



FAIRHAVEN SELECT BOARD

Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2026

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
RCUD 2026 JUN 29 PM 1:33

Present: Andrew Romano, Natalie A. Mello, Pam Kuechler, Richard F. Trapilo and Keith R. Hickey

Not Present: Andrew Saunders

Mr. Romano opened the Select Board meeting at 6:30pm

A moment of silence was observed for Lars Vinjerud II and Liam Pinheiro.

Mr. Romano announced that the reorganization of the Board would take place at the June 22, 2026 meeting due to Member Saunders not being present tonight and welcomed Mr. Trapilo and Ms. Kuechler.

PUBLIC HEARING 6:30PM

Mr. Romano opened the Public Hearing at 6:32pm and read the notice:

Request to Transfer an Aquaculture License from Stephen Doonan to Matthew Loo: in accordance with provisions of Chapter 130, Section 60 of MGL as amended and Rules and Regulations promulgated by the Fairhaven Selectboard, that Stephen Doonan is transferring his Aquaculture Acreage to Matthew Loo of 42 Taber Street, Fairhaven MA 02719. Coordinates are: NE41.36'22.23N 70.50'46.66"W, NE 41.36'22.97"N 70.50'50.02"W, NE 41.36'19.22"N 70.50'47.57"W, NE 41.36'19.85"N 70.50'50.80"W for a lease of five years.

The Public hearing with the Select Board to be held on June 15, 2026 at 6:30 PM.

Harbormaster Tim Cox addressed the Board regarding the request to transfer the Aquaculture License from Stephen Doonan to Matt Loo and showed the proposed site on the map (*Attachment A*). The applicant appeared before the Marine Resources Committee on March 12, 2026 and Mr. Cox clarified that the public hearing request was held due to Town Meeting and the need to advertise the hearing.

Public Comment: Dale Leavitt of 53 Goulart Memorial Drive addressed the Board. He said he has the 47-acre site pictured on the map (*Attachment A*). Mr. Leavitt said he is in favor of the transfer, he has many years of experience with shellfish farms in several countries and Mr. Loo's work is exemplary.

Harbormaster Cox advised the Board that he supports the transfer.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:41pm.

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to approve the Aquaculture License transfer from Stephen Doonan to Matthew Loo as outlined in the application for a period of five years. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to take agenda item C1 out of order. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

Public Safety Complex Update on Recommendations Regarding Lease Negotiation and Request to Authorize the Town Administrator to Spend Funds Allocated for Said Purpose

Fire Chief Todd Correia and Police Chief Dan Dorgan addressed the Board regarding their memo and request (*Attachment B*). The memo reviews the recent votes taken by the Public Safety Complex Committee (Committee). The Committee is seeking the Board to authorize the Town Administrator to use up to \$50,000 of funds appropriated through Town Meeting on legal cost to negotiate a lease and, if there is money left, on a Request for Proposals (RFP) for design and costs.

The Board asked questions and discussion ensued regarding details of the proposed renovation at the current public safety building, what the proposed savings of twenty to thirty million dollars is based on, financial forecast concerns and future deficits, concerns as to what has happened in the City of New Bedford with public safety

facilities, clarification on which department budget operational costs would be appropriated from, and the timing to coincide with other projects rolling off debt exclusion versus an override. Mr. Hickey asked for adding an appraisal in the motion.

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to authorize the Town Administrator to expend up to \$50,000 for legal, appraisal, design and engineering services for the existing police/fire building and the building located at 4 Plaza Way. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to take agenda item D1 out of order. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

Consider Opting-In to a Temporary Pilot to Extend Hours of Liquor Licenses and to Allow for Public Consumption in Designated Districts in Summer 2026 as outlined by the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) The ABCC sent notice to all Local Licensing Authority's (LLA's) regarding the Governor's signing of "An Act Authorizing Municipalities to Opt-In to a Temporary Pilot to Extend the Hours of Liquor Licenses and to Allow for Public Consumption in Designated Districts in Summer 2026."

Chief Dorgan addressed the Board about the ABCC's notice and said he is not in favor of the Town opting-in to the pilot due to the risk to the Town and due to the neighboring City of New Bedford not opting-in. Chief Dorgan added that he reviewed the schedule of games and, based on the schedule, does not see a need for extended hours for alcohol sales.

Mr. Hickey advised the Board that no licensees have asked to opt-in and he wanted the Board to review and determine whether the Town would opt-in so that businesses could be notified.

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to opt-in to "An Act Authorizing Municipalities to Opt-In to a Temporary Pilot to Extend the Hours of Liquor Licenses and to Allow for Public Consumption in Designated Districts in Summer 2026" as outlined in the notice from the ABCC. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion failed (0-4-0) All opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENT – *None received*

APPOINTMENTS / COMMUNITY ITEMS

Appointment Request: ADA Coordinator: Martha Reed

The Board reviewed the request.

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to appoint Martha Reed as the Town's ADA Coordinator. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

Event Procession Request: Our Lady of Angels, September 5, 2026 and September 7, 2026

The Board reviewed the request.

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to approve the Our Lady of Angels application to the MassDOT to hold their event procession on September 5, 2026 and September 7, 2026 as presented. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

ACTION / DISCUSSION

Discussion on Funding Tourism Department Through Donations

Mr. Hickey referred the Board to the memo from Community Development Coordinator Alyssa Botelho (*Attachment C*) and Ms. Mello read it into the record.

Mr. Hickey informed the Board of a request to use Tourism gift account funds or a donation platform to support Tourism Department operations in FY27. He noted that, as outlined in Ms. Botelho's memo, neither she nor Todd Migliacci wished to continue in their roles on a donation-supported basis.

The Board discussed the need for further process review, concerns about community feedback on the use of gift account funds, the override vote as the voice of the voters, whether additional appropriations will come from the state budget process, general budget processes including potential appropriations on the fall town meeting warrant and concerns about using unappropriated funds ahead of town meeting. Mr. Hickey provided an overview of the state budget process, from the Governor's initial budget proposal through House and Senate review and the development of a final budget.

Additional discussion continued regarding available funds from open Town positions, the status of the Planning Director interviews and whether other impacted departments would be considered for additional revenue appropriation. Mr. Hickey said interviews are taking place and there are other steps before a Planning candidate will be recommended to the Board. Unique budget situations in municipalities could have towns bringing additional appropriations to fall town meetings based on final state budget numbers. Any additional state budget funds would be reviewed with the Select Board and Finance Committee before seeking appropriation at town meeting.

Mr. Romano asked Mr. Migliacci to address the memo regarding the statement in Ms. Botelho's memo (*Attachment C*). Mr. Migliacci said he would consider continuing in tourism events if a stable structure was established. The July 4th parade and event is run by the Fairhaven Village Militia with Discover Fairhaven in a supporting role and not the organizer. Ms. Botelho branded the "Harborfest" events at Grimshaw Park so those events as well as those happening within Town Hall under "Discover Fairhaven" would be canceled as posted on social media.

The Board discussed defining the direction for Tourism's role after the failed override vote, the potential policy on the use of donation or grant funds. Mr. Romano asked Mr. Migliacci to meet with the Town Administrator to discuss further. The Board thanked Mr. Migliacci. Some on the Board expressed concerns about privatizing the Tourism Department.

Cathy Melanson addressed the Board and said this is something Fairhaven cannot give up and as the Chair of the Economic Development Committee would engage them to support or another entity to continue the work. Erin Carr addressed the Board and read from her email (*Attachment D*). Mr. Romano asked her to forward her additional statement to the Board.

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to table item D2 to the June 22, 2026 agenda. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. Hickey updated the Board on the Recreation (Rec) Center's All Abilities Fishing Derby on June 19, 2026 from 12-3pm at Hoppy's Landing. The Rec Center's KoolKids Summer programs has some openings left, contact them to register, there are rates for members and non-members.

MINUTES

Motion: Ms. Mello motioned to accept the open session minutes of June 8 and 9, 2026 as presented. Ms. Kuechler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS / COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Mello, Ms. Kuechler and Mr. Trapilo had no reports

Mr. Romano:

- Fairhaven's Got Pride is at the end of the June.
- Friday is Juneteenth and he encourages those with the day off as a holiday to spend time researching why it is recognized and reach out to the Belonging Committee with any questions.
- A Planning Board member reached out to ask for an agenda item outside of the 48-hour posting time. Pat Carr asked if it could be considered as not reasonably anticipated by the Chair. Mr. Romano said he checked with the Town Administrator and was advised it would not be appropriate for tonight and to see the Town Administrator to ask for a future agenda request.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled Select Board meeting will be on **Monday, July 13, 2026** at 6:30pm

Mr. Trapilo asked to bring forward financial information for the next Board's agenda based on discussions with Mr. Hickey and Ms. Carreiro about a three-year forecast and balance sheet. Mr. Hickey advised the Board that a five-year forecast was reviewed as part of the budget process and offered to review with Ms. Carreiro prior to the June 22, 2026 meeting.

Ms. Kuechler asked about reappointments on the next agenda and any lists available to the Board to review in preparation. Ms. Hart has the list for the agenda, it contains only those with expiring terms. She will send that list and the Select Board liaison list to the Board tonight and it will be in the packets for the June 22, 2026 meeting.

The Select Board adjourned at 7:40pm

ATTACHMENTS

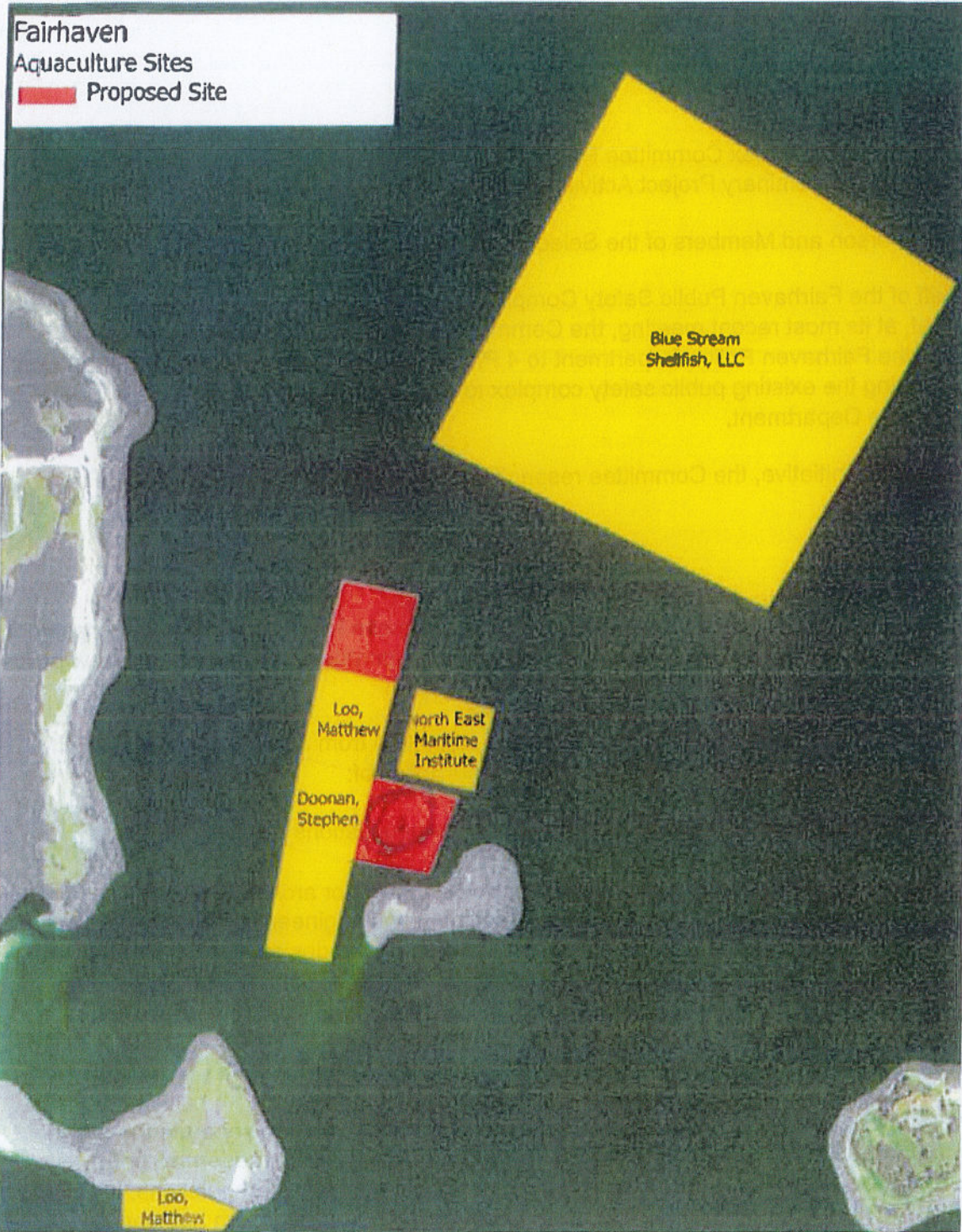
- A. Aquaculture Sites map
- B. Memo: Public Safety Complex Committee
- C. Memo: Alyssa Botelho, Discover Fairhaven
- D. Email: Erin Carr: Potential Fundraiser for Discover Fairhaven

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Select Board Clerk (ah)

Accepted on June 22, 2026



Town of Fairhaven
Marine Resources Department
40 Center St., Fairhaven, MA 02719





**FAIRHAVEN PUBLIC SAFETY
COMPLEX COMMITTEE
40 Center Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719**

June 10, 2026

Fairhaven Selectboard
Attention: Chairperson
40 Center Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719

Re: Public Safety Complex Committee Recommendation Regarding 4 Plaza Way and Authorization of Preliminary Project Activities

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Select Board:

On behalf of the Fairhaven Public Safety Complex Committee, I am writing to advise the Select Board that, at its most recent meeting, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend relocating the Fairhaven Police Department to 4 Plaza Way, the former Citizens Bank building, and renovating the existing public safety complex to create a modernized fire station for the Fairhaven Fire Department.

To advance this initiative, the Committee respectfully requests that the Select Board take the following actions:

Requested Actions

1. Authorize the Town Administrator to negotiate the terms of a lease, lease-to-own agreement, or purchase of the property located at 4 Plaza Way for the purpose of establishing a new police station for the Fairhaven Police Department.
2. Authorize the Town Administrator to expend up to \$50,000 from funds appropriated at the November 19, 2025, Special Town Meeting for the purposes of:
 - Obtaining legal review and assistance related to negotiations involving the lease, lease-to-own, or purchase of 4 Plaza Way;
 - Developing and issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for architectural and engineering services for the purpose of designing and engineering a new police station at 4 Plaza Way for the Fairhaven Police Department; and designing and engineering modifications and renovations to the existing fire station located at 146 Washington Street for the Fairhaven Fire Department.

Background

In early 2026, the Fairhaven Public Safety Complex Committee voted to separate the police and fire department facility planning efforts. This decision was made to modernize both facilities and provide the infrastructure necessary to comply with current regulations, laws, and operational requirements while preparing both departments for future growth and service demands, while keeping costs under control.

Throughout its review process, the Committee explored options for a single combined public

safety facility. However, no viable property or location was identified that could adequately accommodate both departments. As a result, the Committee determined that pursuing separate facilities represented the most practical and cost-effective path forward.

The Committee toured both the Westport Police Station and the Westport Fire Station and compared those facilities to the Town's existing public safety buildings located at 1 Bryant Lane and 146 Washington Street. Following those evaluations, the Committee unanimously concluded that significant modernization of both departments' facilities is necessary.

Subsequently, the Committee learned that the owner of 4 Plaza Way was interested in leasing the property to the Town of Fairhaven. The Committee toured the building and determined that the facility appears large enough to accommodate the operational and administrative needs of the Fairhaven Police Department. A meeting was then held with the owner, who expressed a willingness to lease, enter into a lease-to-own arrangement, or sell the property to the Town.

At its meeting on June 2, 2026, the Committee again voted unanimously to move forward with relocating the Fairhaven Police Department to 4 Plaza Way and redeveloping the existing fire station to better serve the Fairhaven Fire Department.

During discussions, several questions were identified regarding prevailing wage requirements and how those requirements may apply differently under lease, lease-to-own, and purchase scenarios. We believe these matters warrant further legal review and analysis. Our goal is to provide the Town Administrator with the authority necessary to negotiate the best possible agreement on behalf of the Town while ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Should negotiations prove successful, the Committee recommends initiating an RFP process for architectural and engineering services to develop conceptual and final designs for:

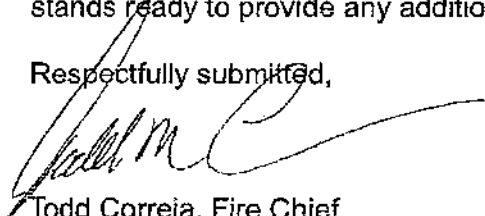
1. A new Fairhaven Police Department facility at 4 Plaza Way; and
2. The modernization and renovation of the existing Fairhaven Fire Department facility at 146 Washington Street.

Completion of these designs and associated cost estimates will provide the Town with accurate project costs and planning information necessary for future decision-making and funding discussions.

The Committee notes that Town Meeting previously appropriated \$50,000 for legal, engineering, and related project expenses. In addition, the Town currently maintains approximately \$2.5 million within the Public Safety Capital Stabilization Fund, which may be available for future design and engineering costs associated with these projects.

The Committee respectfully requests favorable consideration of these recommendations and stands ready to provide any additional information the Selectboard may require.

Respectfully submitted,



Todd Correia, Fire Chief

Chairperson

Daniel Dorgan, Police Chief

Vice Chairperson



TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN
Office of Tourism, Community & Economic Development
Discover Fairhaven
40 Center Street • Fairhaven, MA 02719

I would like to thank everyone who has expressed support for the Department of Tourism, Community & Economic Development, branded as Discover Fairhaven, following the outcome of the June election.

While we appreciate the efforts being made to preserve the department in some form, municipal operations require stable funding, clear oversight, and long-term planning. This office has operated as a municipal department for approximately 30 years, and any effort to transition it into a different organizational structure would require significant planning and coordination.

Should the Select Board wish to explore alternative models moving forward, there are numerous operational considerations that would need to be addressed in collaboration with the Town Administrator and potentially Town Counsel, including governance, financial oversight, insurance and liability coverage, office space, employee health benefits, access to municipal resources, and other legal and administrative requirements.

Any future organization would require a sustainable structure and clear operational framework before leadership positions could reasonably be considered. Establishing that structure would take time, as would securing sufficient and reliable funding to support resuming operations.

While I will not be returning to this role on a donation-supported basis due to the unpredictability and structural concerns involved, I appreciate the enthusiasm and generosity shown by residents who wish to see this work continue. I have discussed this proposal with Todd Migliacci, who has led events over the last eight months while I directed the department remotely overseas. Should the Select Board and Town Administrator establish a stable structure and operational framework, he has expressed a willingness to continue this conversation.

As a Fairhaven resident, it has been an honor to serve my community over the past ten years, especially during the last year and a half as Director of Tourism, Community & Economic Development.

I respect the decision made by the voters and leave this role with gratitude. Thank you to everyone who supported the department and contributed to its success.

Respectfully,

Alyssa Botelho
Community Development Coordinator

khickey@fairhaven-ma.gov

From: Erin Carr <ecarr0825@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 8:40 AM
To: Keith Hickey; Anne Carreiro; selectboard@fairhaven-ma.gov
Subject: Potential Fundraiser for Discover Fairhaven

Dear Mr. Hickey, Mrs. Carreiro, and Members of the Select Board,

I am writing to request the Town's consideration and guidance regarding a community fundraising effort to support Discover Fairhaven and its ongoing operations for FY27.

I think most would agree that Discover Fairhaven has played an important role in promoting the town, supporting local businesses, and encouraging community involvement over the last couple of years. The department's programs and initiatives have provided tremendous value to residents, businesses, and visitors and its success can largely be attributed to Ms. Botelho's talent, leadership, and creative vision.

Members of the community have expressed interest in establishing a public fundraiser, such as a GoFundMe, to raise donations from supporters who'd like to contribute to the continued operation of Discover Fairhaven.

I respectfully request the town's guidance on the following:

- 1/ Whether the Town of Fairhaven would be willing to accept private donations earmarked for Discover Fairhaven.
- 2/ Any legal or procedural requirements that would need to be considered and addressed before launching this type of fundraiser.
- 3/ The appropriate process for ensuring transparency and compliance with municipal gift policies.
- 4/ To determine whether or not donations solicited through GoFundMe (or a comparable crowdfunding campaign) are tax deductible.

My goal is to ensure that the fundraising effort is conducted transparently and responsibly, but also quickly and efficiently in an effort to retain Ms. Botelho and prevent any lapse in her programming before July 1.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Any guidance you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Erin Carr

508.991.951: