

Fairhaven Town Administrator Recruitment



HISTORY

Fairhaven, MA (16,000 pop.), is a charming seaside community located on the shore of Massachusetts' Buzzards Bay, approximately one mile from New Bedford, 35 miles east of Providence, R.I., and 50 miles south of Boston. The Town is bordered by the Acushnet River and New Bedford to the west, Mattapoisett to the east, Buzzards Bay to the south, and Acushnet to the north. Fairhaven is a community of homes, commercial development, the marine trades, and industrial companies. The Town, settled in 1653, has a rich history dating back to the days of the Pilgrims. Fairhaven was incorporated in 1812 after separating from New Bedford and grew in prosperity during the whaling days in the 1800s. The Town's most remarkable features are the magnificent European-style public buildings built between 1885 and 1906 by Standard Oil Company executive and millionaire Henry Huttleston Rogers, a native of the Town.

<https://www.fairhaven-ma.gov>

GOVERNMENT

Fairhaven has a three member elected Select Board that hires the Town Administrator. The Town has a representative Town Meeting. The Select Board serves as the Town's chief executive, acting through the Town Administrator, who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of town government. Legislation is pending to change from a three member to a five member Select Board.

Fairhaven has a number of elected positions, boards, and committees including the Select Board, School Committee, Board of Public Works, Planning Board, Board of Health, Housing Authority, Commissioner of Trust Funds, Town Clerk, Tree Warden, and Town Moderator. Fairhaven has one fire station and police department, one library, and its own school department with two elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. The Town has an agreement with the Town of Acushnet in which Acushnet high school students can choose to attend Fairhaven High School. Approximately one third of the students at Fairhaven High School are from Acushnet, which is a source of approximately \$2.5 million dollars in annual revenue.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Fairhaven is a seaside community with a working waterfront. While retail trade is now the leading segment of the economy, fishing and ship maintenance are still important segments. Acushnet Company, the producer of the Titleist and FootJoy brands of golf equipment, is headquartered in Fairhaven, and there is a burgeoning healthcare-driven job cluster along Route 240. The Town's economic development goals include preserving the financial viability of the working waterfront, maintaining healthy commercial occupancies along Route 6 and other commercial areas, supporting mixed-use projects, encouraging small business incubation and growth, and collaboration with New Bedford and other area towns on workforce training and regional economic development.

The Northeast Maritime Institute, located in the Town Center, is a private college that offers training and education for careers in the maritime industry. Maritime-related business in Fairhaven represents a small but vital industry cluster and it is an important aspect of the Town's legacy and identity. As the Town is largely built-out, future development will need to consist of redevelopment. Nearly 90% of businesses in Town can be considered "small business." Apart from the commercial and industrial areas and three working farms, Fairhaven is a quiet residential community.



FINANCIAL FACTS

FY22 Budget:

Town	\$29,925,787
School	\$24,428,591
Capital	\$2,143,900

Bond Rating:

Standard and Poor's (July 2020)	AA+
Moody's	AA+

FY21 Residential Tax Rate: \$11.29

FY21 Commercial Tax Rate: \$22.53

2021 Tax Classification:

Residential	\$22,949,125	75.33%
Commercial	\$5,699,748	18.71%
Industrial	\$671,240	2.2%
Personal Prop.	\$1,145,460	3.76%

FY22 Revenue by Source:

Tax Levy	\$31,490,171	57.9%
State Aid	\$11,500,000	21.3%
Local Receipts	\$8,333,000	15.3%
Other	\$2,981,207	5.5%

Reserves:

Free Cash	\$1,695,631
Overlay	\$8,836,722

QUESTIONS AND REFERRALS

Should you have any questions regarding this opportunity, or a recommendation of a colleague that may be interested, please contact **Mary Flanders Aicardi**, Human Resources Practice Leader at 508-215-8992.

To learn more about the Collins Center for Public Management and the services provided, please visit www.umb.edu/cpm

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Fairhaven strives to preserve and protect its agricultural resources and landscapes, cultural and historic places, open space, recreational, and forest and marine resources. The Town has a total area of 14.1 square miles and 29.4 miles of shore property as well as significant rural areas, including three working farms. Fairhaven is home to a town beach, a public state beach overlooking Buzzards Bay, two large public parks, many recreational fields and facilities, several recreational marinas, commercial wharves, a yacht club, historical Fort Phoenix and the Rogers buildings, and provides free walking tours of scenic and historic sites. The Fairhaven Recreation Department oversees a variety of youth sports programs, a fitness room, a summer youth program, and school vacation programs as well as adult exercise, wellness, and day trip programs each year.

FINANCES

According to Moody's Fairhaven has a robust financial position, and a strong socioeconomic profile with a sizable tax base. It has a moderate pension liability with an affordable debt burden. The Town is typically conservative with its spending, but strongly supports investing in the upkeep of its historic buildings. Like most municipalities, Fairhaven is facing potential revenue constraints due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis as well as the overall pressure of increasing costs and infrastructure needs. The Town has made a very successful concerted effort in recent years to seek and apply for grants.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Fairhaven's current challenges include the implementation of necessary wastewater treatment plant upgrades which will be funded via the Sewer Enterprise Fund, implementing the recommendations of the Public Facilities Improvement Plan of which the first priority is a Public Safety Facility, enhancing collaboration and unifying Town staff as well as a desire for economic development that will allow the community to retain its rural charm and character.

The Town has benefited from federal stimulus funding programs and has the potential to benefit from additional grant funding in the near future. A critical facet of the Town Administrator position will be to work with department heads and grant consultants and to network with State and Federal officials to maximize the grant funding the town receives. The Town Administrator will also need to oversee management of these funds to ensure that they are spent in the most efficient manner and in the best interest of the taxpayer.

CURRENT PROJECTS

- Approximately \$40+ million for wastewater treatment plant upgrades to be funded through the Sewer Enterprise Fund via sewer user fees. This project is scheduled to begin in 2026.
- A \$1.4 million high school turf field project to be funded with surplus revenue and \$200,000 from the high school's trust fund.



QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Town seeks applicants who possess a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in public administration, government or a related field and five to seven years of municipal management experience. A Master's degree is preferred. Candidates with an equivalent combination of education, training, certification and related experience are encouraged to apply.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience. Fairhaven values diversity and is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds and from underrepresented groups. The anticipated salary is \$155K +/- depending on qualifications.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Please submit your cover letter and resume detailing your interest and qualifications to the Collins Center for Public Management recruitment email recruitment.umb@gmail.com. Please combine all documents into a single PDF file and include your **LAST NAME and FAIRHAVEN** in the subject line. Review of resumes begins September 23, 2021.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

- Implementation of the \$110 million Public Facilities Improvement Plan of which the first priority is a new public safety facility, expected cost of about \$50 million, which would require a Proposition 2 ½ override.
- Work with the committee to help determine best use of the former Rogers School building.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

To serve as the second permanent Town Administrator since this form of local government was enacted in 2014, Fairhaven is seeking a seasoned, collaborative leader with strong financial acumen, who has the ability to unify and make difficult decisions, has strategic vision, excellent communication skills, and experience with economic development and personnel management. The ideal candidate will be:

- A demonstrated and dynamic leader who is forward-thinking, fair-minded and transparent;
- An effective and experienced manager from an environment of similar complexity who has proven strong organizational and professional skills;
- A manager with exceptional financial acumen with a proven record of building balanced budgets that reflect needs while adhering to the Town's financial policies and respecting its limited resources;
- An experienced negotiator of contracts and having served as a Procurement Officer;
- An individual who has human resources, labor and employee relations, and collective bargaining experience;
- Experienced in planning, community development and economic development;
- Knowledgeable of municipal management best practices and ability to implement them;
- Experienced in guiding the development of a shared strategic vision for the community and whose words and actions provide clarity to those they supervise as well as all boards and commissions and the public;
- A leader who can work with state and federal officials closely to further the Town's goals and priorities;
- An individual who understands the value of protecting open space and historic structures;
- Someone who understands coastal resiliency issues and the importance of the blue economy; and
- A person with unquestionable ethics and integrity and committed to the standards for municipal management professionals specified by the International City Management Association (ICMA).