

Begin forwarded message:

From: Historical Commission <historicalcommission@fairhaven-ma.gov>

Date: July 13, 2025 at 6:48:32 PM EDT

To:

Subject: Historical Commission Resignation

Dear Selectboard & Town Officials,

It is with a heavy heart that I submit my resignation as both Chair and member of the Fairhaven Historical Commission. I have mostly enjoyed my time on the Commission, and believe I have been an asset to the Town. But there is only so much abuse a person can take, particularly when they have done nothing but donate their time and effort on behalf of others.

During my brief stint as Chair, we have accomplished the following:

1. Consistently opened the Old Stone Schoolhouse for public viewing, welcoming well over 600 visitors and proving there is consistent interest in our public sites.
2. Spearheaded a donation effort that saw the replacement of the Fort Phoenix flagpole, which will endure for generations to come, at no taxpayer expense.
3. Forged collegial relationships with the Veterans Services Department, Discover Fairhaven, and the Fairhaven Historical Society.
4. Brought transparency, accountability, and adherence to the laws of the State and the municipal codes of Fairhaven to the Historical Commission.
5. Secured the donation of the Nimrod cannon to Fairhaven in perpetuity. Historically speaking, at least, this is a priceless artifact.
6. Secured a CPC grant to renovate the exterior of the Fairhaven Academy Building, as well as bring the Academy restroom into ADA compliance.

7. The commission has begun the process of opening additional buildings to the public and tourists, which should serve to increase Fairhaven's attraction as a tourist destination.

8. The Historical Commission and the Old Stone Schoolhouse now have social media followings of over 1,000 people. These pages have been effective at driving interest and attendance at events, promoting the work of the town and the commission, and providing factual information at times when rumor and disinformation are circulating.

Please note, none of these things were occurring prior to my joining the commission. Not one of them. Whatever else may be said, we worked tirelessly for the people of Fairhaven.

I hope that in the future, the Selectboard will move more quickly to protect and defend volunteers and commission members from the hostile actions of a small but vocal group. While we all accept a level of scrutiny and invective when we put ourselves forward, the level of unjustified vitriol & abuse allowed in Fairhaven Town Government is truly breathtaking.

I will cooperate fully and proactively with the Selectboard and the Historical Commission to make the next transition as smooth as possible. I will surrender my keys, documents and any other materials belonging to the town or commission that are in my care. Please move immediately to suspend my access to the Historical Commission email account and social media accounts.

The \$750 worth of antiques and collectibles that I purchased personally to display at the Old Stone Schoolhouse I donate to the Town in perpetuity.

With very best regards,

Michael J. Kelly
Former Chair & Member, Fairhaven Historical Commission (2022 - 2025)
FHS Class of 1990
Rogers School Class of 1984
Publisher, Penguin Random House