

Fairhaven Cultural Council
March 18, 2026

Call to order

A motion to begin the meeting was unanimously accepted.

Meeting called to order at 6:37

Roll call

Serina Gundersen (member), Jen Frasier (Treasurer), Beth Ann Gallagher (Chair)

absent- Katharine MacPhail (secretary), Nicole Arruda and Alexandra Mitchell

Minutes review and approval

The motion to accept the minutes of the December 17th, 2025 meeting was unanimously accepted.

The motion to accept the minutes of the January 14th, 2026 meeting with the spelling of two names corrected was accepted with three yes votes and one abstention

Chair's report

Annual report

Beth Ann submitted the FCC report for the printed Annual Town Report by the deadline. The Annual Report is handed out at town meeting. The FCC report highlights the council's activities in the past year.

Grant celebration March 30

Beth Ann registered for the Monday, March 30th grant celebration for the Bristol County Regional Mass Cultural Council event.

Financial Committee meeting

Beth Ann attended the Financial Committee meeting. Everyone who receives funds from the town budget was called into the meeting. Beth Ann talked about FCC mission and activities. The Financial Committee Meeting will be presenting two budgets to town meeting, one if the override passes and a reduced budget if the override does not pass. Currently the FCC receives \$1200 from the town, they plan to reduce that funding to \$900. Beth Ann told the finance committee that the FCC receives the majority of their funding from Massachusetts Cultural Council. The Financial Committee asked if Fairhaven did not provide any funding, would the FCC still receive state funds and Beth Ann answered in the affirmative. Beth Ann presented a sheet with the FCC budget which shows the \$11,900 the FCC currently receives from the state. The state funding is dependent on population. She also showed the 18 award winners for 2026 including the information about how much they requested and how much the FCC funded, which was 72% of the requested amount. Beth Ann hopes that made an impression on them regarding the fiscal responsibility of the FCC.

Creative individual grant winners

Beth Ann contacted Beth David and Amy Hart in the town hall office about the three creative individual grant winners in Fairhaven, possibly the first in town to win those grants. Brian Cass (music), Heather Martin (visual arts) and Kylie Serpa (multidisciplinary) each were awarded a \$5,000 grant without restrictions to spend on whatever they need to continue practicing their art. The Neighborhood News published an article which will hopefully increase the applicants from Fairhaven next year.

Treasurers Report

All of the agreements and W-9s have been signed and submitted to the Select Board office. Jen is going to send a bulk email to the grantees about where they are in the process. Jen was told that all of the paperwork that she needed to sign and submit can be submitted as a PDF which will make the process simpler.

Council Membership

Jen Frasier, John Walker and Beth Ann Gallagher have terms that end in May 2026. All three plan to stay for another term.

If the FCC is 6 or 7 members, a quorum is four members. If the FCC is 5 members, three members are a quorum. Two members have not attended meetings regularly. Alex Mitchell has spent two years on the council without attending a single meeting. Nicole Arruda has not been heard from recently. When Jen inquired about this issue with town hall, the recommendation was to check the MCC rules to look for guidance, but after that the FCC would need to establish attendance requirements. The matter needs to be discussed at a meeting and voted on. Beth Ann read the Local Cultural Council member removal guidelines from MCC, which state that LCCs may establish participation requirements for members to ensure the ability meet quorum and conduct business. The policy can set forth a period of inactivity, I.e. one year or three missed meetings, etc, that could trigger a vote to either request the member resign or that the appointing authority remove them. The FCC does not have the ability to remove a member. Jen and John will work on drafting an attendance policy.

Fundraising

John proposed to set a goal to match the funds that the town is giving to the FCC (possibly \$900). Katharine has been talking about a spring event that could be a fundraiser. Some restaurants in town do allow fundraising in the form of a percentage of the bill going to a non-profit. John will inquire with them. Beth Ann mentioned that Discover Fairhaven holds business mixers for local networking that are held periodically. They typically happen in the early evening. Beth Ann told the group that the FCC could start a gift account which would require just one check to start.

Katharine is working on ideas for a grant reception, which ties directly into fundraising. Homecoming is the last Saturday in June, the FCC will attend and walk around talking to people about the FCC.

Special projects

Beth Ann's special projects are creating a banner and getting a newsletter out.
Katharine's special projects are getting youth involvement and the grant reception.

To dos

Jen and John will work on the attendance policy
John will check with the restaurants to see how the fundraiser works
Jen will send the list of grantees to Neighborhood News

Next meeting date

A motion to hold the next meeting will be Wednesday April 22, 2026 was unanimously accepted.

A meeting to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 PM was unanimously accepted.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine MacPhail, Secretary