbara Acksen, David Flaherty

1. Call to Order

- a. Chair Frezza called the meeting to order at 5:03pm. 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 April 8, 2026. Member Acksen seconded. The vote passed unanimously (3-0-0).

5. Health Agent Report

- a. COVID positivity rate is 0% down from 0.97% 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. There is a tick PSA on the webpage and FB page.
- e. No Perc tests were witnessed and two Title 5 inspections were 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 a Public Information Officer training in Norton. This training provides education on how to communicate health information to the public.
 - 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** – Agent Flaherty noted that no Impact Forms have been submitted to date. Odor control measures have been implemented. The Board discussed removing this item from the agenda and incorporating future updates into the Health Agent’s Report, now that odor control has commenced.
7. **Wind Turbine Status** – Agent Flaherty reported that inspection reports were received from Fairhaven Wind; however, no inspections have been conducted by the Town. There have been no Impact Forms submitted in the past two weeks. Agent Flaherty noted that he has spoken with the Building Commissioner, who indicated that any modifications to the turbines would be considered new construction. Member Acksen requested that Agent Flaherty follow up with the Building Commissioner regarding the current structural stability of the turbines. Agent Flaherty will also follow up on the status of the contract, including its expiration, the decommissioning timeline for the turbines and whom is responsible for the decommissioning. Discussion followed regarding the turbines, including power generation and contractual matters.
8. **Discussion on Kratom** – Agent Flaherty reported that, of the 19 tobacco retailers in Town, three establishments are selling kratom and one establishment is selling 7-OH. The Board discussed how to identify and address all potential retailers selling kratom and 7-OH within the Town. The Board also discussed potential regulations related to these products.
9. **Public Comment** – 2 Minute allowance by Chair on Public Health Issues
- a. Melody Woolf of Kalamazoo, MI – identified herself as a consumer advocate who has spoken at a joint HHS and FDA press briefing regarding kratom and 7-OH. Ms. Woolf thanked the Board for considering regulation of kratom and a ban on 7-OH. Ms. Woolf noted the personal benefits she has received from kratom.

- b. Shannon Hareld of Somerset, MA – read a statement describing the positive effects natural kratom has had in her life. Ms. Hareld requested the Board consider banning synthetic 7-OH while regulating natural leaf kratom.
- c. Dr. Heidi Sykora, Doctor of Nursing Practice and volunteer Chief Scientific Officer for the International Plant and Herbal Alliance – commented that natural leaf kratom may be beneficial for various conditions. Dr. Sykora offered to provide support and education, including a compliance kit intended to assist with banning 7-OH and regulating kratom.
- d. Jennifer Gillis – expressed appreciation that the Board recognizes a difference between kratom and 7-OH. Ms. Gillis shared personal benefits from kratom.
- e. Lora Romney – presented her testimony. Ms. Romney noted that she collaborates with Dr. Sykora on education materials. Ms. Romney expressed support for regulating kratom and banning 7-OH. Ms. Romney referenced an increase in poison control reports following the introduction of 7-OH products.

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 – May 6, 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).