Fairhaven Historical Commission
Minutes
July 7, 2026

Present: Members: Rick Martin (chair), Beth Luey (vice-chair), Eleanor Chew (secretary), Alex Kuechler, Shayna Jones and Doug Brady. Alternates: Nils Isaksen and Brian Messier. Natalie Mello: Select Board Liaison. Nils joined the meeting at 6:54 p.m.
ZOOM: Nick Jones
Absent: Matt Paulson
Guests at Town Hall: John Medeiros, Steve Darwin, William Gaudreau

1. Meeting called to order: by Rick Martin, Chair with the Pledge of Allegiance and attendance at 6:30 p.m.

2. Minutes: A motion was made and seconded that we approve the minutes as ameneded for June The motion passed unanimously. (B. Luey/ A. Kuechler) Amendment: Change Natalie's dad to Mr. Mello.

3. Financial Report: A motion was made and seconded that we approve payment of invoices totaling $5,033.00. The motion passed unanimously. (A. Kuechler/ S. Jones).

A motion was made and seconded that we move item number six up to number 4. It passed unanimously. (E.Chew/A. Kuechler)

4. House Plaques: William Gaudreau from 64 Bridge St. came before us seeking approval of a house plaque. A motion was made and seconded that we table this until further historic information is available. It passed unanimously. (A. Kuechler/ B. Luey)

5. Chair's Report: Rick reminded us that our budget for this fiscal year is $10,000.00. He shared a budget sheet with recommendations for each line item which we will discuss next month. Natalie said she talked to Mr. Hickey who wants to put someone in the Academy Building during the day to keep the building maintained. Eleanor asked if the bills for the building would become the towns. Brian asked if we know the costs of each building. Rick said the Historic Survey Plan is coming along and he sent out four bids, receiving one back. The Procurement Officer is working with Rick to confirm the bid from Mr. Chris Skelly and he received the confirmation letter from the CPC. The Art Gallery is going well and the Historical Society is helping to man the building.

6. Properties Updates:

a. Academy Building: We need LePage to come back and look at the roof and the other items have already been covered.

b. Fort Phoenix: Eleanor said Brian fixed and painted the bunker door. A new light was installed in the bunker closer to the corner. The padlocks were changed and work great. Purchased two flags and the paint for the bunker wall. We need to put sponsorships on the next agenda so we can talk about this. A motion was made and seconded that we appoint Brian Messier as the co-teammate for the fort. It passed unanimously. (A. Kuechler/ B. Luey). It was mentioned that Fort Taber has a flag sponsorship to honors veterans. A motion was made and seconded that we have a person/group sponsor a flag a month with the money to go into the gift account pending approval of this. It passed unanimously. (B. Luey/ A. Kuechler) Eleanor asked Beth if we could do this per town policy.

c. School House: Rick said a reporter from a Los Angeles Japanese/ American newspaper toured the schoolhouse. We need a schedule for the schoolhouse to be open. Shayna will do a schedule for people to sign up for dates.

d. Firehouses/ Trucks: Alex said they had two trucks at Home Coming but they were unable to give rides this year. Engine 4 is being repainted by Protecting Society members.

e. Nimrod Cannon: Doug said the goal was to get quotes and meet with the TA. NEMI has said it's okay if the cannon remains there unless we want to move it. Alex felt we should leave it there and Doug said we would need an agreement in writing and we would need to discuss this with the SB. It needs to be on next month's agenda

f. John Paul Jones Cannon: Eleanor said it may be leaning more and we need to keep an eye on it, Brian is going to try and put shims under it.

7. Discussion/Action Items:

a. Rogers School Bell: Eleanor said she and Brian met with the BPW to discuss the possibility of placing a storage unit there to house the bell if the plan progressed. Vinnie and Josh (BPW) said they would help find a place and move the bell when and if the time came. The town attorney and insurance company have confirmed that the trailer with the bell can only be driven by a town employee. The working group met before tonight's meeting and did not feel this was a viable project at this time. Eleanor asked if we wanted to continue to pursue this or look at other options such as finding a permanent place for the bell. John Medeiros asked if we could rent out the bell to make money. A motion was made and seconded that we no longer pursue the bell project. It passed unanimously. (E. Chew/S. Jones)

b. Discussion of Repairs Needed: Do a list for the CPC for FY 27. Beth said we need to have the fire house repaired so the truck can come home to a safe building. Doug asked if we wanted to pursue estimates for the Nimrod Cannon. We decided to table this until August so people could come in with needs and ball park costs.

c. Update Names at Rocky's Hardware: A motion was made and seconded that we remove Wayne Oliveira, Vicki Oliveira and Gary Lavalette from the Historical Commission account and that we place Rick Martin and Eleanor Chew on the account and that we notify Rocky's. It passed unanimously. (D. Brady/ B. Luey)

d. Eagle Scout Project: Eleanor shared that their maybe a scout interested in doing some work at the fort. A motion was made and seconded that we approve the Eagle Scout project for the bunker wall pending his acceptance. It passed unanimously. (E.Chew/ A.Kuechler)

8. Committee Liaison Reports:
a. CPC: Eleanor said they are not meeting until August.

b. Lagoa Society: Their last meeting was cancelled.

9 Commission Member Items: Doug said the grant application was submitted for the Academy Building

10. Public Comment: Steve Darwin spoke about the Town Dedication Policy, providing us with written information. He said he felt the policy was violated and the decision was not valid as the property has historical significance due to various past events there, including Herman Melville's departure from there on his trip.

11. Next regularly scheduled meeting: Tuesday, August 4, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

12.Motion to adjourn: We adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eleanor Chew
Clerk