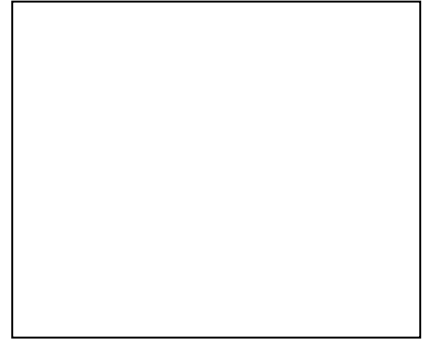


**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
March 4, 2024**



Present

Brian Wotton, Commissioner
Robert Hobson, Commissioner
Anne Morton Smith, Commissioner
Daniel Lopes, Commissioner
Travis Rapoza, Commissioner
Vincent Furtado, BPW Superintendent
Rebecca Vento, Office Manager
Joshua Crabb, Highway Superintendent
Angie Lopes Ellison, Town Administrator
Doug Brady, Resident
Newton Edwards, Resident
Karen Vilandry, Resident
Daniel Ferreira, Fairhaven Pickleball Association

I. Call to Order

Mr. Wotton called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. Routine Matters

A. Signing of Departmental Bills

III. Approval of Minutes

A. n/a

IV. Executive Session A

A. To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual (Sewer Superintendent)

V. Appointments

A. Fairhaven Pickleball Association, Storage Container at Livesey Park Update

Mr. Ferreira – Back in December we received permission from the Board to put a storage container alongside the fence near the tennis courts at Livesey Park. Valtran came down and they cannot put the container in the location that was approved because the incline from the roadway is too steep. We are here tonight looking for approval to move the location of the container. There are 3 memorial trees that were planted and we would like to put the container between the newly planted trees and pickleball courts.

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
March 4, 2024**

Mr. Crabb- When we originally met we were concerned about the site lines and the visibility throughout the park.

Mr. Wotton - Could we help them relocate their container?

Mr. Crabb – I would have to look to see if this could be done.

Mr. Wotton – Mr. Crabb will go there and see if the container can be put in the previously approved location and report back to the Board.

VI. Item for Action

- A. Sewer Superintendent Evaluation**
- B. Sign EL Harvey Trash & Recycle Extension**
- C. Trash Fees**

Mr. Wotton - This is a continuance from our meeting last week, where we had open discussion. At that meeting we had a lot of residents in the room and also a lot of participants on Zoom like we do tonight. We listened to your feedback and your thoughts on things, and the Board has taken that into consideration for the upcoming vote. Tonight, we are joined by Ms. Ellison who I'm sure is available for any questions. We are going to keep those questions to a minimum as we already had open discussion on this at the last meeting. Tonight, is really to go over a couple of things that we found that can assist with the deficit issue and to vote on a trash fee that we were asked to implement.

Ms. Ellison - I know last week Ms. Carreiro came and gave you a breakdown of what the implication would be. I know that it had been discussed to charge \$100 and I was advocating for the total cost of the contract to be able to sort of dispense that throughout. With the Municipality covering that contract we are at a 2.2-million-dollar deficit. Mr. Furtado had mentioned some options at the Joint FinCom / Select Board meeting, and I wanted to provide some feedback to that because those options will not help out with the deficit.

Ms. Ellison explained to the Board why reducing Capital Plans and freezing positions would not help with the 2.2-million-dollar deficit.

Mr. Hobson - We have a trash contract coming up for renewal. How much do you recommend that the Board assess for a trash fee?

Ms. Ellison - I am looking to cover the whole contract. That way it would zero out.

Mr. Hobson - If we charge \$25 a quarter would that help you out with your budget?

Ms. Ellison - That would suffice, anything less than that will not be feasible.

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
March 4, 2024**

Ms. Smith - How much would it be to cover the entire contract?

Mr. Furtado – It's just shy of \$150 per year.

Mr. Lopes – Is there a way that the fee could be imposed on an annual basis and not have to be renewed if we see future revenue sources moving down the road?

Ms. Ellison – Yes, you could reevaluate at any time. This fee is not a permanent fee.

Mr. Wotton - This might fix today but what's going to happen going forward? What are we looking at in the years to come? This Board is taking a lot of heat and collectively we came up with 1.2 million dollars that we could give up but unfortunately those numbers will not help the deficit.

Ms. Ellison – I am suggesting that we implement a trash fee. The taxes do not pay for the trash and have been supplemented by other revenues that are no longer here. I am hoping that by creating this revenue source it will decrease the deficit. You are not the only ones that are addressing the fees. I have asked all the departments to raise their fees.

Mr. Brady – Of the 7,000 residents how many are condo associations that have private services.

Mr. Wotton - The 7,000 does not include condos or residents that have private pickup. The fee would only be assessed to residents that have the bins.

Mr. Brady – If you have a blue bin can you opt out per quarter? Like residents that have seasonal properties.

Mr. Wotton - There will be no opting out for seasonal properties. Once you opt out you will no longer have your bins.

Mr. Brady – You have to have both bins?

Mr. Wotton – You cannot opt out of trash and only have recycle.

Mr. Brady - This should be a none recurring fee, that way you have to look at the fee and discuss it every year.

Mr. Edwards – I just want to confirm that Harbormist Condo will not pay the fee.

Ms. Ellison – Anyone that has private trash pickup would have to file for an abatement.

Mr. Edwards – Thank you, I will have to let the homeowners know that they will have to file for an abatement.

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
March 4, 2024**

Mr. Rapoza - My concern is that residents are expressing frustration with what's going on, and I get really nervous when we have to start cutting government services. People then see or feel that the town is providing them with less things. Then at the same time, anytime that we ask to raise taxes or implement a fee, they're frustrated because they don't see what the government is doing for them, or they feel that they're not doing much, and then they're even more upset when you ask for more money from them. Not you in particular, I mean us as a Town. My question is how are we dealing with this on a public perception level? Trust in government is something that I'm really concerned about and it feels to me like cutting services is a great way for people to lose more trust with the government, and then make them even more reticent to except different fees or taxes when it comes into place. I'm just curious how you're thinking about going about this, so that the residents feel like they're part of the process, I know participatory budgeting is a thing. I'm not sure if you've ever thought about participatory cutting just so people feel more engaged and they feel like they have more of a say in what's taking place.

Ms. Ellison – I think that's what we're utilizing. Whatever the deficit is, it's going to be redirected to respect the four major departments since they are going to feel the most impact. I feel that we have been explaining it's a deficit and not here's more services.

Mr. Rapoza – My last thing is I did a quick search of the census and I found that a quarter of Fairhaven's population is over the age of 65. Off the top of your head do you know what portion of that population is low income?

Ms. Smith – I actually looked into this and there would be 25 residents who qualify for tax abatements.

Ms. Vilandry – I appreciate that Mr. Rapoza shared the fact that the Town has a senior population of 25%. Also, we do have a population of environmental justice, people who are low income, and they may or may not own a house. \$ 100 per year may not be a big deal to some people but \$100 a year may be a big deal to others that are low income.

Mr. Wotton - There will be an abatement for low income seniors.

Mr. Hobson motioned to adopt a new program for the collection of solid waste and recycling in the Town of Fairhaven detailed as follows:

Each residential property or residential unit in a multi-family property shall receive a sixty-four (64) gallon cart for trash and a ninety six (96) gallon cart for recycling. The residential fee for trash and recycling collection shall be \$100 per year per residence or per residential unit in a multi-family property, billed in quarterly installments of \$25 and payable within thirty (30) days of billing.

Each legacy commercial property shall receive a sufficient number of carts for trash and recycling as the owner of such property or business deems necessary. The commercial fee for trash and recycling collection shall be \$100 per cart per year, billed in quarterly installments of \$25 per cart and payable within thirty (30) days of billing.

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
March 4, 2024**

Carts are the property of the Town of Fairhaven, through its contracted service provider but shall remain at the location issued. The amount of curbside collection of trash and recycling shall be limited to the capacity of the carts issued to each property or unit. Property owners are responsible for appropriate means of disposal of any trash and recyclables over these limits; no such excess shall be placed curbside.

Any commercial or residential property owner who does not receive trash and recycling collection services from the Town may apply for an abatement on a form to be prescribed by the Board of Public Works. Any application for abatement shall be accompanied by such documentation as the Board of Public Works may require, for example, evidence of long-term vacancy of the property, private association rules and regulations or contract for private waste collection services provided to unit owners, or other relevant documentation, the sufficiency of which shall be in the sole discretion of the Board of Public Works. Any abatement granted shall be for the year of application only; a new application must be submitted each year. Any carts that have been issued to a successful applicant for abatement must return such carts to the Town within seven (7) days of receipt of notice of the approved abatement.

An abatement for senior residents that meet HUD requirements may be submitted by a property owner. The senior abatement will be for half of the fee.

The Board is to revisit and review

This program is to be revisited and reviewed in one year on or before March 4, 2025.

Ms. Smith seconded. Rollcall: Mr. Hobson, Ms. Smith and Mr. Rapoza in favor. Mr. Lopes and Mr. Wotton opposed. Motion passes 3-2.

Mr. Wotton motioned to take a 5-minute brake at 7:25 p.m. Ms. Smith seconded. Rollcall Vote: Mr. Wotton, Mr. Hobson, Ms. Smith, Mr. Lopes and Mr. Rapoza in favor.

Mr. Rapoza left the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Mr. Wotton reconvened in open session at 7:30 p.m.

**D. Whitfield-Manjiro Friendship Society, Cooke Memorial Park, Cherry Blossom
Festival May 5, 2024**

Mr. Furtado - I think that the Board should allow the festival to take place but not in Cooke Park. We could block off the streets but I would exercise caution of allowing the festival in Cooke Park.

Mr. Wotton motioned to approve the Whitfield Manjiro Festival on May 5, 2024 with the understanding the festival is to be held in the street by blocking off Cherry Street from Pilgrim Avenue to Lafayette Street and to get a police detail if required by the police department. Mr. Lopes seconded. Vote unanimous.

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
March 4, 2024**

**E. Mattapoisett Land Trust and Friends of Mattapoisett Bike Path, Tour de Crème
May 19, 2024**

Mr. Lopes motioned to approve Mattapoisett Land Trust and Friends of Mattapoisett Bike Path, Tour de Crème on May 19, 2024. Ms. Smith seconded. Vote unanimous.

**F. Tighe & Bond, WPCF Upgrade Project Construction Services, Payment #8
\$96,181.59**

Ms. Smith motioned to approve Tighe & Bond Payment #8 in the amount of \$96,181.59 for WPCF Upgrade Project Construction Services. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

VI. Table Matters

A. n/a

VII. Public Comments / Open Forum

VIII. Old Business / New Business

A. Superintendent

Superintendent Report for March 4, 2024

- Attend professional development training
- Along with staff - present FY 25 Budget and projects
- Water Tank Maintenance Vendor Scoring
- Town Counsel working on Trash/Recycling curbside contract extension
- Chair monthly BBAC meeting
- Planning Meeting for Stormwater
- Meet with Mattapoisett re IMA
- Attend various budget meetings
- Estimate FY 25 water/sewer revenue projections
- Meet with NFIA

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
March 4, 2024**

Mr. Furtado answered any questions that the Board had regarding the Superintendent Report.

B. Board Members

Mr. Hobson – Why is the sidewalk on the causeway is blocked off?

Mr. Crabb – It was deemed unsafe because there are some sink holes and deep voids. I need to open it up and see what we are dealing with.

Mr. Wotton – Could we just check all the outfalls and drainage to make sure that they are clear.

Mr. Furtado – Yes, we clean catch basins and outfall during the slower months.

Mr. Wotton – Could you go to Brook Drive with the Building Commissioner and address the issue of people pumping into streets.

C. Marine Resources Committee – BPW Related Matters

Mr. Hobson – We met but there was nothing that had to do with the BPW.

D. Community Preservation Committee – BPW Related Matters

IX. Set Date for the Next Meeting

Mr. Hobson motioned to set the date for the next meeting on March 18, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Smith seconded. Vote unanimous.

X. Adjourn

Mr. Wotton motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. and enter into executive session to discuss personnel matter and not to reconvene in open session. Rollcall Vote: Mr. Wotton, Mr. Hobson, Ms. Smith and Mr. Lopes in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca L. Vento

Rebecca Vento
Office Manager

Minutes approved on March 18, 2024