

Fairhaven Cultural Council
January 14, 2026

A motion to begin the meeting at 6:35 Pm was unanimously accepted.

Roll call: Beth Ann Gallagher (Chair), Katharine MacPhail (Secretary), Serina Gunderson (Member) on zoom, Jen Frasier (Treasurer) on zoom

Absent: John Walker (Vice Chair), Nicole Arruda (member), Alexandra Mitchell (member)

Minutes: Beth Ann will work with Katharine to expand the December 2025 minutes regarding the reconsideration request.

Motion to postpone acceptance of the minutes until Katharine and Beth Ann revise section on the reconsideration request was unanimously accepted.

Chair report

Regarding A Party at the Crossroad reconsideration request. Beth Ann emailed the applicant on January 7th. Beth Ann asked for feedback from Jay Wong before she sent the email. The email should be short and to the point, ending on a positive note. Katharine, Jen and Beth Ann worked on the letter and Beth Ann send the email Raeha Ramos, the main applicant and the artist MWALIM and copied Jay Wong. The email read:

Dear Raeha Ramos,

In December, the Fairhaven Cultural Council convened a quorum of members to review your application, **A Party at the Crossroads (FY26-LCC-126143)**, as if for the first time. We had an in-depth and lengthy discussion as we evaluated the application, according to published state guidelines and our published local priorities and guidelines. Ultimately, a majority of members voted to decline funding the application for the Fiscal Year 2026 grant cycle.

Based on the Council's outreach and education efforts, this particular application year yielded a higher number of applications, especially those specifically designed for Fairhaven residents. Approximately 70% of our 54 applications were for in-town-occurring projects. For comparison, last year only about 47% of the 47 proposals were for in-town-occurring projects. For Fiscal Year 2026, the Council declined to fund 19 other in-town-occurring projects in addition to yours and did not choose to fund any of the 16 out-of town-occurring projects.

While this short-term outcome was not your desired one, the Fairhaven Cultural Council hopes this does not discourage you or your organization from pursuing future grant opportunities. Just as culture is not static, neither are the mix of applications and projects we consider or fund. Plus based on feedback, we annually revise our local priorities, guidelines, and grant processes.

We wish you the best of luck with your upcoming performance!

Grant decisions report is due on Friday January 16, Jen will input all the information. Beth Ann will work on the 2025 Annual Report and members list due Friday January 16. The report covers the activities of the Cultural Council and the events funded along with plans for future projects.

Conflict of interest training due by February 4th.

Ron Fortier submitted 3 extension requests prior to the December 18, 2025 deadline. He was told that the agenda for the December meeting was packed and would be discussed next meeting.

Treasurer report

Jen received our last grant completion letter from Jeff Angeley, so the books of 2025 can

be officially closed.

Ron Fortier's Grant Extension Requests

Ron Fortier was awarded three grants in 2025 but has run into a few setbacks and would like to request extensions for all three grants.

The first request was for an extension for FY25-LCC100061 (the disappearance of Joshua Slocum painting and even) to June 15, 2026. One of the three panels has been completed and the event has not taken place.

A motion to accept the extension request for FY25-LCC100061 was unanimously accepted.

The second request was for an extension to September 15, 2026 for FY25-LCC99884 (for the Fairhaven Performing Artist podcast series). Beth Ann will emphasize to Ron that all 10 episodes should be both recorded and published by the deadline.

A motion to grant the extension request for FY25-LCC99884 was unanimously accepted.

The third request was for FY25-LCC 99954 (for the Lost Artist of Fairhaven podcast series) 10 promised episodes. The original planned host is out of the country and a new host is being sought.

A motion to grant the extension request for FY25-LCC 99954 to September 15 2026 was unanimously accepted.

Suggestions for fiscal year 2027 Grant Season & Processes

Make the declinations in the state database as the meeting is going on.

Have an online-hybrid information session.

Hold the information session earlier in the grant season.

Discuss whether FCC would like to pay for food and fundraising through grants. Make use of the notes field when entering rejections, that might help the applicants to understand why their applications didn't go further.

Discuss whether we want to prioritize free events.

Discuss whether we should set a grant limit request dollar-wise.

Discuss whether we'd like to score each application to better compare the applications.

Suggestions for Fiscal Year 2026 Grant Applicant Follow-ups

Possibly reach out to old applicants and encourage them to reapply. For example the Porchfest was a good one but did not have some details worked out, Hip Hop chair dance applications were confusing but with clarity might receive a grant.

Fundraising

John Walker was going to propose fundraising efforts but couldn't make the meeting.

A motion to skip agenda item 10 and move on to item 11 was unanimously accepted.

Grant reception (as a future fundraiser and community outreach)

Mass Cultural Council is having their spring reception on March 30, 2026. The FCC could get inspiration from that reception. Local businesses could donate for the event, and Alyssa could help find a space for an April reception from 6 to 8 on a weeknight, probably Wednesday.

Katharine will work on this.

Additional Community Outreach

FCC was invited to decorate one of the holiday trees outside of the town hall, Beth Ann would like to plan for the FCC to accept that invitation.

North Fairhaven Open Air Market applications are due soon, Katharine will fill out an application.

A motion to apply for a booth at the North Fairhaven Open Air Market in 2026 was unanimously accepted.

Harborfest- Beth Ann will express FCC interest in tabling at one or more event.

Special projects

Beth Ann is working on figuring out the newsletter.

To Dos Reviews

Katharine is planning the special party.

John is thinking about fundraising.

Jen will fix the wording on the website.

Beth Ann will think about the banner design and production.

Engaging the youth in the special party.

Other business

Set next meeting date

A motion to set the next meeting Feb 18 was unanimously accepted.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn at 7:39 PM was unanimously

accepted. Respectfully submitted,

Katharine MacPhail, Secretary