

# SENATE . . . . No. 560

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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### REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE THE IMPROVEMENT OF FAIRHAVEN HARBOR.

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STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, April 15, 1947.

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.*

In accordance with the provisions of chapter 59 of the Resolves of 1946, the Special Commission appointed thereunder presents herewith its report upon its investigation relative to the improvement of the Fairhaven Harbor.

Chapter 59 of the Resolves of 1946 follows:

RESOLVE PROVIDING FOR AN INVESTIGATION BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS TO IMPROVE FAIRHAVEN HARBOR.

*Resolved*, That an unpaid special commission, to consist of two members of the senate to be designated by the president thereof, three members of the house of representatives to be designated by the speaker thereof, and the commissioner and associate commissioners of the department of public works, is hereby established to investigate the advisability and expediency of the improvement of the port facilities at Fairhaven harbor, and in connection therewith shall consider and study the provisions of current senate document numbered twenty. Said commission shall also cause preliminary studies to be made sufficient for reliable estimates as to the probable cost of such work and the probable revenue which might be received therefrom. Said commission may expend, with the approval of the governor and council, for expert, clerical and other services and expenses such sum, not exceeding three thousand dollars, as may be hereafter appropriated

therefor. Said commission shall report to the general court the results of its investigation and its recommendations, together with drafts of legislation necessary to give effect to the same, by filing the same with the clerk of the senate on or before the first Wednesday of December in the current year, and shall at the same time file a copy thereof with the budget commissioner.

The Commission was organized on November 7, 1946, and elected the following officers: Senator Willard A. Ormsbee, chairman; Representative F. Eben Brown, vice chairman; Representative G. Leo Bessette, clerk; Senator Edward C. Peirce; Representative William D. Fleming; Joseph F. Cairnes, Commissioner of Public Works; George G. Hyland and Ralph A. Palladino, Associate Commissioners.

Several meetings were held, and on December 4, 1946, the members of the General Court of this Commission, together with the chairman and Associate Commissioner of the Department of Public Works, made a thorough survey and investigation of the Fairhaven shores. That evening a public hearing was held in the town hall of the town of Fairhaven. This meeting was very well attended and consisted of the members of the board of selectmen, the board of assessors and the finance committee of the town of Fairhaven, representatives of civic and business organizations, interested citizens and others.

Every one spoke in favor of the intent of this resolve. There was no opposition.

A survey of the existing conditions along the Fairhaven shore was made by the Department of Public Works and is presented herewith, and shows a plan for the enlargement of the entrance channel between Crow Island and the Fairhaven shore, and the dredging of a basin extending from this entrance to the Fairhaven bridge to a depth of 15 feet at mean low water. (Plan on file with original report.)

It is believed that the channel and basin so dredged will provide a harbor of refuge with sufficient anchorage space to supply the present demand, and will form an important part of any further development of this area.

It is planned to build a bulkhead parallel to the shore line extending southerly from the Fairhaven bridge for a distance of 1,370 feet with an end bulkhead extending in an easterly direction 340 feet in length to the town property.

The material dredged from the approach channel can be placed behind this bulkhead and thus fill in to elevation 14 at mean low water. The Federal government, through the War Department, is making a study of the improvement of Fairhaven Harbor, and it is expected that the dredging and filling described herein will be done as part of the Federal contract.

An approximate estimate of the cost of the work may be stated as follows:

Dredging and filling about 300,000 cubic yards at 60 cents . . . . .	\$180,000
Bulkhead construction, 1,700 feet at \$70 per foot . . . . .	119,000
Sewer extension . . . . .	10,000
Land takings, assessed value of lands and buildings, \$63,000	
plus 25 per cent . . . . .	78,750
Engineering contingencies . . . . .	22,250

If Federal funds are secured for dredging and filling, the total cost for local interests will be, therefore, about \$230,000.

The bulkhead thus constructed may be used for mooring of boats if so desired. In the future, if docking facilities are desired along the bulkhead, a pile and timber wharf platform can be constructed at a cost of about \$100,000, providing 1,400 linear feet of docking space at a depth of 15 feet at mean low water. This area would be in a sheltered position, and it would seem to be an ideal location for tying up fishing boats, government boats and other similar commercial craft.

As the solid filling and bulkhead construction are wholly on private property, it is recommended that the town of Fairhaven acquire this property from time to time as desired between Middle Street and the proposed bulkhead and from Bridge Street to the property of Frank Taylor, an area of approximately five acres, which can be used for various municipal and public purposes.

Inasmuch as the Commission has been unable to ascertain from the Federal government the amount of Federal assistance that might be expected on Fairhaven Harbor improvement, the Commission hereby respectfully requests that the Commission be extended for further study and report on or before the second day of February, 1948.

SEN. WILLARD A. ORMSBEE,  
*Chairman.*

REP. F. EBEN BROWN,  
*Vice Chairman.*

REP. G. LEO BESSETTE,  
*Clerk.*

SEN. EDWARD C. PEIRCE,  
SEN. WILLIAM D. FLEMING,  
WILLIAM H. BURACKER,  
*Commissioner of Public Works.*

GEORGE G. HYLAND,  
*Associate Commissioner.*

RALPH A. PALLADINO,  
*Associate Commissioner.*