

## **Regular Meeting – August 18, 2015**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Wade Sealey, J.J. McCree, Carol Leak-McKenzie, Terry Evans and Monte McCallum. Commissioner Amelia McLean was out of town and participated by telephone. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, and Town Clerk Jenny Larson. Others in attendance included Kelly Johnson, Jane McMillan, Dixon Ivey, Sarah Willets, and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Evans asked to add Economic Development Committee under New Business and Closed Session to discuss finances to the agenda. Mayor Townsend preferred not to go into closed session without the attorney present and the majority of the board agreed. Acting Town Manager Linda Vause requested that Resolution 15-09, Taylor offer for Happy Hill and Industrial Drive lot, be added under New Business as Item C. Commissioner Sealey made a motion to approve the agenda as amended to include Resolution 15-09 as Item C and Economic Development Committee as Item D under New Business. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

#### **Jane McMillan – Guardian Ad Litem advocacy program**

Ms. Jane McMillan was present to solicit volunteers for the Robeson County Guardian Ad Litem advocacy program for children. They currently have 45 volunteers that serve over 300 kids. There are currently 192 unassigned cases. Anyone wishing to be a volunteer must undergo 30 hours of training, which is mostly online. The group is holding a luggage drive so children will not have to leave home with all their belongings in a plastic bag. They are also planning a toy drive for Christmas.

### **Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Sealey and seconded by Commissioner Evans, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, June 16, 2015 and Special Budget Adoption Meeting, June 30, 2015.

**Unfinished Business**

Fairmont Farmers Festival update – Kelly Johnson

Mr. Kelly Johnson gave an update on the Fairmont Farmers Festival which will be held on Saturday, October 17, 2015. Following the parade, all crafts and entertainment will be located in the Fairmont Community Park with food vendors located near Town Hall. Mr. Johnson said festival t-shirts will be ready soon. Anyone interested in volunteering or giving input on the festival was invited to the next meeting, which will be Tuesday, August 25 at 6:00 p.m. in the Courtroom.

Warehouse removal report

Mrs. Vause reported that Public Works Director and Code Enforcement Officer Ronnie Seals and Town Clerk Jenny Larson are working with Town Attorney Rob Price. They are in the process of preparing a complaint and notice of hearing on an unsafe abandoned structure to be delivered to the Hi-Dollar Warehouse owner later this week. After meeting with the property owner, Mr. Seals will give an order to remedy the property so it is brought up to code.

**New Business**

Resolution 15-07 – Voluntary annexation petition, 1809 Marion Stage Road

Mrs. Vause informed the board that Mr. Tony Ray Britt would like to voluntarily annex his property located at 1809 Marion Stage Road. Mrs. Vause stated that everyone thought the property was already in the city limits but discovered it was not during the last municipal election when the tenants were not allowed to vote. Commissioner McCree made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-07 – Directing the Clerk to investigate a petition received under G.S. 160A-31, Voluntary annexation of 1809 Marion Stage Road. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Resolution 15-08 – Fairmont Arts offer for 311 South Main Street

Mrs. Vause has received an offer from Mr. Legusta Floyd, of Fairmont Arts and Culture Center, LLC in the amount of \$100 for 311 South Main Street, Parcel #300801009. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-08 – Authorizing the Advertisement of an offer to purchase certain property, 311 South Main Street. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Resolution 15-09 – Taylor offer for Happy Hill and Industrial Drive lot

Mrs. Vause has received an offer from Mr. Dwight Taylor, of T & H & H Trucking, LLC in the amount of \$1,000 for the overgrown Happy Hill and Industrial Drive lot, Parcel #050601036. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-09 – Authorizing the Advertisement of an offer to purchase certain property, Happy Hill and Industrial Drive lot. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Economic Development Committee

Commissioner Evans was ready to present his recommendation for the Economic Development Committee that was discussed back in June. Mayor Townsend explained that he did not ask for the committee to be on this month's agenda because of an Economic Development meeting to be hosted by Greg Cummings on Thursday. The town also has a Main Street committee. Commissioner McCallum was unaware that the town had a Main Street committee. Commissioner McCallum and Mayor Townsend had an intense discussion about the proposed Economic Development Committee and the existing Main Street program. Commissioner Sealey made a motion to table the Economic Development Committee to the September meeting. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion.

Manager's Input

Mrs. Vause presented the following monthly financial summary to the board:

July has not been as "cash strapped" as previous Julys. The General Fund had a cash balance of \$10,908.40 as of July 31, 2014. The balance as of July 31, 2015 was \$126,068.49. I did split our property and liability insurance into two payments to help with the cash flow. Our cash balance in the General Fund would have been in excess of \$100,000.00 without the split. The Water/Sewer Fund had a cash balance of \$74,064.65. The cash balance for July 2014 was \$40,870.14. The CDBG payback was made in July. We did not have to wait until August.

I stress to you that the improved cash flow does not mean we have lots of money to spend. It is very important that we increase our fund balances in the General Fund and in the Water/Sewer Fund. We must be prepared in the event of a natural disaster such as a hurricane or equipment failures.

We are continuing to save money with Interim Police Chief Kimothy Monroe vs a full time chief. We are also saving money with me acting as town manager. Mr. Monroe has indicated his willingness to remain interim chief. However, I hope we can begin the search for a new manager sometime soon.

Mrs. Vause addressed the rumor going around that she makes \$125,000 a year and the town clerk makes \$54,000. She explained those figures are the total budgets for each department and that her salary is \$55,166 annually and the clerk's is \$39,411.

**Announcements**

Saturday, August 22 - American Legion Post 548 Membership Drive, 1:00 p.m., Fire Hall. All Veterans invited.

Saturday, August 22 – Games Night at The Stage, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Admission is free.

Monday, August 24 - First Day of School.

Tuesday, August 25 - Movie Night at The Stage “Chief”, 6:00 p.m.

Friday, September 4 – Fairmont High School Football vs. Ashley, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 5 - Senior Bingo, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., Fire Hall.

Monday, September 7 - Labor Day, Town offices and schools closed.

Tuesday, September 15 - NCDMV Mobile Driver’s License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall Parking Lot.

Tuesday, September 15 - Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – September 15, 2015**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Wade Sealey, J.J. McCree, Carol Leak-McKenzie, Terry Evans and Monte McCallum. Commissioner Amelia McLean was out of town and participated by telephone. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals and Officer Cody Blount. Others in attendance included Sarah Willets, Kelly Johnson, Robert Weagraff and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Sealey made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

#### **Boy Scout Troop #305 – Robert Weagraff**

Mr. Robert Weagraff wanted to welcome Fairmont Boy Scout Troop #305 to the Lumber River Boys Scouts of America District. The Fairmont American Legion post is sponsoring the pack, which meets every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Fire Hall until they find a permanent meeting place.

Mayor Townsend asked to amend the agenda to add Fire Hall use for Boy Scouts as Item E under New Business. Commissioner Evans made the motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Sealey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner McLean it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, August 18, 2015.
- b. Reappoint Steve Floyd to Fairmont ABC Board.

**Unfinished Business**

Fairmont Farmers Festival update – Kelly Johnson

Mr. Kelly Johnson gave an update on the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Fairmont Farmers Festival, which is Saturday, October 17, 2015. Festival t-shirts are available in short sleeve for \$10 and long sleeve for \$15 at Town Hall, First Bank, Angie’s Touch of Class, Fairmont Golf Club and The Hardware. The Fairmont Chamber of Commerce will sponsor a golf tournament on Friday, October 16 followed by a Grand Marshal dinner at 5:30 p.m. On Saturday, there will be wrestling, kids area, crafts, food and music in the Fairmont Community Park following the parade at 10:00 a.m. There will be a dance that evening by The Magnificents Band.

Resolution 15-10 – Fixing date of public hearing on question of annexation pursuant to G.S. 160A-31, Britt property on Marion Stage Road.

Mrs. Vause informed the board that Mr. Tony Ray Britt would like to voluntarily annex his property located at 1809 Marion Stage Road. Mrs. Vause stated that Town Clerk Jenny Larson had certified the annexation petition and the next step is to set a public hearing for the next board meeting on October 20, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-10 – Fixing date of public hearing on question of annexation pursuant to G.S. 160A-31, Britt property on Marion Stage Road. Commissioner Sealey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Economic Development Committee guidelines and appointments.

Mayor Townsend asked the board to adopt the Economic Development Committee guidelines and name their appointments. Town Attorney asked the board to replace “in consecutive years” with “annually” in the paragraph labeled “Officers.” Commissioner McCree asked for the sentence “The FEDC cannot make binding commitments without board and attorney approval” under the first paragraph labeled “Created.” Commissioner McCallum asked if the FEDC would have a budget for travel, advertising, training, etc. Mayor Townsend replied that the FEDC does not have a budget and would have to come to the town board when they need money. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Economic Development Committee guidelines as amended. Commissioner Leak-McKenzie seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The board made the following appointments to the Fairmont Economic Development Committee:

Mayor Townsend appointee: Tony Mackey (given after meeting at a later date)

Commissioner McLean appointee: Winona Gause

Commissioner McCree appointee: Cindy Strickland (given after meeting at a later date)

Commissioner Evans appointee: Vanessa Abernathy

Commissioner Leak-McKenzie appointee: Nedward Gaddy

Commissioner McCallum appointee: Melvin Stephens

Commissioner Sealey appointee: Rod Heasley

Commissioner Sealey suggested Mayor Townsend set the first meeting date and head up the first meeting until the committee chooses a chair. Acting Town Manager Linda Vause suggested that the appointees choose their term or either 2 or 3 years by drawing numbers. Commissioner Evans made a motion that the FEDC members draw numbers to determine whether their term is 2 years or 3 years at the first meeting. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **New Business**

#### **Ordinance 15-161 – Adopting Project Budget Ordinance for Sewer System Rehabilitation Phase 2 – CDBG Infrastructure.**

Mrs. Vause asked the board to adopt the Project Budget Ordinance for Sewer System Rehabilitation Phase 2 – CDBG Infrastructure in the amount of \$1,765,000. Commissioner McCree made a motion to adopt Ordinance 15-161 – Adopting Project Budget Ordinance for Sewer System Rehabilitation Phase 2 – CDBG Infrastructure. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

#### **Abandoned and Dilapidated properties discussion.**

Commissioner McCallum asked for the abandoned and dilapidated properties discussion. He stated the town has a problem with abandoned and dilapidated residential and commercial buildings. There are 32 dilapidated building in just 2 sections of town. He would like to contract property owners about either relinquishing the property to the town or work on cleaning it up because doing nothing is only decreasing other people's property values. Commissioner McCallum would like to work with the county because some of the downtown buildings have issues like asbestos. He added that Adrian Lowery with the LRCOG would be willing to help with the code enforcement. Town Attorney Rob Price stated that dealing with dilapidated properties can be very a complicated situation. He like the idea of working with the LRCOG and said that haw worked well for Rowland. Mayor Townsend suggested the board make a motion to contact Adrian Lowery with the LRCOG and have him assess our problems and what steps to take to address them. Commissioner Sealey made a motion to contact Adrian Lowery with the LRCOG and have him assess our abandoned and dilapidated properties and what steps the town needs to take to address them. Commissioner Leak-McKenzie seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Park fence repair discussion.

Mrs. Vause asked the board for direction for the Community Park fence repair:

As many of you are aware, the fence around the Fairmont Community Park is in need of repair. Ronnie Seals and I have contacted about three different fence companies in the past two years trying to get estimates to do these repairs. We had companies look at the fence and never get back with us on pricing; even after leaving multiple messages. Mr. Seals obtained the name of Evers Fencing & Electric Gates in Bladenboro that does this type work. I have attached their estimate of approximately \$5,500.00 to complete the work.

The funds needed were not included in our current year budget in the Parks and Recreation Department. However, the longer this is put off the more it will cost. I am asking if you would like this repair work to be done and if so what department(s) budget you would reduce to cover this expense. Remember, this is a General Fund item and cannot come from Water/Sewer Funds.

Please let me know what direction you would like me to take.

Commissioner McCree made a motion to approve the park fence repair in the amount of \$5,500 to come from the Code Enforcement/Nuisance Abatement funds. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Town Manager search discussion.

Commissioner Evans asked for the Town Manager search discussion. Commissioner Evans heard that a qualified candidate, familiar with the town, was interested in the Town Manager position. Commissioner McCallum had heard that as well and feels the town should take advantage of this opportunity. Commissioner Sealey suggested tabling the issue and let the new board handle it after the election. Commissioner McCree was concerned about the budget since the town only appropriated a town manager salary for half a year and pointed out the board just had to find funds for repairing the park fence. Commissioner Evans made a motion to hire the person whose application is on file and discuss offering them a contract. Town Clerk Jenny Larson interjected that the town should advertise the position first. Town Attorney Price replied the town was not required to hold a search process and could hire a manager on the spot. Mrs. Larson suggested the board go into closed session to discuss personnel since it was apparent that not all of the commissioners were aware that a resume had been submitted. Commissioner McCallum made a new motion to clarify Commissioner Evans original motion that the board review and consider the application/resume on file. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion but a vote was not taken. Mr. Price said it would now be appropriate for the board to go into closed session. Commissioner McCree stated that Commissioner McLean should not participate because she was calling in on a cell phone that could possibly be intercepted. Commissioner McLean was okay with that suggestion and excused herself.

**Closed Session – Personnel G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6).**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into closed session at 7:00 p.m. to prevent the disclosure of information that is deemed privileged or confidential as determined under General Statute 143-318.10(e) and to discuss personnel as permitted under General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). Commissioner Leak-McKenzie seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Townsend, Commissioners Sealey, Leak-McKenzie, McCree, McCallum, and Evans along with Jenny Larson and Rob Price were in attendance during closed session.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of closed session at 7:26 p.m. Commissioner Leak-McKenzie seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mayor Townsend announced that no action was taken in closed session.

**Fire Hall use for Boys Scouts**

Commissioner McCree made a motion to allow the Boy Scouts to meet in the Fire Hall every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Sealey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Mayor Input**

Mayor Townsend announced that the RCMA meeting will be in Maxton on September 22 at 7:00 p.m. in the Maxton Resource Center.

Mayor Townsend also announced that Walgreens is hosting a flu clinic on September 30 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall.

**Commissioner Input**

Commissioner Leak-McKenzie announced the RCABP is hosting a Breast Cancer Survivor Banquet on Friday, October 9 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Pinecrest Country Club in Lumberton.

Commissioner McCallum would like to see the town host a job fair in October.

**Manager's Input**

Mrs. Vause presented the following monthly financial summary to the board:

Our August financial picture has been much the same as July. Revenues in the General Fund are below theoretical percentage. This is because we will not receive our first “large” current year tax payment from Robeson County until later in September. Revenues in the Water/Sewer Fund are very close to budget. Overall, the expenses are within budget for the General Fund and the Water/Sewer Fund. The slight overage is due to three payrolls in August versus the normal two. It is also because the workers’ compensation premium payment has been made for six months. These things normally balance out during the course of the year.

## Page 6 – Regular Meeting, September 15, 2015

As I stated last month, our improved cash flow does not indicate excess funds to spend. Public Works continues to do an amazing job with the equipment they have to work with. This encompasses both the General Fund and the Water/Sewer Fund. The majority of their expenses are for maintenance and repair of equipment. I hope we can soon work on financing several pieces of new equipment.

The Police Department has been awarded a grant through the Bureau of Justice Assistance for the purchase of four armored vests. This is a 50% reimbursement grant. The department is currently working on other grant applications for equipment that do not require a match. The Police Department purchased a 2009 Dodge Charger from the NC Department of Public Safety. The purchase price was \$7,300.00. This vehicle was thoroughly inspected by the department prior to purchase.

### **Department Head Input**

There was no Department Head Input this month.

### **Announcements**

Friday, September 18 – Fairmont High School Football vs. South Brunswick, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, September 25 – Fairmont High School Football vs. South Robeson, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 3 – Senior Bingo, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., Fire Hall.

Friday, October 9 – Fairmont High School Football vs. West Columbus, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 10 - Fairmont Farmers Festival Pageant, E.R. Gause Auditorium, 2:00 p.m., Rosenwald Elementary School.

Tuesday, October 13 - NCDMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall Parking Lot.

Friday, October 16 - Fairmont Chamber of Commerce Festival Golf Tournament, 12:00 noon, Fairmont Golf Club.

Friday, October 16 – Fairmont High School Football vs. South Columbus, 7:30 p.m., Homecoming.

Saturday, October 17 – 29<sup>th</sup> annual Fairmont Farmers Festival.

Tuesday, October 20 - Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Friday, October 23 - Teacher workday, no school.

Friday, November 6 – Fairmont High School Football vs. St. Pauls, 7:30 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – October 20, 2015**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Wade Sealey, J.J. McCree, Amelia McLean, Terry Evans and Monte McCallum. Commissioner Carol Leak-McKenzie was absent. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Jim Perry, Sarah Willets, Kelly Johnson, the 2015-2016 Fairmont Farmers Festival Queens, their parents and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Mayor's Presentations**

#### **Introduction of the 2015-2016 Fairmont Farmers Festival Queens**

Mayor Townsend introduced the 2015-2016 Fairmont Farmers Festival Queens. They are Miss Taylor Locklear, Teen Miss Chloe Hunt, Junior Miss Natalee Britt, Tiny Miss Ella Floyd, Little Miss Ava Silcox, Wee Miss Charley Lowery, Royal Ambassador Addyson Hunt, Mini Ambassador KarLeigh Freeman and Ambassador Margot Hunt.

#### **Fairmont Farmers Festival update – Kelly Johnson**

Chairman Kelly Johnson reported that the 2015 Fairmont Farmers Festival was a huge success and that the majority of visitors and vendors enjoyed everything being located in the park. He agreed to be the festival chairman again next year.

Mr. Johnson also informed the board that Robeson County is starting a First Tee golf program for youth.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Evans asked to remove item B “Town Manager decision and contract” from old business. Town Attorney Rob Price stated item C “Closed Session – Personnel” could also be removed. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Sealey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing – Voluntary Annexation of Britt Property on Marion Stage Road**

Commissioner Sealey made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:10 p.m. to discuss the voluntary annexation of the Britt property located on Marion Stage Road.

Town Manager Linda Vause stated this was the last step the board had to take to voluntarily annex the Britt property on Marion Stage Road. If approved, the annexation would be effective immediately, giving the residents a chance to vote in next month's municipal election. No one spoke on the proposed annexation. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 15-162 – Extend the Corporate Limits of the Town of Fairmont, North Carolina, Britt Property on Marion Stage Road. Commissioner Sealey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Commissioner McCree made a motion to come out of public hearing at 6:12 p.m.

**Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

There was no public comment this month.

**Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Sealey and seconded by Commissioner McLean it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, September 15, 2015.

**New Business**

Resolution 15-11 – Approving Administrative Plans and Polices, 2014 CDBG Infrastructure Program, CDBG No. 14-I-2657.

Acting Town Manager Linda Vause asked the board to adopt Resolution 15-11 – Approving Administrative Plans and Polices, 2014 CDBG Infrastructure Program, CDBG No. 14-I-2657. These are the same plans the board adopting when applying for the grant with the exception of the name being changed from North Carolina Department of Commerce to NCDENR. Commissioner McCree made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-11 – Approving Administrative Plans and Polices, 2014 CDBG Infrastructure Program, CDBG No. 14-I-2657. Commissioner Sealey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the resolution and polices are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Request by Mary Lynn Jenkins to give parking spaces on Thompson Street to the town.

Mrs. Vause announced that Ms. Mary Lynn Jenkins would like to donate the parking spaces on Thompson Street, next to the old Time Messenger building, to the town free and clear. Town Attorney Rob Price was concerned that the wording in her letter was not clear whether she was giving the town the lot or just the parking spaces. Commissioner Evans made a motion to table the acceptance of the Jenkins property on Thompson Street until the November meeting in order to get clarification. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Unfinished Business**

Ask LRCOG to assist with Town Manager Search (requested by Commissioner McLean)

Commissioner McLean suggested the LRCOG assist the town with the town manager search. She realizes that Mrs. Vause has been under a lot of stress and is having some health problems and needs relief from the duties of being town manager. Commissioner Sealey agreed that the LRCOG should handle the town manager search process but feels the newly elected board should make the hiring decision since they will be the ones working with the new manager. Commissioner Evans would like the LRCOG to complete the search process within 30 days. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to ask the LRCOG help the town with the town manager search with the goal of hiring someone in 30 days. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Jim Perry, with the LRCOG, arrived late to the meeting at 6:50 p.m. He stated that the LRCOG would be happy to help the town with their town manager search process and would handle everything from the advertisement, to the review and selection of candidates for interviews. Mr. Perry said the process could be done in as little as 30 to 45 days. He will draw up a formal proposal for the board to adopt at a special meeting.

Ordinance 15-162 – Extend the Corporate Limits of the Town of Fairmont, North Carolina, Britt Property on Marion Stage Road.

Ordinance 15-162 was adopted during the public hearing.

Property Bids on 311 South Main Street

Mr. Terrance Hunt was the high bidder for 311 South Main Street in the upset bid process with Mr. Legusta Floyd. Mr. Floyd made the original bid of \$100 and Mr. Hunt outbid him at \$200. Mr. Floyd then outbid Mr. Hunt with an offer of \$490. Mr. Hunt counteroffered with \$515 and Mr. Floyd decided to let Mr. Hunt have the building. All of this was properly advertised in the Robeson Journal four times at \$65 each for a total cost to the town of \$260. Mr. Hunt is no longer interested in the building and would like to withdraw his offer.

Town Attorney Robert Price stated there is no clear guidance on what happens when someone attempts to withdraw a high bid in an upset bid process. He suggested keeping Mr. Hunt's deposit and accepting the Mr. Floyd's high bid of \$490. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to accept Mr. Hunt's bid withdrawal, based on a written withdrawal, keeping his bid deposit and to accept Mr. Floyd's offer of \$490 for 311 South Main Street. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Mayor Input**

Mayor Townsend announced that the RCMA meeting will be in Fairmont on October 29 at 7:00 p.m. in the Fairmont South Robeson Heritage Center. Lt. Harold Jackson of the Lumberton Police Department will be the guest speaker and the topic will be gang violence in Robeson County.

Mayor Townsend invited everyone to consider volunteering with the Guardian Ad Litem program. They currently have 300 cases and only 40 volunteers.

### **Commissioner Input**

Commissioners Sealey, McCallum and McLean thanked everyone for the great job they did on the Fairmont Farmers Festival.

Commissioner Evans suggested having a day for PGA golfer and Fairmont native William McGirt.

### **Manager's Input**

Mrs. Vause presented the following monthly financial summary to the board:

We received our first tax collection payment from the Robeson County Tax Department for 2015 taxes. Current year taxes are now at 46% of the budgeted amount. The first half of our Powell Bill Allocation was received in September. As you can see from the attached Budget vs. Actual Report, most of the departments are on target for their budgets. Tax Department is at 46% but this is due to most of the county tax collection fee being collected in August and September. It should level out in October.

The town staff, especially Jenny Larson and Ronnie Seals, have been very busy preparing for the Farmers' Festival. This is one of those times that we can really feel the staff reductions in public works and administration. Everyone is pitching in to get the job done!

I will be out of the office from October 22<sup>nd</sup> thru October 28<sup>th</sup>. Jenny Larson can handle most situations that might arise. I will also be available by cell phone; but I may not be able to return calls as quickly as I like.

Mrs. Vause added that the town's audit was approved by the state and will be presented to the board in November. The town's fund balance increased from 4.2% to 9.9%.

**Department Head Input**

Public Works – Ronnie Seals

Public Works Director Ronnie Seals announced that the sewer lift station on Marion Stage Road had gone down and they are working to solve the problem.

**Announcements**

Friday, October 23 - Teacher workday, no school.

Saturday, October 24 - Candidate Forum, 4:00 p.m. E.R. Gause Auditorium, Rosenwald Elementary School.

Saturday, October 31 - Halloween Trick or Treat hours, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Mayor Townsend will be handing out candy on the front porch of Town Hall. Dr. Electrode will be handing out candy at the Border Belt Museum from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 3 - Election Day, Fire Hall, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Friday, November 6 – Fairmont High School Football vs. St. Pauls, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, November 7 - Bethesda United Methodist Church Annual Bazaar & BBQ Plate Sale, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Plates are \$7.00 and will be sold starting at 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, November 10 - NCDMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall Parking Lot.

Wednesday, November 11 – Town offices and schools closed in observance of Veterans Day.

Saturday, November 14 - Trinity United Methodist Church Food Fair, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 17 – Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting – October 29, 2015**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Tuesday, October 29, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Carol Leak-McKenzie, Terry Evans and Monte McCallum. Commissioners J.J. McCree, Amelia McLean and Wade Sealey were absent. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals and Town Clerk Jenny Larson. LRCOG Director Jan Maynor was also present.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Discuss and approve the LRCOG's proposal for assisting with the Town Manager Search process**

Mrs. Jan Maynor, Director of the LRCOG, presented a proposal for assisting the town with the town manager search process. The cost of the search is estimated to be approximately \$3,000 and can be split over two fiscal years. The scope of work includes development of process timeline, advertisement for the position, suitable questions for the initial interview sessions, assistance with review of applications/resumes, scheduling of candidate interviews and collection of additional candidate information, facilitation of the interviews, follow up interview sessions, scheduling and facilitation of second interviews, assist town staff in any correspondence throughout the process and assistance with any second round of interviews.

Commissioner Evans if the town could hire a manager within 30 days. Mrs. Maynor said it would be difficult to do a genuine search within 30 days due to the time constraints of advertising, receiving and reviewing applications and scheduling interviews. Commissioner McCallum would like a 30-45 day deadline so that a new manager could be hired by the end of December and start in January and to only accept the first 5 applications. Commissioner Leak-McKenzie said limiting the number of applications accepted is not a good idea. Commissioner Evans pointed out that the town used the LRCOG for help in 2011 and ended up hiring Mrs. Vause instead. Acting Town Manager Linda Vause reminded the board that she was given an additional \$5 hour to be both town manager and finance officer because the town did not have money in the budget at that time to hire a town manager.

Commissioner Leak-McKenzie made a motion to use the LRCOG for the town manager search process. Her motion died for lack of a second. Commissioner Evans made a motion to go with the first applicant who has already applied for the position. His motion died for a lack of a second. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to use the LRCOG for the town manager search process with a timeline of hiring a manager by January 1, 2016. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mrs. Maynor asked for some suggestions to put into the advertisement. Commissioner McCallum stated the salary would be \$52,000 a year and suggested five years of experience. Mrs. Maynor recommended a minimum of a bachelor's degree but preferably a master's degree in public administration. Commissioner Evans proposed using a similar advertisement to the one used in 2011.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – November 17, 2015**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Amelia McLean, Terry Evans and Monte McCallum. Commissioner Wade Sealey was home sick and participated by telephone. Commissioner Carol Leak-McKenzie was absent. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included John Masters, Sarah Willets, Kelly Johnson, Caroline Lennon, Derrick Eury and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Mayor's Presentations**

#### **Introduction of the Fairmont High School Homecoming King and Queen and Lumberton High School Homecoming Queen**

Mayor Townsend introduced the 2015 Fairmont High School Homecoming King Derrick Eury and the 2015 Lumberton High School Homecoming Queen and Fairmont native Caroline Lennon.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

#### **Ned Gaddy**

Mr. Ned Gaddy thanked the board for appointing him to the Fairmont Economic Development Committee. He hopes everyone can come together and work for the betterment of Fairmont.

#### **Sam Johnson**

Mr. Sam Johnson invited everyone to the annual Fairmont Rotary Club Auction and BBQ plate sale on Tuesday, November 24 from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Heritage Center. The plates are \$8.00 with \$5.00 being a credit for the auction.

Charles Kemp

Commissioner-elect Charles Kemp complimented Acting Town Manager and Finance Officer Linda Vause for her service to the town. Mr. Kemp asked the board to consider giving him and Commissioner-elect Cassandra Gaddy an opportunity to participate in the town manager selection process.

Musheerah Ali

Ms. Musheerah Ali, Vice President of the Sigma Iota Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, asked the town to consider purchasing a full page ad in their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary book at a cost of \$100. It was the consensus of the board to approve the purchase of an ad for the sorority's anniversary since they have done so much for the community.

Kelly Johnson

Mr. Kelly Johnson invited the board to attend the Fairmont Chamber of Commerce Christmas party on Monday, December 7 at 6:00 p.m. at the Fairmont Golf Course. The party is free for members and is \$50 a couple for non-members, which includes membership dues for 2016.

**Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner McCree it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, October 20, 2015 and Special Meeting, October 29, 2015.
- b. Resolution 15-13 – Certifying sale of 311 South Main Street.

A signed copy of the resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

**Unfinished Business**

Request by Mary Lynn Jenkins to give parking spaces on Thompson Street to the town.

Mrs. Vause announced that Ms. Mary Lynn Jenkins would like to donate the lot and parking spaces on Thompson Street, next to the old Time Messenger building, to the town free and clear. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to accept the Jenkins property on Thompson Street. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**New Business**

2014-2015 Audit Report presented by S. Preston Douglas & Associates.

Mr. John Masters, of S. Preston Douglas & Associates, presented the 2014-2015 Audit report. Mr. Masters commended the town's finance department for a job well done. There were no findings or violations in this year's audit. The town's unassigned fund balance is 12.63%, a big increase over last year's 4.24%. The state prefers 8% or higher. The town's tax collection rate is 91%. Mr. Masters stated the state revenues are up, the town's garbage, water and sewer revenue are static and payroll costs are down substantially. The town's structured debt has also decreased. Commissioner McLean made a motion to approve the 2014-2015 audit report. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Resolution 15-12 – Authorizing the Sale of Certain Personal Property by Sealed Bid Auction - 1968 Jeep.

Acting Town Manager Linda Vause stated the town would like to declare a 1968 Jeep as surplus and sell it by sealed bid. The vehicle was given to the town by the NC Department of Public Safety and has not been used in years. Commissioner Sealey made a motion to adopt Resolution 15-12 - Authorizing the Sale of Certain Personal Property by Sealed Bid Auction. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Complaints about burned down house on Pine Street. (Requested by Commissioner McCree).

Commissioner McCree has received several complaints about the burned out house at 201 Pine Street. He is concerned about it being a safety hazard to children since it is a school bus stop, with reports of rats and snakes coming out of the property. The property burned two years ago and is in a high volume traffic area close to the housing authority and Dollar General. Town Attorney Rob Price suggested town staff follow the ordinance procedures for declaring the property a nuisance, by giving notice to the property owner and scheduling a hearing. The town can tear down the property and add the cost as a tax lien.

Marion Stage Road Lift Station Rehab.

Public Works Director Ronnie Seals informed the board that the Marion Stage Road Lift Station needs to be rehabbed. The grinder pumps are worn out due to all kinds of debris. The cost of these repairs is estimated at \$29,750.00 and can be paid in payments. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the rehab of the Marion Stage Road Lift Station at an estimated cost of \$29,750.00 using the payments option. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Commissioner Input**

Commissioner Evans would like to work on a day to honor PGA golfer William McGirt. Commissioner Sealey said it is a very good idea and he would mention it to him. Mr. McGirt's wife just had a baby so he is taking time off from golf to spend time with his family.

Commissioner McCallum thanked the citizens for attending the meeting and hopes to start a public forum soon.

Commissioner McLean was also glad to see citizens at the meeting and was happy that the town has been able to save money and get a good financial report.

### **Manager's Input**

Mrs. Vause presented the following monthly financial summary to the board:

October was a financially stable month. All funds are at or near the theoretical budgeted amount with the exception of the tax department. As I explained last year, most of the tax collection expense occurs in September. This is true again this year with the expense amount at 57 % of the budget. However, current year tax collection is also at 57% of the budgeted amount.

I am extremely pleased by the attached letter from the Local Government Commission. Our unappropriated fund balance almost tripled. As the letter states, we have to work hard to continue to increase the fund balance. The Town must prepare for unforeseen emergencies, such as repair of leaky roofs. We have several of those in town buildings. This year's unit letter does not require the signature of all of the board members. However, I would appreciate your suggestions on increasing our fund balance. You will receive a copy of our reply.

We will have our annual Thanksgiving luncheon for the staff on Wednesday, November 25, 2015 at 12:00 Noon in the fire hall. This is a simple lunch of pizza and soft drinks. Town offices will close for the luncheon and remain closed until Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. Please join us if you can!

### **Announcements**

Tuesday, November 17 – Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Saturday, November 21 - Lumberton Christmas parade, 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, November 21 - Photos with Santa, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Borderbelt Museum. Discount coupons are available from any Farmers Festival Queen or Angie Lovin. Photos will be taken by JoAnn Lewis.

Wednesday, November 25 - Schools closed, teacher workday.

Thursday, November 26 - Friday, November 27 - Town offices and schools closed in observance of Thanksgiving.

Page 5 – Regular meeting, November 17, 2015

Saturday, November 28 - Breakfast with Santa, sponsored by the HANDS Junior Civitan Club, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., Cukabury Farms. Tickets are \$10.00 for 1 adult and 1 child. Each child after that is an additional \$2.00 each. If another adult comes that is an additional \$5.00.

Friday, December 4 - Holiday on Main Twilight Christmas Parade at 6:00 p.m., downtown Fairmont followed by tree lighting ceremony in the community park.

Friday, December 4 - Fairmont High School Varsity Basketball vs. Lumberton, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 5 - Marietta Christmas Parade, 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, December 9 - Fairmont High School Varsity Basketball vs. West Bladen, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 5 - Lake View Christmas Parade, 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 12 – Guinness World Record Truck Pull, 12:00 noon, Highway 41 South to South Robeson Rescue Unit.

Monday, December 14 - Fairmont High School Varsity Basketball vs. West Columbus, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 15 - North Carolina DMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall parking lot.

Tuesday, December 15 - Regular Town Board meeting and swearing in of new commissioners, 6:00 p.m., Fairmont South Robeson Heritage Center.

Monday, December 21, 2015 to January 1, 2015 - Schools closed for Christmas break.

Wednesday, December 23 - Town offices closed at noon for annual Employee Christmas luncheon.

Thursday, December 24 to Monday, December 28 - Town offices closed in observance of Christmas.

Friday, January 1, 2015 - Town office closed in observance of New Year's Day.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## Special Meeting – December 3, 2015

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Thursday, December 3, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Wade Sealey, Carol Leak-McKenzie, J.J. McCree, Amelia McLean, Terry Evans and Monte McCallum. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Attorney Rob Price, and Town Clerk Jenny Larson.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order at 12:05 and gave the invocation.

Mayor Townsend stated the purpose of the meeting is to review the applications for the Town Manager position and decide which candidates to interview.

### **Closed Session – Personnel G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6).**

Commissioner Sealey made a motion to go into closed session at 12:05 p.m. to prevent the disclosure of information that is deemed privileged or confidential as determined under General Statute 143-318.10(e) and to personnel as permitted under General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Townsend, Commissioners Sealey, Leak-McKenzie, McCree, McCallum, McLean and Evans along with Jenny Larson and Rob Price were in attendance during closed session.

Commissioner Sealey made a motion to come out of closed session at 12:25 p.m. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mayor Townsend announced that the board reviewed the applications for the Town Manager position.

Commissioner Sealey made a motion to interview Candidates 1, 4, and 5. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 3 as follows:

For:	Commissioners McCree, Leak-McKenzie, Sealey and Mayor Townsend
Against:	Commissioners Evans, McCallum and McLean

The board briefly discussed scheduling dates for the interviews, which will be conducted with assistance from the LRCOG. Commissioner McLean would like to hold them as soon as possible since she will be having surgery next week and will be out for at least two months. Commissioners Sealey and Leak-McKenzie felt it would be more appropriate for the newly elected board members to participate in the interviews. Mayor Townsend assured Commissioner McLean that she would be able to participate by telephone. It was the consensus to wait until after the December 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting to schedule interviews.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – December 15, 2015**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Carol Leak-McKenzie, J.J. McCree, Wade Sealey, Terry Evans, Monte McCallum, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Commissioner Amelia McLean was absent due to illness but participated by telephone. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Attorney Robert Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, and Police Chief Kim Monroe. Others in attendance included Superior Court Judge Frank Floyd and around 40 citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Sealey made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Leak-McKenzie and seconded by Commissioner McCree it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda item:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, November 17, 2015 and Special Meeting, December 3, 2015

### **Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business this month.

### **Organizational Meeting**

#### **Comments from outgoing Commissioners Carol Leak-McKenzie and Wade Sealey**

Commissioner Leak-McKenzie thanked the citizens for giving her a chance to give back to the community. She really enjoyed her two terms as commissioner. She met and worked with many wonderful people. She hopes and prays that Fairmont will come together as one.

Commissioner Sealey thanked the citizens for his three terms on the board. He challenged the new board to continue to make Fairmont a better place for everyone and all people.

Swearing in of Commissioners by Superior Court Judge Frank Floyd.

Superior Court Judge Frank Floyd swore in Commissioners J.J. McCree, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. A copy of their sworn oaths is hereby incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Comments by newly elected officials Commissioners Cassandra Gaddy, J.J. McCree and Charles Kemp

Commissioner Gaddy thanked the citizens and plans to keep their interests at the forefront at all times.

Commissioner McCree thanked the citizens for the opportunity to serve again. He encouraged the citizens to participate in government by attending town board meetings and contacting commissioners with their issues and concerns.

Commissioner Kemp thanked the citizens and plans to focus on the future of our community. Some of the issues he plans to work on include jobs, revitalize downtown, remove abandoned buildings, youth activities, underpaid town employees, community beautification and senior programs. He hopes the town board can work together as a team with the town's best interests at heart.

Set Meeting Schedule.

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to keep the current meeting schedule of the third Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Select Mayor Pro Tempore.

Commissioner Evans nominated Commissioner McCallum for Mayor Pro Tempore. Commissioner Kemp nominated Commissioner McCree for Mayor Pro Tempore. Commissioner McCallum was named Mayor Pro Tempore by a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

Commissioner McCallum: Commissioners Evans, Gaddy, McLean and McCallum  
Commissioner McCree: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

**Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

John Jackson – Town Finances

Mr. John Jackson was glad that the town's fund balance had increased from 4% to 12% but reminded the board that it was 36% in the past. He encouraged the board to keep working toward further increasing the fund balance.

**New Business**

There was no new business this month.

**Mayor Input**

Mayor Townsend thanked the citizens for coming tonight. He believes great things can happen in Fairmont and encouraged the citizens to keep participating and attending board meetings.

**Commissioners Input**

Commissioner Evans feels confident in moving forward with the new board.

Commissioner McCallum thanked the citizens for coming and asked them to keep coming to meetings. He congratulated the new board members. He said the town is moving in the right direction. There are plans for a new business to come to town and work is continuing on dilapidated properties.

Commissioner Kemp would like the board to set a date at the January board meeting for a board retreat so the new board can come together as a team and start out on the right path. He would also like to see job fairs on the January agenda. He has also talked to Congressman Hudson about finding funding to continue the senior nutrition site program which is currently having funding issues.

Commissioner McLean congratulated the new board members and looks forward to working with them. She is currently recovering from surgery and thanked the board for allowing her to participate by phone.

**Manager Input**

Mrs. Vause presented the following monthly financial summary to the board:

The General Fund and the Water/Sewer Fund are at or near the theoretical budgeted. However, we have two rather large expenses in the Water/Sewer Fund that are not reflected in these reports. The work at the Marion Stage Road lift station has not been completed at this time and that estimate is \$30,000.00. Public Works Director Ronnie Seals and/or I telephoned or visited each of you about a sewer line break on McDaniel Street. This break had to be repaired immediately. That repair will cost approximately \$40,000.00. These were UNBUDGETED items that absolutely must be taken care of. This points out the absolute necessity of maintaining a good fund balance. These repairs will be paid from the Water/Sewer Fund. However, we may have to do an inter-fund loan from the General Fund by June 2016 when our bond payments come due. These repairs may place further restraints on the General Fund Budget. I am at a loss of how to make further reductions that will help with the salary, etc. of our new manager. Please let me know if you have any ideas.

Our reply to the Local Government Commission's Unit Letter to the Town of Fairmont is attached. I forewarned them of the possibility of an inter-fund loan. The LGC frowns on these transfers. We will have to budget for a payback to the General Fund in the 2016-2017 budget. Sharon Edmundson, Director of the Fiscal Management Section of the State and Local Government Finance Division is tentatively scheduled to be at the February 2016 board meeting. She will be discussing the fiscal responsibilities of the board along with the budgeting procedures.

On a lighter note, we will have the annual employee Christmas Party Wednesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> at 12:00 PM in the Heritage Center. Please join us if you can.

### **Announcements**

Monday, December 21, 2015 to January 1, 2015 - Schools closed for Christmas break.

Wednesday, December 23 - Town offices closed at noon for annual Employee Christmas luncheon.

Thursday, December 24 to Monday, December 28 - Town offices closed in observance of Christmas.

Friday, January 1, 2015 - Town office closed in observance of New Year's Day.

Tuesday, January 12 – NCDMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall parking lot.

Monday, January 18 - Town Hall and schools closed in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Tuesday, January 19 - Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Tuesday, January 19 - Schools closed, teacher workday.

Tuesday, January 19 – Fairmont High School Basketball vs. St. Pauls, 7:00 p.m.

Friday, January 22 – Fairmont High School Basketball vs. South Robeson, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 26 – Fairmont High School Basketball vs. Whiteville, 6:00 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. A social with refreshments was provided following the meeting in honor of the new commissioners.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting – December 23, 2015**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Wednesday, December 23, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Monte McCallum, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Commissioner Amelia McLean was absent but participated by telephone. Staff present included Town Attorney Robert Price and Town Clerk Jenny Larson. Others in attendance included Jim Perry, Rod Heasley, Vanessa Abernathy, Winona Gause, Tony Mackey, Melvin Stephens and Cindy Strickland.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

Mayor Pro Tempore Monte McCallum called the special board meeting for the purpose of having a joint meeting with the Fairmont Economic Development Commission to discuss proper procedure and protocol. The board will also be going into closed session to give the newly elected commissioners a chance to review the resumes for the town manager position and set dates for interviews.

Commissioner Kemp asked to be excused at 6:00 p.m. for a previously scheduled family engagement. He also stated that he would not have time to review the resumes tonight and would like to look at them during the town's regular operating hours on December 29. Mayor Townsend asked for a motion to excuse Commissioner Kemp at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner McCree made a motion to excuse Commissioner Kemp from the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Kemp seconded the motion and it passed with a motion of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners McCree, Kemp, Gaddy and McLean  
Against: Commissioners McCallum and Evans

### **Fairmont Economic Development Committee**

Mayor Townsend gave the floor to Commissioner McCallum to discuss the Fairmont Economic Development Committee. Commissioner McCallum stated he got a call about an article in Sunday's Robesonian concerning the Fairmont Economic Development Committee. He read the article and thought it was great. However, Commissioner McCallum wanted to know who gave Mr. Rod Heasley, Chairman of the FEDC, permission to talk to the press. He didn't understand why the interview was needed since the committee was just formed and have not even given a report to the town board yet. He felt the entire committee should have been interviewed, not just the chairman. He was also concerned about a misprint in the article that stated Commissioner Kemp was the ex-officio board member on the FEDC, when that position belongs to Mayor Townsend. He was also upset that Mr. Heasley's picture was taken in front of the museum sign and not the town welcome sign.

Mr. Heasley couldn't understand why Commissioner McCallum didn't call him to discuss the article rather than calling a special meeting during the holidays. Mr. Heasley explained that the FEDC has had 3 meetings and he was elected chairman during the second meeting for a term of 6 months. The committee discussed doing a press release and when he contacted the newspaper they decided to do an article instead. Mr. Heasley said there was no ill intention with the article and that he had no idea where the reporter got the information that Commissioner Kemp was the ex-officio board member. Mr. Heasley did not understand the negativity. He said the committee has had productive meetings so far and the FEDC realizes they can take no action without approval of the town board. He gave the town board a contact list of the members of the FEDC. He added that he would include the town board in any future communications about the FEDC. He stated the next meeting will be January 12, 2016 at 12:00 noon at the Fairmont Golf Course.

Commissioner Evans also received phone calls about the article and felt that any future press releases should come from the mayor and town manager only. Mr. Heasley said that any response, be it positive or negative, was the purpose of the article. He apologized to the members of the FEDC for any poor communication on his part.

#### **Closed Session - Personnel**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into closed session at 5:35 p.m. to prevent the disclosure of information that is deemed privileged or confidential as determined under General Statute 143-318.10(e) and to personnel as permitted under General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Townsend, Commissioners McCree, McCallum, McLean, Kemp, Gaddy and Evans along with Jenny Larson, Jim Perry and Rob Price were in attendance during closed session.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of closed session at 5:45 p.m. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mayor Townsend announced that no action was taken in closed session.

#### **Set Date for Town Manager interviews**

Mayor Townsend asked Jim Perry to advise the board on the interview process for the town manager position. Mr. Perry indicated that the three candidates the board previously chose to interview are willing to make themselves available for any date the board chooses. He stated the board should allow an hour and 15 minutes for each interview and that they could all be held on the same date. He suggested setting a date in January to allow time to contact the candidates and conduct reference checks. Commissioner McCallum suggested Wednesday, January 6, 2016.

Some of the board members were concerned about the current state of the town budget and whether there were enough funds to hire a town manager at this time. Mayor Townsend suggested having a budget overview prior to the manager interviews. He suggested the budget overview begin at 4:00 p.m. and the interviews at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Kemp asked why the meeting couldn't be held on Tuesday, January 5 but Commissioner Gaddy stated she had to work that night. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to schedule a special board meeting for Wednesday, January 6, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. for the budget overview and 5:00 p.m. for the town manager interviews. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners McCallum, Evans, Gaddy and McLean  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Mr. Perry said he would contact the three candidates and set up the interview times. He will provide them with a town job application and a list of pre-interview questions. He will also contact their references.

Commissioner Gaddy asked the board members how they felt about hiring a town manager at this time. Mayor Townsend, Commissioners Kemp and McCree said Fairmont needs a town manager but can't afford one right now. Commissioner McLean stated the town budgeted for a town manager for half a year and feels the board should move forward with hiring someone. Commissioner Evans agreed that the town needs a manager. He pointed out that he just got out of bankruptcy and we all need to learn how to cut back. Commissioner McCallum said Fairmont needs a manager for revenue and economic purposes. He pointed out that the Mrs. Vause has health issues and if the board procrastinates in hiring someone what will happen if she gets sick and can't come to work. Commissioner Gaddy thanked the board for their input.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting – January 6, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Monte McCallum, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Commissioner Amelia McLean was absent but participated by telephone. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, Police Chief Kim Monroe and Captain Jon Edwards. Others in attendance included Jim Perry, Sharon Edmundson (by phone) and around 20 citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation. The purpose of the meeting is to hold a budget overview work session to consider the town's expenses before hiring a town manager. The board will also go into closed session to allow the board to interview three candidates for the town manager position.

### **Budget Overview**

Acting Town Manager Linda Vause presented the following report to the board:

The General Fund revenues and expenses are currently at projected levels. However, this does not mean there is a surplus of funds. Unplanned expenses can occur at any time. We are currently awaiting roof repairs on two of our public buildings. We continue to patch our buildings due to budget constraints. The same can be said of the Street and Sanitation Departments.

The Police Department, while currently at the theoretical 50%, will soon have increased expenses. Our interim police chief has expressed his desire to step down. He is willing to assist as needed, just not as many hours. We can no longer use county deputies to cover our town. County law enforcement officers go through different training and standards than municipal officers. The sheriff curtailed our use of his officers effective December 31, 2015. This is going to cause additional overtime expense to properly cover our town. We have trouble attracting officers and keeping them once employed due to our pay scale.

While the Water/Sewer Fund looked okay at the end of November, December will be a different picture. I will request a budget amendment at the January board meeting. This will be a \$40,000.00 appropriation of the Water/Sewer Fund Balance to cover the repair of the sewer line on McDaniel Street. I included this information in the November report. This cannot be reimbursed with the CDBG grant. I hope we will not have to use the fund balance but at this point I am not sure. Public Works Director Ronnie Seals has reported additional expense in the sewer treatment department. This includes equipment failures as well as payroll expense. Our Waste Water Treatment Plant Operator resigned to go to a town that pays better than we do, however he is considering coming back. We are required to have a WWTP III Operator due to the size of our sewer plant and system. We have spent over \$1,000.00 in advertising for this position and have received zero applicants.

We are currently using our Retired WWTP III Operator and will soon use a retired WWTP III Operator from the City of Lumberton. This is a band aid fix for our staffing problems. The Water/Sewer Fund has the same problems with staffing as the General Fund does. We cannot attract or retain employees due to our pay scale. This is something that needs to be addressed very soon. A rate increase will soon be required if we are to continue to provide services at the level we strive for. The last pay plan study was done in 2001.

Ms. Sharon Edmundson, with the Local Government Commission, participated by phone and answered the board's concerns regarding the town's finances. Ms. Edmundson stated the town was making progress but the town's general fund balance of 12% is still too low and not enough money to cover emergencies. She said December and January are high cash flow months due to tax revenue. She applauded the town for letting the county collect property taxes because it results in a higher collection rate.

Ms. Edmundson will contact the North Carolina Department of Commerce to see if the CDBG grant will reimburse the town at a later date for the cost of the sewer line repair on McDaniel Street since that line was part of the grant application. Ms. Edmundson encouraged the board to enforce utility bill collections across the board unless a customer has a medical reason. She stated the town's reconnect fee of \$25 is too low, most towns charge a higher rate and that it should cover the cost of cutting service on and off. She also said the town's deposit fee should be adequate enough to cover two months of service.

Commissioner Evans would like to see more people connected to the town's regional WWTP. He stated that Robeson County is Tier 1 and that most of the town's residents are poor and on welfare. Even though the town has poor infrastructure, he feels the town's citizens can't pay their utility bill because it is too high. Mrs. Vause told Ms. Edmundson that Fairmont's minimum utility bill is \$63.94 a month for water, sewer and sanitation. Ms. Edmundson replied that Fairmont was in the middle of the pack for towns with similar income levels of less than \$25,000 a year. Mrs. Vause explained that we could not add new customers to the WWTP at this time because of a moratorium from NCDENR. The plant can process 1.8 million gallons a day and most of that has been storm water from Fairmont and Fair Bluff. The plant would have to expand before new customers can be added. She said the CDBG grant will only repair a small portion of the town's decaying sewer lines and make a small dent in the town's I&I storm water problems.

Ms. Edmundson said the town could consider disbanding the police department and rely entirely on the county for police protection. She said this would be a drastic step but there were several towns Fairmont's size that do not have a police force. She said cutting shifts is another option.

Commissioner McCree does not think the town is financially stable to hire a full time manager at this time but a part time manager might work. Commissioner Evans mentioned budget cuts and that he filed bankruptcy and came out of it in four years due to making sacrifices. Commissioner McCallum feels the town needs to hire a manager to take on issues and turn the town around. Ms. Edmundson said there was no substitute for having a strong manager to run the town. She said Mrs. Vause has done a good job the past four years and the town is making progress financially. She agreed that a part time manager could work but that it would be harder to find someone willing to work part time. She also suggested the town wait a month or two to see how the property tax

revenue is coming in before making any decisions. Commissioner McCallum would like to move forward with hiring a manager because Mrs. Vause has health issues and the town would be in a bind with no one to run it if she were to be out of work due to her health. Ms. Edmundson is scheduled to come to the town's February board meeting and looks forward to meeting everyone in person.

Mayor Townsend concluded the budget overview portion of the meeting and stated that it was important for everyone to know where the town stood financially. He advised the board to make a decision based on what is best for the town.

**Closed Session – Personnel, Town Manager candidate interviews**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into closed session at 5:50 p.m. to prevent the disclosure of information that is deemed privileged or confidential as determined under General Statute 143-318.10(e) and to personnel as permitted under General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Townsend, Commissioners McCree, McCallum, McLean, Kemp, Gaddy and Evans along with Jim Perry were in attendance during closed session.

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to come out of closed session at 8:30 p.m. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mayor Townsend announced that no action was taken in closed session.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting – January 14, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Monte McCallum, Cassandra Gaddy, Charles Kemp and Amelia McLean (by telephone). Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, Police Chief Kim Monroe and Captain Jon Edwards. Others in attendance included around 20 citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss whether the town can afford to hire a town manager at this time based on the town's current economic situation. If so, the board will decide which process will be used to determine which candidate to hire. The board will then go into closed session to allow the board a chance to discuss who should be offered the town manager position and any terms related to the position. Any other issues that relate to the hiring of a town manager may be discussed and acted upon. No other issues will be discussed.

Commissioner Kemp asked Town Attorney Rob Price if it would be appropriate to give the citizens a chance to voice their opinion on the town's finances. Mr. Price stated that the board could vote to allow the citizens to speak during the special meeting and suggested a three minute time limit per person. Commissioner Kemp made a motion to allow the citizens to speak only on the town's budgetary issues with a three minute time limit per person. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Citizens Comments on the town's financial status**

Mayor Townsend opened the floor for the citizens to speak briefly on the town's financial situation and whether now is a good time to hire a town manager.

Mr. Tony Mackey feels the town cannot afford a full time manager due to budgetary restraints. He stated the town has trouble keeping officers due to low salaries and there are many street maintenance repair problems.

Mr. Ned Gaddy thinks the town has been without a town manager for long enough and hopes the board can find the money to hire one.

Mr. Terry Taylor feels the town should stay within its budget and reserve funds for time of trouble like sewer line breaks. He also thinks that a town manager is not a full time position.

Mr. Talmadge Killens said the town needs a town manager to go after state and federal grants for infrastructure needs.

Mrs. Diane McKeithan pointed out that Fairmont has a small tax base with old infrastructure and that things are not being done because the town cannot afford it. She suggested a part time manager instead.

Mrs. Lynn Taylor was concerned about the older citizens who cannot afford the town's high utility bills.

Ms. Bridget Bass suggested hiring a part time manager, someone retired with experience, to save the town money on benefits until the budget can support a full time person.

Mr. Roy McKeithan recommended a part time person who could serve under current Acting Town Manager Linda Vause. As a former police officer, he also suggested the board look after the town's police officers.

Ms. Vanessa Abernathy felt hiring a town manager who could get state and federal grants for infrastructure and economic development would be beneficial to the town.

### **Decision on whether to move forward with hiring a Town Manager**

Commissioner McCallum thanked the citizens for their comments and concerns. He pointed out that the town budgeted \$26,000, which is half a year's salary for a full time town manager. He added the town is in much better financial shape than it was 7 or 8 years ago. He wants to hire a town manager to help Fairmont move forward after it has fallen behind with the loss of the tobacco industry.

Commissioner Evans wants to hire a town manager to bring Fairmont out of its problems and to establish a better working relationship with Robeson County.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to move forward with hiring at full time town manager. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion.

Commissioner Kemp made the following statement and requested it be included in the minutes:

At our January 6<sup>th</sup> special meeting, we heard from both Town Manager/Finance Officer Linda Vause and LGC Director Sharon Edmundson, a presentation on our budgetary picture and financial status. I thought they both gave a very clear and understandable picture of our current situation. After hearing what they had to offer, studying our current budget, and having many conversations with citizens I do not believe pursuing the hiring of a full time town manager can be justified at this present time. I feel we should let the remaining 6 months of our budget year pass, allow certain current items to be paid for, keep a watchful eye on expenditures, cross our fingers and hope for good luck on unforeseen utility issues, and then address the manager topic at the start of our new fiscal year. Anyone in this room who maintains a budget understands that unforeseen expenses creep into our lives and those things we had planned to spend money on have to be postponed until a later date. I feel this applies to our current town situation. And I urge that we wait and address this matter later.

Commissioner McCallum suggested hiring a manager now with the salary budgeted for the rest of the fiscal year and that person can then find money in the next fiscal year's budget to continue funding their position.

Mayor Townsend called for a vote on Commissioner Evans's motion to go forward with hiring a town manager and the motion passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners Evans, McCallum, Gaddy and McLean  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Town Attorney Rob Price stated the next step is for the board to decide which process to use in hiring the next town manager before going into closed session. He advised that any terms and conditions of employment will not be made public until after the candidate accepts the position. The types of procedures the board can use are make a motion to hire a candidate and vote, vote by secret ballot by voting for the top two candidates or ranking them. It was the consensus of the board to make a motion to hire a candidate and vote.

### **Closed Session – Personnel**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into closed session at 7:45 p.m. to prevent the disclosure of information that is deemed privileged or confidential as determined under General Statute 143-318.10(e) and to discuss personnel as permitted under General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Townsend, Commissioners McCree, McCallum, McLean (by phone), Kemp, Gaddy and Evans along with Rob Price and Jenny Larson were in attendance during closed session.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of closed session at 8:00 p.m. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mayor Townsend announced that the board chose a candidate to offer the town manager position to and once that candidate accepts the position, it will be made public.

### **Town Manager decision**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to hire a town manager with a start date of February 1, 2016 if the candidate accepts the town's offer. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners Evans, McCallum, Gaddy and McLean  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – January 19, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, January 19, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Pro Tempore Monte McCallum presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Amelia McLean (by telephone), Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Mayor Charles Townsend was out of town on business. Staff present included Acting Town Manager Linda Vause, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Police Chief Kim Monroe and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Rod Heasley, David Powell, Peggy Davis, Katrina Tatum and around 20 citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

There was no public comment this month.

### **Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner Kemp it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, December 15, 2015, Special Meetings, December 23, 2015 and January 6, 2016.
- b. Reappoint Mickey Williamson and Linda Vause to the Fairmont Firefighters' Relief Fund Board.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **Resolution 16-01 – Accepting Bid and Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Tax Parcel 050601036, Happy Hill and Industrial Drive**

Acting Town Manager Linda Vause announced that after several upset bids, Mr. Fitzhugh Sealey, of Shady Grove Farms, was the highest bidder for the lot located at Happy Hill and Industrial Drive with an offer of \$2,045.00. Commissioner Kemp made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-01 – Accepting Bid and Authorizing Sale of Real Property, Tax Parcel 050601036, Happy Hill and Industrial Drive. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Fairmont Economic Development Committee

Mrs. Vause stated that Melvin Stephens and Cindy Strickland needed to be replaced on the Fairmont Economic Development Committee. Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum nominated Huel Faulk and Commissioner McCree nominated Wade Sealey. Commissioner Evans made a motion to accept the nominations of Huel Faulk and Wade Sealey to the Fairmont Economic Development Committee. Commissioner Kemp seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Evans had a problem with the Fairmont Economic Development Committee talking to the press without permission from the town board. He was recently told about Mr. Heasley's appearance on Commissioner Kemp's radio show. He feels the committee could jeopardize economic development deals by talking to the press. Commissioner Evans made a motion to ban the Fairmont Economic Development Committee from having contact with the media. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion. Commissioner Kemp has recorded over 500 radio shows and never had any complaints about his guests until now. He stated that he invited Mr. Heasley to be on his radio show before the board met on December 23, 2015. He feels it is censorship and a violation of the first amendment and the right to freedom of speech. Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum wants the Fairmont Economic Development Committee to get permission from the town board before making media appearances.

After discussion, Commissioner Kemp made a call to question. Town Attorney Rob Price stated a call to question requires a second and a two-thirds vote to cut off discussion. Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum seconded the call to question and the motion passed unanimously. The vote on the motion to not allow the Fairmont Economic Development Committee to speak to the media unless approved by the town board passed by a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners Evans, Gaddy, McLean and Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Commissioner Kemp made the following statement and requested it be included in the minutes:

I am opposed to the policy voted in by the Fairmont Town Board on Tuesday January 19<sup>th</sup> 2016 for the following reasons:

- 1) This policy interferes with the committee's ability to reach out to the community in a timely fashion
- 2) This policy singles out the Economic Development Committee without addressing any other town or Mayoral appointed committee
- 3) This policy seeks to apply unfair control over a committee for political purposes.
- 4) I cast my vote in opposition to the motion creating this policy.

**New Business**

Career Management Service – Samuel McIntyre

Mr. McIntyre was not present at tonight's meeting but the board agreed to hear him speak at a future meeting.

Job Fair schedule – David Powell and Peggy Davis

Mr. David Powell, Director of the Robeson County Offender Resource Center, was present to discuss the re-entry services offered to formerly incarcerated individuals in Hoke, Robeson and Scotland Counties. Their mission is to develop effective public/private partnerships and implement comprehensive education, employment and support services with program participants that will insure their successful re-entry into society following their incarceration and help prevent recidivism. He cited solar farm projects as an example of an industry willing to employ former prisoners. He mentioned that the work release program has also been helpful in giving prisoners a chance to prove themselves. He would like to schedule a job fair in Fairmont sometime in March as part of a partnership with Robeson Community College.

Ms. Peggy Davis, with the NC Works Career Center of Robeson County (formerly Employment Security Commission), also discussed setting up a job fair. They have hosted major job fairs in the past in the Heritage Center featuring major employers in the county. They would like to work with veterans and help them re-enter the workforce after leaving the military. Ms. Davis would handle the marketing for the job fair and is willing to host two job fairs a year.

Commissioner Kemp suggested Mr. Powell and Ms. Davis work together for a possible joint job fair to be held in the Heritage Center at a future date.

Water/Sewer Fund Budget Amendment - \$40,000.

Acting Town Manager Linda Vause requested a budget amendment in the amount of \$40,000.00 to cover the repair to the sewer line break on McDaniel Street. Ms. Sharon Edmundson is working with the North Carolina Department of Commerce for a possible pay back to the Town out of the current CDBG-I Grant Funds. This amendment will be reversed if she is successful.

Water/Sewer Fund Equity (Fund Balance)	(\$40,000.00)
Sewer Maintenance Department	\$40,000.00

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the budget amendment of \$40,000 to the Water/Sewer Fund to cover the sewer line repair costs. Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum seconded the motion.

Commissioner Kemp asked how this amendment would affect the fund balance. Mrs. Vause stated the amendment would not affect the general fund balance since this is a water/sewer fund item. The other option is an interfund loan from the general fund that would have to be paid back and the LGC does not like those. She added that except for the sewer line break the water fund is on budget. Commissioner McCree asked if the town will be able to make the sewer plant bond payment in June. Mrs. Vause indicated that if the water fund could not make the payment, then she would have to do an interfund loan from the general fund to pay it. She said they may have to delay the repair of the Marion Stage Road lift station to prevent that from happening.

After discussion, the motion passed to approve the budget amendment of \$40,000 to the Water/Sewer Fund with a vote of 5 to 1 as follows:

For: Commissioners McLean, McCree, Evans, Gaddy and Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum  
Against: Commissioner Kemp

Possible lighting project for the Fairmont Community Park.

Mrs. Vause informed the board that the anonymous group that paid for the park trail widening last year is researching the cost to put lights in the Fairmont Community Park to make it safer for citizens who walk in the early morning and evening. The group would cover the installation costs but they need to know if the Town Board will agree to the installation of the lights and the monthly electric bill that it would incur before proceeding further. The estimated electric bill would be \$3,100.00 annually or an average monthly bill of \$258.00. It was the consensus of the board to proceed with further cost estimates for the lighting project. Commissioner Evans suggested working with the county to see if there is any funding for fitness. Mrs. Vause mentioned talking to the hospital as well.

Set date and location for Board Retreat in February.

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to have a board retreat on Tuesday, February 23 at 6:00 p.m. in the Heritage Center. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Fairmont Economic Development Committee report

Mr. Rod Heasley, Chairman of the Fairmont Economic Development Committee, gave a report to the board. A written copy of the report is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes. The committee met on January 12 at the Fairmont Golf Club with five committee members, 3 town commissioners and Mayor Townsend in attendance. The committee identified 12 categories of economic development that they will address in coming months. They will prioritize them as part of the comprehensive plan to be submitted to the town board to implement. Mr. Heasley plans to attend the International Conference of Shopping Centers and Deal Makers in Charlotte in March. The committee's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at 12:00 noon in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Town Attorney Rob Price was concerned that there was a quorum of town board members at the January committee meeting since no official notice was given of the meeting and that violates the open meetings law. He advised that in future situations when a quorum is present, the necessary number of board members should leave before any town business is discussed. Mr. Price asked if Mr. Heasley's report was the official meeting minutes. Mr. Heasley responded that they were not. Mr. Price said the report would be sufficient to give to the public and the minutes could be made available later. Mr. Heasley reported that the town board members present did not participate in the meeting and were just there to listen. Commissioner Kemp, who attended the meeting, stated that no town business was discussed.

**Mayor Input**

Mayor Pro Tempore McCallum thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He introduced Fairmont’s new Town Manager Katrina Tatum, who starts February 1, 2016.

**Commissioner Input**

Commissioners Evans, McLean and Gaddy also thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting and encouraged them to keep coming.

Commissioner Kemp asked everyone to keep the family of Rudolph Cook in their prayers. Mr. Cook was a retired public works employee.

Commissioner Kemp thanked Linda Vause for her hard work and dedication to the town during her five years as town manager.

Commissioner McCree did not realize there would be a quorum at the Fairmont Economic Development Committee meeting. He just went to observe and show his support.

**Manager’s Input**

Mrs. Vause presented the following monthly financial summary to the board:

The General Fund and the Water/Sewer Fund remain at or near the theoretical budgeted. However, the work at the Marion Stage Road lift station has not been completed at this time and that estimate is \$30,000.00. We also are required by NC DENR to purchase a WWTP effluent flow meter in the amount of \$4,645.96. The work on the sewer line break on McDaniel Street has been completed. We are waiting on a bill from the NC Department of Transportation for repair of the traffic signal wiring that was damaged during this repair. This will be about \$1,500.00. This break had to be repaired immediately.

As I reported to this board and to the NC Local Government Commission, I am requesting an appropriation of \$40,000.00 from the Water/Sewer Fund Unappropriated Fund Balance to be applied to the Sewer Maintenance Department. I hope the total appropriation will not be needed. This amount can be amended at year end.

Mrs. Vause thanked the board for supporting her during her years as manager. She looks forward to working with Ms. Tatum again.

**Announcements**

Friday, January 22 - Fairmont High School Basketball vs. South Robeson, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 26 - Fairmont High School Basketball vs. Whiteville, 6:00 p.m.

Page 6 – Regular Meeting, January 19, 2016

Tuesday, January 26 - North Carolina Small Town Main Street meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont South Robeson Heritage Center at 207 South Main Street. Mayor Townsend would like to meet with the stakeholders of Main Street to discuss future revitalization of downtown. This meeting will be for information and organization.

Friday, February 5 - Fairmont High School Basketball vs. Red Springs, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 9 - NCDMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall parking lot.

Tuesday, February 9 - Fairmont High School Basketball vs. East Columbus, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 16 - Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers

Friday, February 19 - Schools Closed, Teacher workday.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – February 16, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, J.J. McCree, Amelia McLean (by telephone), Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Police Chief Kim Monroe and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Rod Heasley, Kelly Johnson, Jamie Jones, Thunder Zone Karate members and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Special Recognition**

#### **Fairmont Chamber of Commerce**

Mayor Townsend recognized Fairmont Chamber of Commerce President Kelly Johnson, Vice President Tony Mackey and everyone who assisted in cleaning up and repairing Memory Lane.

#### **Thunder Zone Karate School**

Mayor Townsend recognized Thunder Zone Karate School Instructor Jamie Jones and his students for winning 12 trophies (5 first place, 5 second place and 2 third place) at the Battle of the Border Martial Arts Tournament in Dillon, SC.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner McCallum asked to add “Item G – Land use exemption for Main Street for nightclubs and bars” under new business. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

There was no public comment this month.

### **Consent Agenda**

Town Attorney Rob Price asked the board to amend the January 19, 2016 minutes, page 4, last paragraph to read as follows:

Town Attorney Rob Price was concerned that there was a quorum of town board members at the January committee meeting since no official notice was given of the meeting and that violates the open meetings law. He advised that in future situations when a quorum is present, the necessary number of board members should leave before any town business is discussed.

Commissioner Evans asked to amend the minutes of the Special Meeting on January 14, 2016 to reflect that Commissioner McLean intended to vote for allowing the citizens to speak on the town's budgetary issues.

Upon motion by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner McCallum it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items as amended:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting, January 14, 2016 and Regular Meeting, January 19, 2016.
- b. Approval of Contract to Audit Accounts – S. Preston Douglas & Associates, LLP.

### **Committee Reports**

#### Fairmont Farmers Festival

Fairmont Farmers Festival Chairman Kelly Johnson reported that the 2016 festival will be held on October 15. The committee met two weeks to discuss what they like and didn't like about the festival being held in the park. He encouraged volunteers to help and asked the citizens and board for input and ideas. The committee will meet again in April or May.

#### Fairmont Chamber of Commerce

Chamber President Kelly Johnson encouraged people to join the chamber. They met on the first Monday at 6:00 p.m. at the Fairmont Golf Course. The chamber supports the Student of Excellence program at Fairmont High School. They maintain the flower planters on Main Street, recently cleaned up Memory Lane and plan to work on the front porch of Town Hall soon. He stated that McDonalds is planning a grand reopening and he will let the board know when the date has been set. Commissioner Kemp added that McDonalds will be celebrating twenty years in Fairmont this summer.

#### Fairmont Economic Development Committee

Chairman Rod Heasley reported that the committee held their regular monthly meeting on February 9 and all members were present. The committee welcomed new members Huel Faulk and Wade Sealey. They designated twelve different categories to work on and prioritize. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 10 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers to give the public a chance to give their input. Commissioner Kemp stated he attended the meeting and there was no quorum of the town board.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### Fairmont Community Park lighting project.

Commissioner Kemp is 100% supportive of the proposed lighting project in the Fairmont Community Park. He presented a breakdown of rental revenue from the park, Fire Hall and Heritage Center and suggested that revenue would cover the cost of the monthly park light bill. Town Manager Katrina Tatum proposed that the light bill could be paid using the savings from converting the town street lights to LED.

### **New Business**

#### LED Street Light Conversion project

Ms. Tatum informed the board that several towns in North Carolina are converting their street lights to LED. At the present time, Fairmont's Street Lights System includes three different types of lights; Mercury Vapor (MV), High Pressure Sodium (HPS), and Metal Halide (MH). LED lights are more efficient and have a good color rendering index, which measures the ability of a light source to reveal the colors of various objects faithfully in comparison to an ideal or natural light source such as the sun. The lifespans of the existing lights range from 10,000 hours to 15,000 hours versus the LED at 40,000 hours. LED lights use less power wattage to render the maximum efficiency and brightness. Conversion is \$50 per light, or \$9,000 for the entire inventory of lights. However, that amount would be recaptured with the cost savings in the first full year of conversion of \$12,033. The current monthly charge for all of our lights is \$5,469, while the monthly charge upon conversion is \$4,467. This represents a savings of \$1,003 per month or \$12,033 per year. This savings would pay for the additional light bill in the park. Ms. Tatum added that the conversion may not occur until the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to approve the Community Park lighting project and light bill. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner McCallum made a motion to approve the LED Street Light Conversion project. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### Resolution 16-02 Supporting Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to consider adopting a resolution supporting the Atlantic Coast Pipeline project in Robeson County. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-02 Supporting Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Memorandum of Participation for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)

Ms. Tatum informed the board that Statement 45 (GASB 45), which was issued in June 2014, establishes accounting and reporting standards for “other post-employment benefits” offered by state and local governments. The Town of Fairmont is therefore required to report the health benefits paid to employees upon retirement. Heretofore, the Local Government Commission (LGC) supported an excel worksheet that allowed state and local governments to report these benefits directly to them in compliance with GASB 45. Mr. John Masters, with S. Preston Douglas & Associates, LLP, the town’s auditor, has informed us that the LGC will no longer support that worksheet and local governments must take steps to engage a firm to handle the reporting requirements triggered by GASB 45. Mr. Masters and the NCLM recommend Cavanaugh MacDonald Consulting, LLC. The contract would have a base fee of \$2,250 based on our town being in the NC Local Government Employees Retirement System (NCLGERS) with 20-49 active and retired employees. A per participant fee of \$5.00 will be added to the base fee. Ms. Tatum asked the board to approve the Memorandum of Participation for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) with Cavanaugh MacDonald Consulting, LLC. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Participation for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) with Cavanaugh MacDonald Consulting, LLC. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee

Commissioner McLean explained that one of the requirements for the Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Planning Grant is that a Steering Committee appointed by the Board of Commissioners be put in place. Ms. Tatum added that since grant preparations will begin soon, it is imperative that a committee be selected. She recommended that the board vote on a few potential members this month and finalize the list on March 15, 2016. Names that have been submitted so far:

NCDOT Representatives Joe Bailey and Chuck Miller  
Police Captain Jon Edwards  
Public Works Director Ronnie Seals  
Community Representative Commissioner Monte McCallum  
Town Council Representative Commissioner Terry Evans  
Planning Staff Town Manager Katrina Tatum and Town Clerk Jenny Larson

Some other Potential Members of the Steering Committee should include a medical facility or health representative, an elderly person, a chamber member or downtown business or major employer, a school system representative, one or two long-time (well known) town residents that can potentially represent the mixed demographic of the local community, a knowledgeable bicycle or pedestrian advocate, MPO/RPO representative and any other special populations.

Commissioner McLean made a motion to move forward with the names submitted for the Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee and to add names as needed. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Proposed Economic Development Incentive Policy

Ms. Tatum asked that the proposed economic development incentive policy be tabled until she can get clarification on the county's policy, which she may recommend for the town to adopt instead. Commissioner Evans made a motion to table the proposed economic development incentive policy. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Nuisance Abatement

Commissioner Kemp made the following statement and asked that it be recorded in the minutes:

I asked that this topic be on our agenda this evening for 2 reasons. First, it is a fact that our community is dotted with abandoned and decaying houses and buildings and second, this town and its officials, including myself, have not done enough to address their existence or removal. I include myself in this form of finger pointing because from December 1977 until I left office as mayor in December 2013 I was a part of 9 different town boards. In only a few rare occasions did we successfully remove or cause to remove structures that needed to be. I made this topic or issue, if you prefer, a central part of my election platform when I ran for town board in November and now as I am a member of this town board I am absolutely committed to seeking and achieving success in this area.

In both my personal and elected life I believe taking action is important. Talking about a problem is just not sufficient. My fellow commissioners and I did that for the past 36 years already. Accordingly, fellow commissioner McCree and I reached out to and met with a councilman from a neighboring community who has a record of success in nuisance abatement as well as two high ranking officials within the inspections dept. Of the same community all of which detailed methods and techniques resulting in their past success. I have the documents which they shared with us here tonight. I also spent several hours this past summer riding throughout our town and taking photos of each structure which meets this classification. I have copies of them as well. On Dec. 19th I met with a local citizen who has numerous properties many of which qualify to be included in this topic area. I wrote a follow up letter to this citizen and asked the clerk to send a copy to town officials. At our November RCMA monthly meeting Lumberton city manager Wayne Horne spoke on the industrial demolition grant program and since then I have had two meetings with him regarding this very useful program. Since it involves, in our community, the possibility of property acquisition I have asked that we meet in closed session tonight as required by the NC open meetings law to discuss it more in depth. I just met with our town manager last Monday to bring her up to date on these matters, share my information, and seek her support and assistance in helping our government fully address and solve this problem within our community. She has already begun to address this issue and I am very confident will continue to do so.

We must not waste one more day or delay one more minute from the duty we all have to rid our community of these eye sores. We must take action. Now the first comment which will be offered upon this matter being discussed openly will be funding and the second is going to be selective enforcement. These are the same challenges other boards have heard and faced. But my reply-how can other communities with similar situations do it. Easy answer. They sit together, talk together, plan together and get it done together. The councilman I referred to earlier had an entire mobile home park which held multiple nuisance structures removed without one law suit or court action. I am certain we can find a fair way to find a solution here in Fairmont. We do not live in a vacuum. Fairmont can simply model on others successes or be creative on our own. Either way we must take action.

I am prepared to be a full partner with each of you and our administration in solving our nuisance abatement problem but I am not going to return to this room and seat each month without action being taken or solutions being achieved. I want you all to know that I intend to request the topic of nuisance abatement be placed on each succeeding monthly agenda and I plan to ask for a review of actions taken in the past 30 days and future efforts to be made. I intend to continue this for as long as needed so that when my service to the town is finally over I will not have to say what I did at the start of my comments tonight, that I was a part of a government which failed our citizens and left deplorable structures standing in our community. The citizens here tonight and those at home expect us to do all we can to improve our town's appearance. We owe them our very best effort. I ask my fellow commissioners to join in that effort starting tonight.

Commissioner Evans mentioned that nuisance abatement was brought up six months ago and that Commissioner McCallum has taken pictures of the problem properties. Commissioner McCallum stated that he has provided pictures and tax records to Ms. Tatum on the nuisance properties but the main problem is the town does not have the money for demolition. He has also talked to some of the owners about cleaning up their properties. Ms. Tatum explained that she is working on a NC Department of Commerce grant for the demolition of seven commercial buildings. She added that there is not any state money currently for residential properties. Commissioner Kemp talked to Adrian Lowery, with the LRCOG, and he suggested talking to Felicia Locklear of Raeford for assistance with nuisance abatement. Town Attorney Rob Price said some of the properties could be deemed a danger to public health and condemned by the Health Department. Ms. Tatum said she would investigate which properties could be taken down quicker than others.

#### Land use exemption for Main Street for Nightclubs and Bars

Ms. Tatum would like the board to start the procedure to amend Section 154.176(B)(1) Nightclubs or Bars, of Title XV Land Usage, Chapter 154 Zoning, to exempt the 100 to 300 block of Main Street (from Iona Street to Railroad Street). A property owner is interested in opening up a restaurant with bar on Main Street but the current ordinance does not allow a bar within a 1,000 feet of a church. Ms. Tatum stated that bars are normally allowed in downtown districts. The zoning change would require a public hearing. Commissioner Kemp asked how long the process would take before a vote is taken. Ms. Tatum replied that it would take two to three months because it has to be advertised twice plus hold a public hearing. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to start the procedure to amend Section 154.176(B)(1) Nightclubs or Bars, of Title XV Land Usage, Chapter 154 Zoning, to exempt the 100 to 300 block of Main Street (from Iona Street to Railroad Street). Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 5 to 1 as follows:

For: Commissioners McCallum, Evans, Gaddy, McLean and Kemp  
Against: Commissioner McCree

#### Mayor Input

Mayor Townsend thanked everyone for their great ideas and wants the town to move forward with economic development.

### **Commissioner Input**

Commissioner Evans was glad to see citizens at tonight's meeting. He informed everyone that he is still on the Robeson County Planning Board and that his term doesn't expire until June.

Commissioner McCallum thanked everyone for coming.

Commissioner Gaddy also thanked everyone for coming. She is looking forward to the board retreat and making the town look better.

Commissioner Kemp asked the citizens to support the upcoming bond referendum because if passed it won't raise state taxes, but would deposit \$32 million into our county with \$23 million going to UNCP for a new business school building and \$7.2 million going to RCC to renovate and update several campus buildings. As a member of the RCC Foundation Board of Directors, he believes the \$7.2 million can be of great assistance for those who attend Robeson Community College.

Commissioner Kemp thanked the Fairmont Chamber of Commerce for updating Memory Lane in downtown.

Commissioner Kemp raised the issue of sewer problems in various neighborhoods after excessive rainfall and asked that it be a main topic of discussion at the board retreat.

Commissioner McLean thanked Commissioner Evans for correcting the minutes for her. She commended the council for working together to move the town forward and making Fairmont a better place to live.

### **Manager's Input**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum presented the following report to the board:

Asset Management Project – As you know, the Lumber River Council of Governments is completing the town's asset management analysis. This type of analysis is becoming more and more important to municipalities because it promotes transparency. It allows for open and effective management and reporting of public property resources. This type of analysis allows the town to track the ages and use of its assets and is a great tool for planned disposal of assets. Mr. Jim Perry is handling the project and it is nearing completion. His major task was to update and perform some more detailed work on the maps and upgrade/update the work on the financial section. The last of the sewer edits were sent to GIS on February 4, 2016. I am waiting now for Mr. Perry to give us a definite time frame for completion prior to presenting the final document to the Board. A thorough presentation typically takes about 1-1.5 hours.

Munsingwear Building – 807 E. White Pond Road – Prospective Business – The building was inspected by a potential purchaser on February 4, 2016. Mayor Pro Tem McCallum and I met with the company owner after the inspection. The potential buyer is definitely interested and if a decision to purchase is made, there would be a potential of 30-50 manufacturing jobs created. A folder is being compiled for submission to this prospect, which includes demographics for this area, other similar operations within the county, aerials, drawings, potential work force, means of training work force for specific needs of companies, etc. I have yet to receive the information about the county's training capabilities before the packet is sent out. That information will be sent to me by noon, 2-10-2016. I hope to be able to compile similar presentation packets for other buildings and commercial space in the future. Since most of the demographics are being compiled this time, it will take less time to compile packets in the future.

Sewer System Rehab Project – Phase III - The Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) was submitted to the NCDEQ on September 18, 2015. Comments from NCDEQ were issued to the Town on December 28, 2015. LKC provided a response to NCDEQ and the Town responded on January 18, 2016. It is our understanding the Preliminary Engineering Report should be approved by NCDEQ in the next 7 to 10 days. The Environmental Document is near completion. LKC is waiting on comments from Fish and Wildlife. Upon receipt, the Environmental Document will be completed and submitted to NCDEQ by the end of February. The compliance plans were prepared and submitted to NCDENQ for review and approval on November 9, 2015. NCDEQ provided a letter on December 29, 2015 approving the submitted compliance plans.

Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant – Staff spoke with Mr. Vine-Hodge, the NCDOT Representative for the Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant, on February 10, 2016. According to Mr. Vine-Hodge, NCDOT has experienced some delays in setting up contracts with consultants for professional services. Last week he was told that the issue has been resolved and most if not all of the consultants are now under contract and will be ready to take on planning grant activities by next week. Sometime next week the planning grants will be assigned and at that time, he will contact the town to make sure we are comfortable with the selected consultant. If everything is acceptable with the town, the consultant will draft a scope of work for our grant. The scope of work will be sent to us for approval and a notice to proceed should be issued within 3 to 4 weeks from now.

North Carolina Department of Labor – OSHA Consultation Project – As you know, OSHA can make site visits at any time. If that happens and there are compliance issues, there will be financial sanctions. To avoid such issues I have requested an OSHA Consultation contract that will in effect allow us to work with OSHA to bring the town into compliance over a two year period, during which time there can be no financial sanctions. We are not in compliance in several areas that I know of at present; Hepatitis B shots and Blood Borne Pathogens training for Public Works and Police, SDS Sheets, etc. The completed requests for each public building were sent to OSHA on February 3, 2016. We have already received confirmation that we are approved for consultation. Our safety consultant is Eric Smith and our health consultant is Jiles Manning.

Bridge Report – The Town is in receipt of the Bridge inspections report for our jurisdiction. Bridge Number 770178 on Morro Street has received a Regulatory and Warning Sign Notice to remove the “Narrow Bridge” signs at both approaches, as the bridge does not meet the criteria for such signs. Bridge Number 770176 on Floyd Street has been issued a Priority Maintenance Notice to repair decay and fill exposed areas in addition to other maintenance items. Bridge Number 770171 on Mitchell Street has been issued a Priority Maintenance Notice to repair areas of decay and other items. On February 5, 2016, HDR, Inc. was contacted and asked if NCDOT could be contacted to give us an estimate on repairs. Since the repairs must be made to DOT standards before that can pass, it has worked best in the past for NCDOT to actually make the repairs.

NC Main Street and Small Town Main Street Grant Opportunity – Liz Parham has provided the town with information about a new NC Main Street and Small Town Main Street grant opportunity. The NC Main Street Center has teamed up with the Commerce Small Cities CDBG Economic Development program to offer the Downtown Redevelopment Fund. Currently the fund has \$2,000,000 in the pot. Grants will be awarded at a minimum \$300,000 and a maximum \$500,000 in an open round (first-come, first-serve basis). The purpose of this program is to make improvements to downtown building(s) in vacant or underutilized buildings that helps prepare the property for a new business. Pictures and other information about some of the buildings that might qualify for this property are being compiled in an effort to apply for about \$300,000. LKC Engineers has been contacted to see if they are interested in writing the application for this grant. This grant is a no match grant.

Demolition Grant - This grant is administered by the NC Department of Commerce using federal funds. It is a no match grant. Information has been compiled on seven downtown buildings in an effort to apply for approximately \$500,000. The package requested by Mr. Kenny Stagg is complete and was sent to him on February 10. There are conditions on this grant such as; once the building is demolished, the land can't be used for retail, parking or parks.

Chicken Road Clean-up – Chicken Road, leading into Fairmont has been placed on NCDOT's list for regular clean-up. Their Litter Squad has not been able to work since October 2015, but they are starting up the road clean-up again. Hopefully within the next few weeks or so, Chicken Road will have a different look.

Welcome Sign Property on Iona Street – D.C. Ratley has approached the town on behalf of one of his relatives about the town possibly purchasing the land on which the town's welcome sign is erected on Iona Street. Staff met with Mr. Ratley and researched some of the maps and some deeds to get a good description of the property. We have requested that the owner send a letter offering this property to the town, along with the corresponding deed prior to Board review. Mr. Ratley indicates that the owner is trying to get data for the town and will be in contact shortly.

Ms. Tatum added that she will have engineers look at the Old Field Community flooding and sewer back up problems next week. The Army Corp of Engineers no longer does relocation of property owners because the water is not diverted there. Ms. Tatum is looking into relocation funds for the affected property owners. One property owner is going to raise their foundation to help alleviate the issue.

### **Department Head Input**

There was no Department Head input this month.

### **Executive/Closed Session – Property Acquisition G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5)**

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to go into closed session at 7:16 p.m. to prevent the disclosure of information that is deemed privileged or confidential as determined under General Statute 143-318.10(e) and to discuss property acquisition as permitted under General Statute 143-318.11(a)(5). Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Townsend, Commissioners McCree, McCallum, McLean (by phone), Kemp, Gaddy and Evans along with Rob Price, Katrina Tatum and Jenny Larson were in attendance during closed session.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of closed session at 7:25 p.m. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mayor Townsend announced that no action was taken.

Commissioner Kemp wants the board to look at dilapidated commercial properties at some point in the future and consider methods of removing them. Commissioner McCallum has talked to the landowner of one commercial property about beginning the process of taking down the building. Commissioner Evans does not want the town to accept any commercial or residential property. Ms. Tatum agreed that acquiring nuisance property opens the town up to a huge liability. Town Attorney Rob Price suggested the board work on a standard policy to handle nuisance properties.

**Announcements**

Friday, February 19 - Schools Closed, Teacher workday.

Tuesday, February 23 - Fairmont Town Board Retreat, 6:00 p.m. Heritage Center.

Thursday, March 3 - Weatherization Program, Town Hall Council Chambers. 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, March 3 and Friday, March 4 - Primary Early Voting, 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Fire Hall.

Thursday, March 10 and Friday, March 11 - Primary Early Voting, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Fire Hall.

Saturday, March 12 - Primary Early Voting, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Fairmont Fire Hall.

Tuesday, March 15 - Primary Election, Fairmont Fire Hall.

Tuesday, March 15 - Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Saturday, March 19 - Easter Egg Hunt, Fairmont Community Park, 2:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Board Retreat – February 23, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a board retreat meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Pro Tempore Monte McCallum and Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Monte McCallum, Cassandra Gaddy, and Charles Kemp. Commissioner Amelia McLean was absent. Mayor Townsend arrived at 7:00 p.m. due to a previous engagement. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Clerk Jenny Larson and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Robesonian reporter Sarah Willets was also in attendance.

### **Call to Order, Invocation and Dinner**

Mayor Pro Tempore Monte McCallum called the meeting to order and gave the invocation. The board then ate a dinner of sub sandwiches before beginning the retreat.

### **Retreat Topics of Discussion**

#### Icebreaker

The board answered trivia questions as an icebreaker.

#### Board communication issues

Town Manager Katrina Tatum went over good communication skills including opening up to the ideas and input of others and listening to what others have to say. She encouraged the board to work together as a team to collaborate and achieve common goals. Ms. Tatum stated that conflict on the board comes from not listening and giving credence to each other's ideas.

Commissioner Kemp specifically asked for the retreat because it is a good forum to discuss communication issues. He expects some disagreement among board members but feels like he has been personally insulted with demeaning comments and that it is rude and inappropriate. Commissioner Kemp has gone out of his way not to be rude to any board member and wants to work with everybody on the board.

Ms. Tatum respectfully asked that the town staff not be placed between two disagreeing board members. She encouraged the board to let the staff know they have faith in their capabilities to do their job.

Commissioner McCallum loves Fairmont and serving on the town board. He encouraged the board to quit bickering and stop doing stuff outside the board room that causes problems.

Commissioner Gaddy has only been on the board for 68 days and feels like she is at a disadvantage on some issues because she doesn't know the backstory. She doesn't like the board's bickering and would like everyone to act like adults, not insult each other and work as a unified body.

Commissioner Evans stated that he does not like Commissioner Kemp and never has but is willing to work with him and share ideas. Commissioner Kemp appreciated Commissioner Evans's honesty but was stunned that he felt that way.

Ms. Tatum encouraged the board to have mutual respect for each other and try to act as a unified body to put a positive foot forward even though it may not be an easy process because of conflict.

Commissioner Kemp asked that personal insults not be thrown out at board meetings because he will defend himself.

### Town Departmental issues

Police Department - Ms. Tatum presented the current status of the police department on behalf of Chief Kim Monroe, who is sick and could not attend the retreat:

- 1) Separations – Individuals who have been separated from the Department within the last two years of current date: Danny Parker, David Schmale, Darren Jones, Roy Grant, David Windom, Cody Blount, Cody McKinnon, Evan Whitley, Stephen Penfield (5months), Matthew Steeno (6 months), Gyvian Collins-Jackson (4 months) and Ryan Gibson (8 months).
- 2) Departmental Meetings – Every two to three months.
- 3) A new Standard Operating Procedure has been developed. Once it is completely finished, it will be submitted to the Board and the Town's Attorney. The previous manual was too subjective in nature and fell short in terms of individual accountability.
- 4) Performance Evaluation Packet has been developed which will provide an assessment of performance achievement.
- 5) Assigned 2 Officers rather than 1 to a shift during critical times; Friday & Saturday, especially night shift on the critical days.
- 6) Began specialized training (training that is not included during recertification) for Officers which was desperately needed. Examples include supervisory, weaponry, critical response situations, community relations, etc.
- 7) Assigned Veronica Hunt to Evidence Section. Restrictions were quickly placed, locks were changed and protocol for submission was established in order to meet standard operational procedures.
- 8) Because the department was frequently short-staffed, part-time positions were established. The Robeson Co Sheriff's office has been a tremendous help in this area although we are not currently using them. The Deputies work at a rate of \$14.00/hr. when called upon. Reserve Officers receive no compensation, but are required to work at least 16 hrs. /mo. in order to retain their Law Enforcement certification with the Town of Fairmont.
- 9) The Police Department has twelve Board approved positions. One position of the twelve has remained unfilled in order to achieve other departmental needs such as In-Car camera systems and Body-cameras. The need is self-explanatory and they will most likely become mandatory in the near future.

Page 3 – Board Retreat, February 23, 2016

- 10) Developed a Quality Circle Organization which consists of a cross section of citizens within Fairmont and one police officer to explore various complaints from the community and improve community/police relations. The individuals can go online, mail or drop off applications to join this group at the PD. The application is reviewed and checked before approval. The Q.C. cites various problems within town, prioritizes them, develop ways to solve them and present them to the Police Chief to implement if and when feasible.
- 11) Initiated the Park, Walk and Talk (PWT): Officers walk through the various neighborhoods and connect with the citizens by initiating dialogue, deterring crime and politely seeking info on any crimes that may be afoot. The Officers also park and walk through the business areas in town.
- 12) A Citizen's Complaint form was created and is offered to Citizens with complaints.
- 13) Internship Program developed for H.S. and college seniors who are recommended by their Student Advisors. This internship serves as a part of their study curriculum.
- 14) Curbed wasteful spending by cutting unused and unnecessary contract items and services. NCIC terminal access was eliminated with the exception of 1 terminal which is in the Records Section. Officers utilize Allen Communications to access NCAWARE and run In-State checks. Out of State checks can be done by our Records section or Communication Center in Lumberton. The DSS contract was also terminated with a savings of over \$2,500 for the last year of the contract.
- 15) Also purchased a Dodge Charger in excellent condition from NC State Highway Patrol (NCSHP) for less than \$8,000.00 in order to have a working spare. Old, dilapidated cars were auctioned and sold yielding \$3,075.
- 16) Fleet Management maintenance schedule established as there was a great deal of spending on vehicle repairs in previous years with no structured monitoring.
- 17) A complaint was lodged with Dodge Corporation based on consistent and similar vehicle repair among several vehicles. As a result, Fairmont was refunded about \$4,000.00.
- 18) Applied for 2 grants: The Fairmont Initiative-\$16,755 for supplies, surveillance, special operations, etc. and the Fairmont Initiative II- \$46,485 – a technology grant. Both grants are pending as of this date.
- 19) Currently in the process of creating a 2 and 3-year contract for potential employees. I believe this tool is essential to retention and commitment.

Current needs:

- a) Building security and surveillance specifically for 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Admin and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Evidence.
- b) Contract Employees.
- c) Revision of Town policy ref employees who are out on sick, injury or investigative matters. One year would be my suggestion and employee may return to work at same rate if cleared of circumstances.
- d) Commissioners talking negatively to Officers about PD or members of staff.
- e) Investigator/Training Coordinator.
- f) Increase pay based on merit for Officers.

Police Department Hierarchy - We currently have one dedicated Detective. There are two approved Detective positions. However, since we hired 2 veteran Officers who have an extensive background (Jon Edwards/Scott Jacobs), I decided to eliminate one of those positions and have Jon serve a dual role. He was a Detective Captain at the Scotland Co Sheriff's Dept. prior to his employment with Fairmont. Scott was also a ranking official there with vast experience. I also have an extensive background in investigations. Therefore, the 3 of us can absorb all duties and responsibilities of the 2nd position detective, thereby resulting in a cost savings to the department. For now, it is working very well. There is a potential issue if our officers accept other more lucrative employment. Please note that once a Patrol Officer is placed in the Corporal position, there is no paid customary promotion. The position is a "training only" position, not intended for automatic advancement. Compared with 11 nearby jurisdictions, only two towns have a starting salary of \$27,000; Saint Pauls and Fairmont. The other jurisdictions have a starting salary of \$28,000, \$1,000 greater than ours. The sliding pay scale currently in place for the Town is comparable or better than other jurisdictions. Due to the Town's financial status we have been prevented from granting step increases associated with experience, which has put us at a disadvantage.

Commissioner Evans suggested Ms. Tatum contact the Saint Pauls police chief to see how they coordinate with the county sheriff's department, as well as the possibility of switching cars every 50 miles.

Fire Department – Ms. Tatum presented the following report on behalf of Fire Chief James Thompson. The total number of approved fire fighters is 25 including Chief James Thompson, Deputy Chief Verdell Freeman and Assistance Chief Garrett Robinson. 2015 statistics – One hundred forty-eight calls, ten of which were mutual aid to Rural Fire.

Fire Department Inventory:

1. Fire Apparatus

- a. 2007 Kenwood Fire Truck (Engine 910) – Good condition, 750 gallon capacity, pressure remains as factory designed.
- b. 1990 Ford Fire Truck (Engine 911) – Fair condition – ball valves and packing is leaking from the pump – 1,000 gallon capacity – Department of Insurance requires that you maintain one vehicle with 1,000 gallon capacity. It also needs an alternator.
- c. 1990 Volvo Fire Truck (Engine 912) – Poor condition – Has been in an accident – it has air leaks which causes break, clutch, steering and shifting problems. 750 gallon capacity. Eight speeds making it difficult for drivers in emergency. Since we have purchased this vehicle, we have replaced the drive shaft, transmission, air lines from front to back, air dryer (currently doesn't function), and it has also been wrecked. The front tire blew out on I-95. The NC Dept. of Insurance recommends that a vehicle be retired after twenty years due to safety issues. The USDA loan for this truck was recently paid off and the truck will be declared surplus soon.
- d. 2004 Ford Crown Victoria – Driven by Chief Freeman – It is in good condition.
- e. 2001 Ford Crown Victoria – Driven by the Chief Thompson – It is in fair or worse condition. Transmission is slipping as well as other issues that they can't ascertain.

2. Turnout Gear – total of 25 sets – The National Fire Protection Association recommends that turnout gear be replaced every 10 years.
  - a. 8 sets of gear were purchased during the current fiscal year at \$1,200 per set.
  - b. The staff desires that 17 sets be scheduled for replacement in the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year at a cost of \$20,400 for all sets. National Fire Protection Association recommends that protective gear be replaced every 10 years.
3. Class A Uniforms - The town currently has about 15 sets of Class A Uniforms that are 12 years. These uniforms are worn for funerals, special events, award ceremonies, etc. Ten firefighters have no Class A Uniforms. The cost of the uniforms is approximately \$100-\$120 per set.
4. Radios and Batteries – Have a total of 25 radios – 16 of which are 12-year-old Icons (none are water proof), four - 2-year-old Kenworth Radios, and five – 4-year-old Motorola Vipers (Walkie Talkies). Ideally water proof gear is desired in order to maintain high level of functioning during a fire event. Four new Motorola radios have been ordered which are intended to replace four Icons.
5. Fire Hydrant Replacement – Several fire hydrants are leaking and in need of repair or replacement. Please review the interim inspection reports from the NC Department of Insurance. Fairmont has a 5 rating, which is the best rating. I will try to get a copy of the ISO rating report as soon as possible. Public Works Director Ronnie Seals stated that some of the town’s fire hydrants date back to the 1930s and 1940s.

Public Buildings Condition Report – Ms. Tatum gave the following report on the condition of the town’s public buildings:

1. Public Works Building – This building is in above average condition. The building needs some tile replacement and painting.
2. Hector Maclean Public Library – This property is in average condition. There is no public access to restrooms and no handicapped access at all. Lack of public access to restrooms is intentional due to high incidences of vandalism.
3. Fire Hall Building – The roof was replaced on this building 2005-2006. The building is in above average condition. There is currently a roof leak, which needs to be addressed as soon as possible.
4. Town Hall Building – This building is in fair condition; experiencing moisture entry in the Water Department, third floor evidence and the basement. This building is considered to be the highest priority because of possible mold issues.
5. The Heritage Center – This building, having been recently renovated is considered to be in good condition. So far, there are minor wear and tear issues.
6. Waste Water Treatment Plant – This building went on line in 2002 and is considered to be in good condition. However, due to high levels of waste water being produced, stress in various areas is beginning to show. There have been leaks behind the Weirs, preventing the Effluent Trough from filling correctly thereby causing the wastewater to go back into the clarifier and not over the Weirs where it is treated. This plant is approved and permitted to handle 1.75 million gallons of waste per day. The plant has been processing from 1.7 to 2.8 million gallons of waste per day; including rain days. We are exceeding approved limits by 1.05 million gallons of waste on some days. February readings are available for review showing where we are exceeding limits. Even on rain recovery days (at least five days dry) we are exceeding our limitations.

Some remedies:

- a. The most significant remedy is the Inflow & Infiltration grant. The type of I & I improvements that will be made in Fairmont will include replacing and slip lining. There will be a similar process accomplished in Fair Bluff.
- b. Staff will be working with LKC to analyze flow data to try to pin point problems at each location; Cerro Gordo, Proctorville, Boardman, Fair Bluff, Harger, and Proctorville.
- c. Staff will also communicate with each jurisdiction to request that they take daily readings so that the data will be more precise.

Public Works Director Ronnie Seals said that the leaks in the Weirs need to be fixed before the plant starts getting bad samples. Ms. Tatum reminded the board that the town is currently under a moratorium from NCDENR for exceeding capacity and cannot add any new businesses or homes unless they are already tapped on. Mr. Seals stated the capacity problems come from rainwater going into the sewer system as well as groundwater seeping into the joints of old clay sewer pipes that date back to the 1920s and 1930s.

Ms. Tatum gave an update on the Old Field drainage problem. The neighborhood is basically located in a swamp. Pipe issues and beaver problems prevent the water from draining properly causing flooding and sewer backups. She has contacted engineers to identify problems and target corrective actions.

Ms. Tatum received estimates on repairing the Floyd and Mitchell Street bridges of \$60,000 to \$100,000 each. The bridges only affect four families and traffic is very light with Mr. Seals only observing one car passing over the bridge in an hour and a half span. Ms. Tatum will look at alternatives but right now she is recommending the bridges be closed to traffic.

### Budget

Ms. Tatum briefly went over the town's current budget vs. actual report. She encouraged the board to become familiar with it as next year's budget planning will begin soon.

### Zoning

Commissioner Kemp informed the board that he would be using section 30.18 of the town code to offer a motion to reconsider the motion to start the procedure to amend Section 154.176(B)(1) Nightclubs or Bars, of Title XV Land Usage, Chapter 154 Zoning, to exempt the 100 to 300 block of Main Street (from Iona Street to Railroad Street) at the March 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting. A motion to reconsider is for any board member to use when they were one of the ones voting in the majority on any matter and later wish to reconsider or change their vote.

Nuisance Abatement update

Ms. Tatum plans to meet with Jan Maynor at the LRCOG to discuss alternatives for handling the nuisance abatement properties. She suggested the board ask the county for a reduction in tipping fees to help alleviate the demolition costs. She has asked Mr. Cody Hunt to work on a Phase I Environmental Report on the eight commercial buildings to be demolished as part of the NC Department of Commerce grant the town is applying for. She added Hi Dollar Warehouse to the list of buildings to target for demolition. Commissioner Kemp wanted to know if the town needed to take ownership of the property in order to get it torn down. Ms. Tatum replied that the property owner does not have to give us the property, just control of it.

Billboard on I-95

Commissioner McCallum thanked Commissioner Kemp for his due diligence on the “Shortest Route to the Beach” I-95 billboard sign project. Commissioner Kemp went out and got sponsors to continue the billboard at its current location near the bridge at Exit 17 with Lamar sign company. Commissioner McCallum has been looking for a better location for the sign and one just came available next to the school bus garage near mile marker 14. This Wildwood sign is closer to Exit 10, will cost the same as the Lamar sign, is bigger in size and can be visibly seen from a longer distance. Commissioner Kemp was surprised by the timing and discussion of changing the sign’s location. He feels the sign sponsors are happy with the current location of the billboard. He offered the compromise of leaving the sign at its current location for another year and then discuss changing the location next January. Commissioner McCallum stated that he has been trying to find a better location for the sign for two years and this billboard just came available last week. Ms. Tatum suggested Commissioners Kemp and McCallum contact the sign sponsors to see if they would continue to support the billboard if it was moved to a different location. Commissioner McCree was concerned that if the sponsors pulled out would the town end up paying for the sign. He asked that the billboard be placed on the March agenda.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – March 15, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, March 15, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, J.J. McCree, Amelia McLean (by telephone), Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Police Captain Jon Edwards and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Kelly Johnson, Brianna Lazzaro, Roneisha Hammonds, Gradd Floyd, John Jackson, Gaines Grantham, Sam Johnson and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Special Recognition**

#### **Proclamation – Memory of Rev. Thelma Watson**

Mayor Townsend read a proclamation in memory of Rev. Thelma Watson. A signed copy of this proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

#### **Brianna Lazzaro – Damsel In Defense representative.**

Ms. Brianna Lazzaro gave a brief presentation on the Damsel In Defense company. Damsel In Defense sells self-defense products. Their mission is to educate the public on the dangers around them, equip them with products whether it be pepper spray, a stun gun, or a striking tool, and empower them to use these products in the face of adversity.

#### **John Jackson – Dilapidated houses**

Mr. John Jackson is the retired fire chief and code enforcement officer for the town. He is well aware that the town has a problem with dilapidated houses but as a taxpayer he is concerned where the funding will come from to deal with it.

#### **Gradd Floyd – Streetlight request**

Mr. Gradd Floyd, of 304 Pittman Street, lives beside the old Mercer house. He would like another streetlight installed on Pittman Street because it is very dark and there have been several break ins at the Mercer house.

Roneisha Hammonds – Guardian ad Litem program

Ms. Roneisha Hammonds, a student at UNCP, is interning with the Guardian ad Litem program. She is seeking volunteers to be advocates for children. There are currently 300 children in the program and only 100 of them have advocates. A Guardian ad Litem is a trained volunteer who is appointed by the court to advocate for the best interests of an abused or neglected child. The next training date is May 9 and the Guardian ad Litem office is located upstairs in the old DSS building in Lumberton.

**Consent Agenda**

Town Attorney Rob Price asked the board to amend the first full paragraph on page 6 of the February 16, 2016, minutes so that the second to the last sentence of that paragraph be changed to read as follows:

Town Attorney Rob Price said some of the properties could be deemed an imminent danger to public health and condemned without the usual statutory procedures upon proper findings by the Town Board under a long-standing statute. ~~by the Health Department.~~

Upon motion by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner McCallum it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items as amended:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, February 16, 2016 and Board Retreat, February 23, 2016.

**Committee Reports**

Fairmont Chamber of Commerce

Chamber President Kelly Johnson encouraged people to join the chamber. He invited everyone to attend the Membership Drive and Spring Social on Thursday, March 17, at 6:00 p.m. at the Fairmont Golf Club. The chamber holds regular meetings on the first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. They have recently cleaned up Memory Lane park, pressure washed, painted and planted flowers on the front porch of Town Hall.

**Unfinished Business**

Motion to Reconsider a Vote – requested by Commissioner Kemp.

Ms. Tatum stated that during the last meeting, the Board voted to instruct the Town Manager to move forward to arrange a Public Hearing to consider a Zoning Amendment regarding Nightclubs and Bars with respect to the distance requirements. Commissioner Kemp voted in the affirmative to moving forward on a public hearing. At the Retreat meeting, Commissioner Kemp gave notice that pursuant to the Fairmont Code of Ordinances, Section 30.18 Rules of Debate, paragraph (D) he intended to exercise his right to make a motion to “reconsider a vote.”

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to reconsider the vote taken on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 on the motion to start the procedure to amend Section 154.176(B)(1) Nightclubs or Bars, of Title XV Land Usage, Chapter 154 Zoning, to exempt the 100 to 300 block of Main Street (from Iona Street to Railroad Street). Commissioner Gaddy seconded the vote and it passed unanimously.

Town Attorney Rob Price said the next step would be go to the planning board. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to start the procedure to amend Section 154.176(B)(1) Nightclubs or Bars, of Title XV Land Usage, Chapter 154 Zoning, to exempt the 100 to 300 block of Main Street (from Iona Street to Railroad Street). Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Commissioner Kemp is grateful there will be a public hearing and that the planning board will be involved. His problem was that there was not enough time to make an informed decision since it was added at the beginning of the February meeting. Commissioner Kemp is opposed to a business serving alcohol within 1,000 feet of a church. He plans to speak out and oppose any future requests for late agenda items. Commissioner Evans pointed out that there is already a restaurant in town that sells alcohol and if you allow it for one you should allow it for another. The vote on Commissioner McCallum's motion passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners McCallum, Evans, McLean and Gaddy  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Ms. Tatum explained the process may take up to four months. The next step is to have the planning board meet, and then come back to the board before advertising for a public hearing.

Nuisance Abatement update.

Commissioner Kemp has asked that nuisance abatement be placed on the agenda every month for the board to receive updates. He recently wrote a letter to Mr. Baxter Miller regarding the property at the intersection of North Walnut Street and Leesville Road. He commended Mr. Miller for ending the lease with the previous lessee and beginning a cleanup of that location.

Ms. Tatum is working on a grant for the demolition of commercial properties. There are two types of grants. One is a federal grant of \$500,000 with no match but is primarily used for manufacturing sites. The second is the State's Rural Demolition Program, which allows up to \$75,000 for buildings 100,000 square feet or less and up to \$150,000 for buildings over 100,000 square feet. This program would cost the town \$18,750-\$25,000 and would only take down a limited number of buildings. The Rural Demolition Program also requires a local match of 25%. There is no money for residential demolition.

Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee.

The Town of Fairmont has applied for and secured a Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Planning Grant through the North Carolina Department of Transportation. One of the requirements for the Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Planning Grants is that a Steering Committee appointed by the Board of Commissioners be put in place. At last month's meeting the Board indicated that it would finalize the list on March 15, 2016.

General categories for representation and individuals appointed to date:

- Relevant Planning staff – Town Manager Katrina Y. Tatum and Town Clerk Jenny H. Larson
- Police representative – Police Captain Jon Edwards
- Public Works Director – Public Works Director Ronnie Seals
- Local council member – Commissioner Terry Evans
- Medical facility or health representative
- Elderly person possibly from retirement center/community (typically more for pedestrian plans)
- Chamber or downtown business or major employer
- School system representative
- Major community representative (someone who can speak for a large sector of the community) – Mayor Pro Tem Monte McCallum
- YMCA and other community physical activity-centered organizations
- One or two long-time (well known) town residents that can potentially represent the mixed demographic of the local community
- A knowledgeable bicycle or pedestrian advocate (depending upon which type of plan you are creating): someone who is already a strong active voice for bicycle or pedestrian needs.
- NCDOT Division Planning Engineer – Chuck Miller, PE and Joe Bailey, PE
- MPO/RPO representative
- Any other special populations

The following additional names have been submitted for your approval to date:

Commissioner Amelia McLean submits a candidate for the Medical Facility or health representative – Physician Assistant Denis Ricard and she is asking that she be appointed as the “knowledgeable bicycle or pedestrian advocate.”

Commissioner Evans made a motion to accept the names of Denis Ricard and Amelia McLean for the Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### Billboard update.

Ms. Tatum informed the board that a new “Shortest Route to Myrtle Beach” I-95 billboard sign has been procured next to the school bus garage in a very visible location. It is situated between two “Visit Myrtle Beach” signs. All sponsors have been invoiced and the sign should be up by the end of the month.

## **New Business**

### **Local Government Federal Credit Union.**

Ms. Tatum has been on the Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) Advisory Board in excess of five years and became an advocate of this establishment because people come first with the credit union. Last week, she was transferred to this region. One of the things that she normally does in conjunction with this responsibility is to inform her jurisdiction and local government officials about the many benefits available through the LGFCU.

If you are a North Carolina local government employee or volunteer, you can join by opening a Share Account. It's a dividend-earning savings account that's the foundation of every membership, and represents your ownership in the credit union. If you are an employee or volunteer with any of the following, you qualify for membership:

- North Carolina municipalities, including cities, towns and villages
- North Carolina county governments
- Emergency management services, including fire, rescue, law enforcement and volunteer fire departments
- Authorities (housing, airport, water, sewer)
- Districts (sanitation, soil, water conservation)
- Commissions (planning, economic development)
- ABC Boards
- Libraries
- Parks and Recreation departments
- Councils of Government
- Local government associations
- Certain hospitals
- Elected and appointed government officials
- Retirees from North Carolina local government
- Contract employees in local government units
- Immediate family members of an LGFCU member, including spouse, children, grandchildren, mother, father, sister, brother or grandparents (membership is also extended to step relationships of listed family members)
- Foster parents
- Spouses of deceased persons who were eligible for membership
- Persons living in the same residence and maintaining a single household unit with an LGFCU member

Resolution 16-03 – Doughlin bid for 505 Gertrude Street.

Ms. Tatum has received an offer from Mr. Jeffrey Doughlin, of 1 Peter 5:7 LLC in the amount of \$1,000 for 505 Gertrude Street, Parcel #300805005. Commissioner McCallum suggested going back to Mr. Doughlin to see if he would be willing to bid \$2,000 on the property. Commissioner Evans made a motion to table Resolution 16-03 to see if Mr. Doughlin was interested in increasing his offer. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Streetlight request by Mr. Gradd Floyd, 304 Pittman Street.

On November 20, 2016, Mr. Gradd Floyd, who lives at 304 Pittman Street, requested that a street light be placed at the Iona Street end of Pittman Street. The Police Department has performed an assessment of the area to assist in making a decision on this request. According to the Project for Public Spaces, a rule of thumb for determining need with respect to street lights is (on two way streets) to place a light every 125 to 150 feet on alternating sides of the street. There is only one street light on a block that spans 463.83 feet. Because of the arrangement of the houses on this block, the assessment indicates that at least one light should be placed in the vicinity of 304 Pittman Street, either on the same side of the street or on the opposite side of the street. Ms. Tatum has asked for a cost assessment from Duke Energy but hasn't heard back from them yet. It was the consensus of the board to not take any action on the streetlight request until a price quote is received from Duke Energy.

Fairmont Economic Development Committee member appointment – Commissioner McCree.

Commissioner McCree nominated Kelly Johnson to the Fairmont Economic Development Committee to replace Wade Sealey. Commissioner Evans made a motion to accept Kelly Johnson's nomination to the Fairmont Economic Development Committee. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Fairmont Rotary Club flagpole donation.

Mr. Sam Johnson and Mr. Gaines Grantham, on behalf of the Fairmont Rotary Club, are offering to donate a flag pole to be placed in the Fairmont Community Park. This 35-foot tall flag pole would be placed in the same area as the existing flag pole and would allow the town to display a large 6x10 U.S. flag. They are asking that the town assist with the installation of the flag pole and the Rotary Club will bear all other costs. They would also like a brick plaque stand similar to the one next to the clock in front of Town Hall. Mr. Grantham recommended that the new flag pole have a spotlight on it so it can be seen at night.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to accept the Rotary Club's donation of a flag pole to be placed in the Fairmont Community Park with the town assisting with the installation and plaque stand. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Consider utility reconnection fee increase.

Commissioner McCallum has asked that the Board consider increasing the utility reconnect fee to bring it more in line with surrounding jurisdictions. To this end, he is asking that the cut-off fee be increased by \$10.00, raising the fee from \$25.00 to \$35.00. Currently, four towns in the county charge similar or higher fees and two towns charge the same or less:

Town of Rowland	\$35.00
Town of Red Springs	\$25.00
Town of Pembroke	\$20.00
Town of St. Pauls	\$35.00
Town of Lumberton	\$35.00

Commissioner Evans made a motion to increase the utility reconnect fee to \$35. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The new fee will be advertised before it goes into effect July 1, 2016.

Bill consideration - Public Enterprise Services.

Ms. Tatum informed the board that it has become more and more difficult for municipalities to collect unpaid public enterprise debts. The typical means of collection such as Debt set off and Accurant don't ensure maximum collection of the debt. It is possible to collect this outstanding debt as a tax lien which would improve the collection efforts. If executed properly, this resource will yield revenue for years to come with little effort. In order to gain this valuable collection resource, a Bill must be introduced at the State Legislative level so that it becomes law. The next session of the General Assembly begins on April 25, 2016 and the House Bill Introduction deadline is May 10, 2016. If you hope to have a Bill introduced during the upcoming session, a request needs to be made as soon as possible to allow time for its introduction. Ms. Tatum is requesting that the Board allow her to contact one of our state representatives to introduce this Public Enterprise Services Bill on the town's behalf. The proposed language has already been introduced on behalf of the Town of Mount Gilead and therefore would require little change to accommodate Fairmont. It reads as follows:

Public Enterprise Services Bill

- I. Collection of Delinquent Bills. If a fee charged by the Town for a public enterprise service remains unpaid for a period of at least 90 days, the Town may collect it in any manner by which delinquent personal or real property taxes can be collected.
- II. Liens. If the delinquent fees are collected in the same manner as delinquent real property taxes, the delinquent fees are a lien on the real property owned by the person contracting with the Town for the service. If a lien is placed on real property, the lien shall be valid from the time of filing in the office of the clerk of superior court of the county in which the service was provided and shall include a statement containing the name and address of the person against whom the lien is claimed, the name of the Town, the specific service that was provided, the amount of the unpaid charge for that service, and the date and place of furnishing that service. A lien on real property is not effective against an interest in real property conveyed after the fees become delinquent if the interest is recorded in the office of the register of deeds prior to the filing of the lien for

delinquent fees. No lien under this Article shall be valid unless filed in accordance with this section after 90 days of the date of the failure to pay for the service or availability fees and within 180 days of the date of the failure to pay for the service or fees. The lien may be discharged as provided in G.S. 44-48. The Town shall adopt an appeals process providing notice and an opportunity to be heard in protest of the imposition of such liens. The county tax office, once notified of the Town's lien, shall include the lien amount on any tax bills printed subsequent to the notification. The county tax office shall add or remove liens from the tax bill at the request of the Town, such as in the case of an appeal where the Town decides to cancel the lien.

- III. Remedies Not Exclusive. The remedies authorized in this Article are not exclusive, and the Town may use any and all other collection procedures authorized by general law, including, but not limited to, the debt setoff provisions of Chapter 105A of the General Statutes.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to introduce this Public Enterprise Services Bill. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Town Attorney Rob Price stated that all of the local state legislators would have to be in favor of the bill, not just the one introducing it.

Border Belt Historical Society request for insurance coverage for Heritage Days festival.

Ms. Tatum talked with Mr. Larry Floyd, Jr., President of the Border Belt Historical Society, regarding the Heritage Days Festival. He understands that the town cannot cover the event under the umbrella of our insurance but would appreciate the board giving a donation towards the one-day event insurance cost of \$321. Ms. Tatum reminded the board that the town already gives the museum \$1,000 annually in the budget. Commissioner Kemp, who is also co-curator at the museum, stated the \$1,000 goes toward the salary of Lib Haywood and the museum's electric bill. Commissioner McLean asked if last year's festival made enough of a profit to cover the insurance for this year's event. Commissioner Kemp replied that the profit was minimal. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to deny giving a donation to the Border Belt Historical Society for the Heritage Days festival insurance cost. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners McCallum, Evans, McLean and Gaddy  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Daystar request to restructure loan payments.

Ms. Tatum reported that on February 15, 2016, Mr. Danny Nobles, of DayStar Solutions, submitted a letter of request to restructure the loan that was in the amount of \$300,000 that was issued on November 1, 2006 under the Rural Business Enterprise Grant program. The total repayment with interest was \$344,977.92. This request is being made because the company has struggled to stay afloat over the last few years and is seeking some relief of the obligation until such time that their strategies to diversify help to stabilize the business. The RBEG grants were grant money given to towns to facilitate the development of small and emerging rural businesses, distance learning networks, and employment-related adult education programs. DayStar Solutions has been in business since October 25, 2002, and the S Corporation since February 24, 2003. In 2006, when its new plant opened, this business employed 69 local residents. Due to the

economy, the number of employees has fluctuated, with DayStar carrying as many employees as the market for their industry would bear. Right now, DayStar employs 55 employees between the Anvil Distribution Center and Fairmont. The whole purpose of the RBEG was to help small businesses get started and the ultimate goal of the program is to retain those businesses if at all possible. The current status of the loan is as follows:

Restructure Details – Loan Restructured February 1, 2013 – Loan Amount - \$226,932.20

2013 – Total Due \$6,457:	Total Paid	\$5957	Balance Owed	\$500
2014 – Total Due \$14,400:	Total Paid	\$17,244.18	Balance Owed	(\$2,844.18)
2015 – Total Due \$24,000:	Total Paid	\$9795.58	Balance Owed	\$14,204.32

Total Paid Against Loan Since Restructuring \$27,099.33.

Upon Default, the interest rate goes to 8%.

As of March, 2016, the loan is currently in default by approximately \$20,204.32.

Approximate Loan Balance (Excluding Interest Due) - \$193,935.44.

2016 – No payments have been made during 2016.

The town does have recourses available to it to recover the funds.

Options for Board Consideration and Discussion: Any Combination of the Following:

1. Foreclose and attach assets – personal and business
2. Restructure the loan – Set terms of Restructure – Require Tax Returns annually to assess ability to pay for any modification to increase or reduce monthly payments.
3. Create a combination of Deferred Loan and Loan Payable
4. Forgive Loan or Portion thereof

Ms. Tatum recommended the board restructure the loan since the payments made will allow the town to help others start businesses or stay afloat. That ability would stop if the town forgave the loan. Mr. Nobles had asked for the loan payments to be reduced to \$300 a month. Commissioners McCallum and Evans suggested \$500 a month instead and Ms. Tatum agreed with that recommendation. Commissioner Evans made a motion to restructure DayStar's RBEG loan with \$500 monthly payments and 1% interest. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Non Residential Maintenance and Safety Code.

Ms. Tatum presented a draft Non Residential Maintenance and Safety Code for the board's review and comments. With the concentrated efforts to approach code enforcement and clean up the town, a non-residential building code will be needed. This will serve as a guide to follow in taking corrective actions in this area. Town Attorney Rob Price suggested some minor changes like adding "as long as funds are available" when the town needs to demolish a building. He also added that the use of the Board of Adjustment was not a proper function and needed to be corrected as well. Commissioner Evans made a motion to accept the Non Residential Maintenance and Safety Code as presented with the language changes suggested by the town attorney. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A corrected copy of the code is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Mitchell and Floyd Streets bridges.

Ms. Tatum reminded the board that NCDOT has reviewed the inspection report for two town bridges and found that they are in poor condition. The current estimate is \$120,000 to \$200,000 to repair both. Each year, the town incurs expenses associated with these bridges. One of the alternatives to having these recurring expenses as well as the repair costs is to close both bridges. Having heard about this issue, Mr. Buster Jackson, who is one of the residents affected if the town were to close the bridges, polled the community and found that for the most part there were no objections. He did ask if a walking bridge could be installed. Commissioner McCallum has also polled citizens and found that the citizens polled had no objection. Families on both sides of each bridge have an alternative route to travel to and from their homes. If closed, both sides of each bridge would be labeled "Dead End Street" and the town would have no further obligation to perform regular maintenance. There will be a one-time cost to demolish both bridges and NCDOT will be assisting the town with the cost estimate. Ms. Tatum asked the board to consider closing the bridges and to start the process to close them. Town Attorney Rob Price said the town will have to follow the formal procedure for closing a portion of a street. Commissioner Evans made a motion to move forward with the procedure to close the Floyd and Mitchell Street bridges. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Commissioner Input**

Commissioner Evans thanked Public Works for their dedication during the recent water leak near Fairmont Middle School. He wants the town to budget for better equipment for the public works department.

Commissioner McCallum thanked the citizens for coming. He also thanked the Chamber of Commerce for their work in making the town better.

Commissioner Kemp stated that the first amendment guarantees freedom of speech and he plans to continue to offer transparency and information to the citizens of Fairmont.

Commissioner McLean thanked everyone for letting her participate by phone during her medical situation. She hopes the board can continue to work in unity for the betterment of the town.

### **Manager's Input**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum presented the following report to the board:

Asset Management Project –A thorough presentation typically takes about 1-1.5 hours. The last edit to the different written plans (e.g. Financial Plan) and interactive map is finished, and the bulk of the balance will be done sometime this week. They want to meet with the manager and public works director to go over the finished product prior to board review. We will be given a flash drive for editing purposes. Remember that a thorough presentation typically takes about 1-1.5 hours and will need a larger area than the Commissioner's Board room. Everyone will have the opportunity to ask questions to get a better understanding of how this project will benefit the town.

Munsingwear Building – 807 E. White Pond Road – Prospective Business – We have not heard back from the individual we spoke with initially. However, we did give a packet of information to another prospective purchaser last week. Hopefully, we will hear back from one of them.

Sewer System Rehab Project – Phase III - The Request for Release of Funds advertisement is complete and the Disclosure Report and related documents have been sent to DCA. We are waiting to get a Release of Funds and all environmental conditions. Once that is done we will be able to move forward with the project.

Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant –Mr. Vine-Hodge, the NC DOT Representative for the Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant has informed staff that they now have all of the consultant contracts in place. They will be contacting us in about a week about moving forward with a potential consultant. They are now developing the scope of work.

North Carolina Department of Labor – OSHA Consultation Project – Staff is currently reviewing all Safety Data Sheets to make sure that all products used by staff are incorporated. In addition, the Police and Public Works Department are reviewing staff files to ascertain who needs Hepatitis Shots. I am currently trying to get my training file so that I can train Public Works on Blood Borne Pathogens. It will save the town money if I am able to train them versus hiring someone or sending them to class. OSHA requires that they have a live trainer, so they can't take online classes for this.

Bridge Report – As mentioned in the Board Retreat, the cost to repair the Bridges on Mitchell and Floyd will range from \$120,000 to \$200,000 for both bridges. Even though you can use Powell Bill funds for this expense, our Powell Bill allocation of \$90,564.70 will not cover the entire expense plus normal operating costs. I am proposing closing both bridges and creating four dead end streets. This proposal is not without cost; I am waiting now to get the estimate to demolish both bridges and place the required signage. In order to proceed to gain public comment on this proposal, we must have a public hearing. See your agenda for further information.

Welcome Sign Property on Iona Street – No change has occurred on this project, staff is still waiting for the owner to straighten out some mapping data in order to set up a meeting to discuss his plans.

NC Main Street and Small Town Main Street Grant Opportunity – As suggested by the Main Street officials, we have asked LKC Engineering to partner with us to do this application. As previously indicated the purpose of this program is to make improvements to downtown in vacant or underutilized buildings that helps prepare the property for a new business. Pictures and other information about some of the buildings that might qualify for this project are being compiled in an effort to apply for about \$300,000. Mayor Charles Townsend held a meeting last week to jump start the project by forming a Downtown Business Association. Officers were selected and to that end Chairperson Rachel Stevens will be attending the conference with me this week to gain a better understanding of how the grant is supposed to work.

Demolition Grant – The coordinator, Mr. Kenny Stagg is contemplating changing our project from a Federal Program which allows up to \$500,000 with no local match to the State’s Rural Demolition Program, which allows up to \$75,000 for buildings 100,000 square feet or less and up to \$150,000 for buildings over 100,000 square feet. This program would cost the town \$18,750-\$25,000 and would only take down a limited number of buildings. The Rural Demolition Program also requires a local match of 25%. I have asked that they reserve their decision to switch us to the State’s program until after they make a site visit because two or more of the demolition sites can be used for manufacturing. Their thinking is that because most of these buildings are downtown, the area will not be conducive to manufacturing and that just isn’t the case with most of the buildings.

Chicken Road Clean-up – As previously mentioned Chicken Road, leading into Fairmont has been cleaned up by the NCDOT maintenance crew. Their Litter Squad is back to their regular schedule for now and they are able to do more work. I have also sent a letter to NCDOT thanking them for their rapid response to the Chicken Road cleanup and requested that all other entrances to Fairmont be placed on the routine schedule. The cleanup of Cottage/NC Hwy 130 has already started.

Tax Collection – I have begun reviewing the town’s taxes and examining whether or not we are receiving the maximum that is due. I have found three cases where the taxes were either not being billed under Fairmont or no personal property tax was being collected for various reasons. The county has already billed for the back taxes they can collect, but the town needs to appoint a tax collector to perform discoveries for tax years 11 and 12. To assist with the efforts to collect these outstanding taxes, I will ask to be appointed the Tax Collector for the Town. The Town never appointed a Tax Collector when Rebecca Andrews left. Even though we transferred tax collection to the county, we need an in-house Tax Collector to collect back taxes.

Expenditure Review – I have begun to examine the Town’s expenditures to see if any money can be saved in that area. I have barely begun, but already a couple of expenditures have been found that do not need to be made. As with the taxes, I will update you as more data is collected.

### **Town Attorney Input**

Mr. Price reminded the board that the town ordinance only allows a board member to participate by telephone four times in a calendar year and we are approaching that limit for Commissioner McLean.

### **Announcements**

Thursday, March 17 - Chamber of Commerce Membership Drive and Spring Social, 6:00 p.m. Golf Course.

Saturday, March 19 - Easter Egg Hunt, Fairmont Community Park, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 20 - Fairmont Women's Club dinner, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Fairmont Masonic Lodge. Grilled Chicken plates \$7.00.

Friday, March 25 - Town offices and schools closed in observance of Good Friday.

Monday, March 28 - Friday, April 1 - Schools closed for Spring Break.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting – March 29, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, Charles Kemp, Amelia McLean, and Cassandra Gaddy. Commissioners J.J. McCree and Terry Evans were absent. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Charles Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner McCallum made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Cassandra Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Business**

1. **Tax Collector Designation** – There was a general discussion concerning the need for a designated Tax Collector in order to collect back taxes. The General Statute indicates that the Board must designate or appoint a Tax Collector. Commissioner Gaddy asked what the town has been doing since the Tax Collector retired. Town Manager Katrina Tatum indicated that two staff members have been taking on those duties as best they could but that some discoveries needed to be accomplished and we needed to designate someone to take on that task. Ms. Tatum indicated that it was particularly critical at this time because she had discovered three businesses had not paid real property and/or personal property tax for several years. She explained that the county had already been asked to bill for years 2013, 2014, and 2015. Commissioner Kemp asked if Finance Director Linda Vause should be designated as Tax Collector since she is the money person and Ms. Tatum responded that the board could designate anyone to take on those duties. Commissioner McLean said that she saw no reason why Ms. Tatum couldn't be the designee since she was the one who discovered the issue and therefore should be the one who is designated to correct the problem. Ms. Tatum indicated that once some of the major discoveries were done, she would come back to the Board requesting that someone else be designated to take on the duties of the Tax Collector.

### **Designation of Tax Collector**

Commissioner McCallum made a motion to designate Town Manager Katrina Tatum as Tax Collector for the Town of Fairmont. Commissioner Amelia McLean seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. **Permission to Approach Legislators to Draft a Bill for Voluntary Satellite Annexations**

Commissioner McCallum briefly explained that he and Commissioner McLean had been meeting with real estate agents, developers and owners concerning the town's goal of reaching Exit 10 at I-95. He indicated that because some of the properties along Chicken Road that are being targeted for annexation are outside of the NC General Statute regulations for distance and size, it will be necessary to ask one or more state legislators to introduce a bill on our behalf to allow such annexations. Commissioner McCallum's primary focus was the Economic Development benefits of such annexations. Commissioner Kemp was concerned about the owners being knowledgeable about and understanding that the annexation process is voluntary. He was assured by the Manager that no voluntary annexation can be done without the full knowledge and signature of the owners. Commissioners McLean and Gaddy expressed their support for such annexations from the standpoint of the town gaining income from taxes and any future developments.

**Vote to Allow Manager to Approach State Legislators to Introduce a Bill for Voluntary Satellite Annexation of Properties Along Chicken Road**

Commissioner McLean made the motion to allow the Town Manager to approach State Legislators to introduce a bill on behalf of the town to annex properties along Chicken Road which fall outside of the distance and size requirements of the General Statutes. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – April 19, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Commissioner Amelia McLean was absent. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Police Chief Kim Monroe and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Kelly Johnson, Rod Heasley, Patricia Sealey, Vanessa Abernathy and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Special Recognition**

#### **Proclamation – Memory of Commissioner Wade Sealey**

Mayor Townsend read a proclamation in memory of Commissioner Wade Sealey. A signed copy of this proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes. Commissioner Kemp also made a presentation to Commissioner Sealey's wife Patricia by reading a speech entitled "Big Wade's Seat."

### **Approval of Agenda**

Town Attorney Rob Price stated that the motion designating Town Manager Katrina Tatum as Tax Collector needed to be clarified. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Tax Collector Designation under Unfinished Business, Item C. Commissioner Kemp seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

#### **Vanessa Abernathy**

Ms. Vanessa Abernathy wanted to publicly thank Town Clerk Jenny Larson for helping her promote events at The Stage.

### **Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Kemp and seconded by Commissioner Gaddy it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, March 1, 2016 and Special Meeting, March 29, 2016.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Fairmont Chamber of Commerce**

Chamber President Kelly Johnson said the Chamber has planted new flowers on Main Street and in Memory Lane. He reminded everyone that the Chamber meets on the first Monday at 5:00 p.m. at the Golf Course.

### **Fairmont Economic Development Committee**

Chairman Rod Heasley reported that the FEDC met last week and welcomed new member, Kelly Johnson. The FEDC are working on individual categories such as beautification, marketing efforts and tourism. They plan to reach out to other civic and community organizations so everyone can work together for a common goal.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **Resolution 16-03 – Doughlin bid for 505 Gertrude Street.**

Ms. Tatum has received an offer from Mr. Jeffrey Doughlin, of 1 Peter 5:7 LLC in the amount of \$2,000 for 505 Gertrude Street, Parcel #300805005. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-03 authorizing the advertisement of an offer to purchase certain property, 505 Gertrude Street. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

### **Resolution 16-04 – Intent to closes bridges – Mitchell and Floyd Streets.**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum and Town Attorney Rob Price finally got opinions back from attorneys at the UNC School of Governments regarding the treatment of bridge closings. It appears that we must follow the guidelines of North Carolina General Statute §160A-299 as outlined below:

§ 160A-299. Procedure for permanently closing streets and alleys. (a) When a city proposes to permanently close any street or public alley, the council shall first adopt a resolution declaring its intent to close the street or alley and calling a public hearing on the question. The resolution shall be published once a week for four successive weeks prior to the hearing, a copy thereof shall be sent by registered or certified mail to all owners of property adjoining the street or alley as shown on the county tax records, and a notice of the closing and public hearing shall be prominently posted in at least two places along the street or alley. If the street or alley is under the authority and control of the Department of Transportation, a copy of the resolution shall be mailed to the Department of Transportation. At the hearing, any person may be heard on the question of whether or not the closing would be detrimental to the public interest, or the property rights of any individual. If it appears to the satisfaction of the council after the hearing that closing the street or alley is not contrary to the public interest, and that no individual owning property in the vicinity of the street or alley or in the subdivision in which it is located would thereby be deprived of reasonable means of ingress and egress to his property, the council may adopt an order closing the street or alley. A certified copy of the order (or judgment of the court) shall be filed in the office of the register of deeds of the county in which the street, or any portion thereof, is located.

Therefore, the first step in this process is for the Board to pass a Resolution of Intent to Close the two bridges on Floyd and Mitchell Streets and call for a public hearing. Following the issuance of the resolution, the bridges will be posted and the adjacent property owners will be notified. The resolution will be published four successive weeks.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-04 declaring the intention of the Town of Fairmont Board of Commissioners to consider the closing of two bridges identified as the Floyd Street (BN 770176) and Mitchell Street (BN 770171) Bridges. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

### **Tax Collector Designation**

Town Attorney Rob Price stated that in the minutes of the March 29 special meeting Ms. Tatum was designated as the Town's Tax Collector. That presents a problem because you can't designate two different entities as your tax collector. The town already designated the County Tax Collector as your tax collector for 2013 and following. Mr. Price suggested correcting the mistake by making the following motion: "I move to amend the motion designating the tax collector made at the March 29 special meeting by specifying that Town Manager Katrina Tatum is designated as the Tax Collector for the Town of Fairmont as to taxes for all years prior to 2013."

Commissioner Evans made a motion to amend the motion designating the tax collector made at the March 29 special meeting by specifying that Town Manager Katrina Tatum is designated as the Tax Collector for the Town of Fairmont as to taxes for all years prior to 2013. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **New Business**

#### **Discussion of telephone participation in board meetings.**

Commissioner Evans would like to extend the number of times a commissioner can participate in a board meeting by telephone. The current policy allows a commissioner to participate by telephone four times in a calendar year. Commissioner Evans would like to change it to six regular meetings. Town Attorney Rob Price interprets the current rule to mean four meetings a year, regular or special. Commissioner Evans would like to change the language to specify regular meetings only. Mr. Price asked Commissioner Evans if he would like the language to state no limit on commissioner participation by telephone for special and emergency meetings and six times per year for regular meetings. Commissioner Evans made a motion to amend the telephone participation in board meetings to state no limit on commissioner participation by telephone for special and emergency meetings and six times per year for regular meetings. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion of FY 2016-2017 Budget calendar.

Town Manager Katrina Tatum presented the FY 2016-2017 Budget calendar:

April 19<sup>th</sup> – April 29<sup>th</sup> – Town Board Reviews Budget vs Actual

April 15<sup>th</sup> – April 29<sup>th</sup> – Department Heads prepare their proposals for the Manager's Consideration

May 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5:00 pm – Departmental requests due to Town Manager

May 2<sup>nd</sup> – Board concerns, questions and suggestions to Manager for incorporation into budget

May 2<sup>nd</sup> – May 20<sup>th</sup> – Town Manager, Finance Officer and Deputy Finance Officer consolidate proposed budget for Town Board consideration

May 23<sup>rd</sup> – Distribution of Estimated Budget to Town Board

ALL BUDGET WORKSHOPS TO BEGIN AT 6:00 PM

Thursday – May 26<sup>th</sup> – Budget Workshop

Thursday – June 2<sup>nd</sup> – Budget Workshop

Tuesday – June 7<sup>th</sup> – Recommended Budget distributed to Town Board

Tuesday – June 14<sup>th</sup> – Budget Workshop, if needed

Tuesday – June 21<sup>st</sup> – Regular Meeting and Budget Public Hearing

Thursday – June 23<sup>rd</sup> – Budget Workshop, if needed

Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> – Budget Workshop, if needed

Thursday, June 30<sup>th</sup> – Special Meeting: Budget Amendment Submission – Fiscal Year 2015-2016 and Adoption of Fiscal Year 2016-2017 budget.

Friday – July 1, 2016 – Fiscal Year 2016-2017 begins

North Carolina Community Foundation.

Ms. Tatum read the following statement about the North Carolina Community Foundation:

The NCCF is the single statewide community foundation serving North Carolina and has made \$101 million in grants since its inception in 1988. With more than \$237 million in assets, the NCCF sustains 1,200 endowments established to provide long-term support of a broad range of community needs, nonprofit organizations, institutions and scholarships. The NCCF partners with 60 affiliate foundations to provide local resource allocation and community assistance in 67 counties across the state. An important component of the NCCF's mission is to ensure that rural philanthropy has a voice at local, regional and national levels.

As a leading charitable resource for donors, they partner with a growing number of individuals, families, businesses, corporations and nonprofit organizations to establish endowments or contribute to funds that benefit charitable causes that matter to them, to their communities and throughout North Carolina. The NCCF's charter also allows them to hold and administer statewide funds.

During recent years, the NCCF has changed its policies and can only work with organizations that have a 501(c)(3) or organizations that are allowed to use the town's Federal ID just for the purpose of tracking those dollars. In other towns, we did this for worthy organizations until they were able to get their designation and could apply on their own. What I am asking the board is for the authority to use the town as a go between for these organizations, which will allow them to apply for these funds. Of course the organizations will be the lead entity for applying for the funds and if possible, the checks will be made out to the requesting organization, so the money does not have to be accounted for in our budget. Although this has been done in the past for the Fairmont Farmers Festival Pageant, I would like Board approval to allow this benefit with the assurance that any organization utilizing the Town's credentials is well vetted by staff. I would only recommend allowing this benefit to established town based organizations like the Pageant, EDC, Community Development Foundation, and other established clubs and organizations.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to allow town based organizations, such as the Farmers Festival Pageant and the FEDC, and established clubs to use the town's Federal ID# to apply for grants. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Ms. Tatum added that the town would allow the organizations to use the town's Federal ID# one time but afterwards they would have to get their own 501(C)(3) number.

#### Police Officer service agreement.

Police Chief Kim Monroe would like to establish a service agreement between certified police officers and the Town of Fairmont. The purpose of this document is to retain officers longer than one year by having them sign two to three year service contracts. If said officer leaves before the term of his contract, he or she will have to reimburse the town for uniforms, equipment, etc.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Police Officer service agreement. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Ms. Tatum said the agreement would be implemented immediately.

#### **Mayor Input**

Mayor Townsend encouraged citizens and property owners to get involved in the Main Street program. He also encouraged input on economic development.

#### **Commissioner Input**

Commissioner Evans is ecstatic about the May Day Festival and Heritage Days bringing people to town. He is concerned about our young people being disrespectful, kids having kids and drug activity.

Commissioner McCallum thanked everyone for coming. He has heard positive things about the new I-95 billboard and hopes it will bring people to town.

Commissioner Gaddy thanked the citizens for coming and encouraged them to keep attending meetings and to bring friends.

Commissioner Kemp invited everyone to attend the Heritage Days Festival. There will be a dinner on Friday, April 22 at the Heritage Center and food, crafts and entertainment all day on the museum grounds on Saturday, April 23.

Commissioner Kemp also invited everyone to attend the Job Fair on Wednesday, May 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Heritage Center.

### **Manager's Input**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum presented the following report to the board:

Code Enforcement – We have met with a demolition company to see how many properties can be taken down with the funds available; approximately \$5,000. The Manager is drafting some agreements to get the owner's commitment to repay the demolition costs. Commissioner McCallum has been doing most of the leg work on this.

Demolition Grant We are still waiting on Mr. Kenny Stagg to schedule the site visit to Fairmont to make a determination about this grant.

Asset Management Project – Mr. Jim Perry is unable to meet with the board to make the presentation of the Asset Management Plan on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April. He has provided three alternative dates in May; 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. I am now waiting on Board response to these dates. (The board agreed to May 2.)

Musingwear Building – 807 E. White Pond Road – Prospective Business – There is still interest, but no movement with the second business owner on this property.

Sewer System Rehab Project – Phase II – CDBG No. 14-I-2657 - Sewer Improvements - Surveying is approximately 50% complete and we anticipate surveying to be completed by mid-May. Administrative - NCDEQ provided a letter on March 18, 2016 releasing all funding conditions for the project. The Town can now obligate funds in any category in the grant. LKC will coordinate with the Town to include a fair housing statement on the next monthly water/sewer bills. This is in keeping with the Town's fair housing policy.

Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant –We have selected a contractor for this project; Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) engineering consultants out of Raleigh. They did the pedestrian plan for the Town of Duck. I communicated with the Town Manager of Duck, Mr. Christopher Layton, who stated, “We have used VHB for a variety of projects, including the development of the comprehensive pedestrian plan. I was very pleased with the plan, particularly with the public input sessions. We used a planning committee appointed by Council and also held several public meetings outside of the committee's meetings.” Mr. Vine-Hodge, the NCDOT Representation for the Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant has informed us that they were pleased with the plan done for the Town of Duck also. The scope of work is complete and they are now proceeding to give instruction to VHB so they can get started. .

North Carolina Department of Labor – OSHA Consultation Project – Public Works is going to start sending staff to get their Hepatitis Shots during the next month. All police officers have gotten their shots and are now compliant. Staff has updated the Safety Data Sheets to make sure all products used by staff are incorporated in the SDS books. No appointments have been set up with the Consultants.

Bridge Report – See the board packet narrative for update. I still haven't received the estimate on demolishing the bridges.

NC Main Street and Small Town Main Street Grant Opportunity – Two meetings have now been held with the Fairmont Downtown Business Association and both went well. We plan to personally reach out to the property owners and businesses to gain more interest. Since the funds for the grant are first come, first served, we must move quickly. It is critical that we gain more interest from the owners. Rachel Stephens and I attended the mandatory meeting in Goldsboro.

Welcome Sign Property on Iona Street – No change has occurred on this project, staff is still waiting for the owner to straighten out some mapping data in order to set up a meeting to discuss his plans.

Expenditure Review and Tax Collection - Expenditure Review – A \$525/mo. expenditure for sewer pretreatment is now being billed out instead of the town absorbing that cost; \$1,050 Beginning 5/16 - \$6,300/year savings beginning 7/16. An audit of cell phones has been requested and a meeting was held with AT&T to discuss the emergency phone in front of town hall. The emergency phone cost has risen greatly since it was put in and is now at \$428/mo. We believe that a less expensive alternative is available. The discoveries mentioned last month are now complete, the following is a breakdown of just the base tax due to the town:

Personal Property - 2011 – 2015 - \$48,001.20

Real Property – 2011-2015 - \$53,529.01

I will continue to work on taxes throughout the year. My next step is to cross reference each street and street range with the county's taxable property list. This should help us fill any holes presently in the system.

Street Light on Pittman – As indicated during the last meeting, I asked Mr. Bland of Duke Energy for an estimate to install a street light. I recently contacted him and it had slipped his mind. He assured me that he was back on track with getting us what we need to make a decision.

Sidewalk Project – USDA is still holding the \$50,000 for the sidewalk installation on Leesville Road. However, we are now being told by the NCDOT that curb and gutters must be installed, which will greatly increase the cost of this project. It was originally estimated at \$91,000. Adding curb and gutter may double this project. I have asked Janet Robertson from the LRCOG to look for grants that may make this project feasible.

### **Town Attorney Input**

Town Attorney Robert Price had no input this month.

### **Department Head Input**

Police Chief Kim Monroe and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals had no input this month.

### **Announcements**

Thursday, April 21 - Games Night, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., The Stage.

Friday, April 22 - Fairmont Heritage Days Dinner, 7:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Friday, April 22 - FHS Baseball & Softball vs. Red Springs, 7:00 p.m.

Page 8 – Regular Meeting, April 19, 2016

Saturday, April 23 - Fairmont Heritage Days Festival, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Border Belt Museum.

Sunday, April 24 - Genealogy Workshop, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., The Stage. Basic Genealogy & Creating a Family Display board.

Tuesday, April 26 - Genealogy Workshop, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., The Stage. Basic Genealogy & Creating a Family Display board.

Tuesday, April 26 - FHS Baseball & Softball vs. East Columbus, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 28 - Movie Night, "The Great Debaters", 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., The Stage.

Friday, April 29 - Schools closed, teacher workday.

Monday, May 2 – Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, 6:00 p.m., Golf Course.

Wednesday, May 4 - Veterans & Community Job Fair, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center. Employers will be on site so please bring your resume and dress to impress. No children please.

Thursday, May 5 - Movie Night, "War Room", 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., The Stage.

Thursday, May 5 - National Day of Prayer, 6:30 p.m., Fairmont First Baptist Church.

Saturday, May 7 - Third Annual May Day Festival, all day with parade at 10:30 a.m., Downtown.

Monday, May 9 – Downtown Business Association, 11:00 a.m., Heritage Center.

Tuesday, May 10 - NCDMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall parking lot.

Tuesday, May 10 – Fairmont Economic Development Committee, 12:00 noon, Council Chambers.

Thursday, May 12 - Movie Night, "A Letter to Three Wives", 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., The Stage.

Tuesday, May 17 - Fairmont Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall Council Chambers.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting – May 2, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Monday, May 2, 2016 at 3:30 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy and Charles Kemp. Commissioners Amelia McLean and J.J. McCree were absent. Staff present included Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, Kevin Taylor and Johnny Britt. Others in attendance included Jan Maynor, Jim Perry and Jean Kline.

### **Call to Order**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and stated the purpose of the meeting was the presentation of the completed Fairmont Asset Management Plan.

### **Asset Management Plan Presentation**

Mr. Jim Perry and Ms. Jean Kline with the Lumber River Council of Governments presented Fairmont's Asset Management Plan. The town started the work on the plan a year ago in order to gain extra points for the CDBG sewer grant. The purpose of an Asset Management Plan is to describe how the town will manage the infrastructure assets of the drinking water and wastewater systems. It outlines maintenance, repair and replacement decisions which should be made. It is also a tool for combining technical, management and financial practices to ensure that the level of service required by the community is provided at the appropriate cost. The plan can be used for asset inventory and auditing compliance, NCDEQ compliance and to improve operations and maintenance.

Mr. Perry presented a GIS map of the town that shows where all the water and sewer lines are located, as well as all the fire hydrants, valves and manholes. Everything is color coded by type of pipe and each line segment, hydrant and manhole is numbered. You can click on an item and it will tell you what material it is made of, how old it is and when it was installed or repaired. The system can be updated when repairs are made to keep it current.

Ms. Kline referred the board to two notebooks: a green one for sewer and a blue one for water. The tables in the books correspond to the maps. The plan was developed using the USEPA's CUPSS program, designed specifically for small systems. The notebooks have three reports for each utility: asset inventory and assessment, financial check-up report and the asset management plan. The overall findings show the system strengths are relatively stable customer base, history of providing timely customer service, experienced staff and elected officials that have made difficult, but good, decisions for the utilities. The weaknesses are many assets are aged beyond their useful life, backlog of rehab and replacement needs and significant deferred maintenance, user rates do not generate the needed revenue to meet operating expenses in the sewer system and user rates in water system do generate revenue to cover operating expenses but there is a significant backlog of old and failed water assets that need to be replaced.

Ms. Kline reported the sewer system has 66 inventoried assets, of which 27 (41%) are High Risk (critical) assets. She added that the rates are not sufficient to sustain the cost of operations of the system. The sewer system has a significant amount of brick manholes and clay pipes that are over 75 years old. Clay pipe is problematic because water can leak into the seams and cracks causing inflow and infiltration issues, forcing the treatment plant to unnecessarily treat storm water. The town's sewer lines are 47% clay pipe.

Ms. Kline reported the water system has 47 inventoried assets, of which 36 (77%) are High Risk (critical) assets. Like sewer, the rates are not sufficient to sustain the cost of operations of the system. The town's water lines are 66% asbestos cement. Most water assets have not been replaced in the last 25 years. Several assets are 55 years and over which are still in service, including the town's wells. The useful life of a well is 30 years and the town's wells are 60 years old.

Ms. Kline recommended that the town prioritize fixing what is most important first and review the water and sewer rates and increase them to cover the maintenance repairs needed. One suggestion was to reduce the number of gallons in the base rate from 2,000 gallons to 1,000 gallons. The town can also do step increases based on the amount of water used so those customers who use the most water will be paying more than those who do not such as senior citizens and single people. Ms. Kline also suggested increasing late fees and penalties for turning water on and off for non-payment. Mr. Perry suggested doing an audit of water pumped versus water billed. Public Works Director Ronnie Seals said it would be difficult to pinpoint where lost water goes because our lines are so old.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – May 17, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy, Charles Kemp and Commissioner Amelia McLean (by phone). Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Attorney Rob Price, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Finance Director Linda Vause and Police Chief Kim Monroe. Others in attendance included Sarah Willets, Rod Heasley, Gradd Floyd, Andre Grant, Kelvin Smith, William Spivey, Christopher McManus, Ned Gaddy, Key McKee, Lois Baker, and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Public Hearing - Voluntary Satellite Annexation**

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:02 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the possibility of voluntarily annexing two lots on Chicken Road near I-95 Exit 10. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Town Manager Katrina Tatum explained that the property owners of two parcels on Chicken Road have requested to voluntarily annex into the city limits. Because of the distance from town, the town has asked our state representatives to draft legislation to allow the annexation to move forward. With no comments from the public or board, Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of public hearing at 6:04 p.m. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Introduction of new Police Officers**

Chief Kim Monroe introduced Fairmont's newest police officers: Kelvin Smith, Andre Grant, William Spivey and Christopher McManus.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Evans asked to add "Town Manager Hiring Contract" as Item F under New Business. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners Evans, McCallum, Gaddy and McLean  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Commissioner Kemp stated that he is opposed to any last minute additions to the agenda regardless of subject.

**Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

Key McKee, 806 Taylor Street - New business opportunity

Mr. Key McKee would like to reopen McKee Craft Boats and is currently looking for a location. He would like the board's support in his effort to reestablish the company.

Lois Baker, 511 Rosewood Street – Community violence

Ms. Lois Baker is concerned about the recent violence in the community and the young people involved.

**Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner McCallum it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, April 19, 2016 and Special Meeting, May 2, 2016.

**Committee Reports**

There were no committee reports this month.

**Unfinished Business**

Street Light Request – Gradd Floyd

During the March Board of Commissioner's meeting a street light request from Gradd Floyd was presented. The Board tabled this item until Duke Energy could make a site visit and prepare a cost estimate. The Town has received an estimate of no cost for installation because they already have a pole that is not being used. The light on that pole is actually an area light and not a normal street light. Duke Energy proposes to put an LED light on that same pole (which will save the installation cost of \$521.00) and perhaps relocate the pole strategically which will solve the issue for the middle of the block in question. The only cost will be the monthly cost of \$10.43. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the addition of a streetlight on Pittman Street and sign the contract with Duke Energy. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Resolution 16-05 – Accepting bid and authorizing sale of real property – Tax parcel 300805005, Doughlin bid for 505 Gertrude Street.

Ms. Tatum announced that no upset bids were received for the 505 Gertrude Street property. Mr. Jeffrey Doughlin of 1 Peter 5:7, LLC offered \$2,000 for the property. Commissioner McCallum made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-05 – Accepting Bid and Authorizing Sale of Real Property – Tax Parcel 300805005, 505 Gertrude Street. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Resolution 16-06 – Addition to Personnel Resolution, Police Officer Service Agreement.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to adopt this resolution to add the police officer service agreement to the town's personnel resolution. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-06 – Addition to Personnel Resolution, Police Officer Service Agreement. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Ordinance 16-163 - Non-Residential Maintenance and Safety.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to adopt Ordinance 16-163 – Non-Residential Maintenance and Safety. The board approved the draft version at the March 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 16-163 - Non-Residential Maintenance and Safety. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Ordinance 16-164 - Amending Section 30.5 – Attending meetings via telephone.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to adopt Ordinance 16-164 - Amending Section 30.5 – Attending meetings via telephone. This ordinance adds the language change adopted at the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting extending the number of meetings a commissioner can attend by telephone to 6 and allows unlimited use for special and emergency meetings. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 16-164 - Amending Section 30.5 – Attending meetings via telephone. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

**New Business**

Resolution 16-07 – Commitment to Further Fair Housing.

Ms. Tatum explained to the board that when CDBG funds (Federal Funds) are awarded to a municipality, it has to make certain assurances to comply with Federal laws regarding Fair Housing. Those assurances are, but are not limited to the following:

It will comply with the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, and regulations issued thereto; and (2) It will comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the regulations issued thereto; and (3) It will comply with the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and will affirmatively further fair housing; and (4) It will comply with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. (5) It will comply with the N.C. General State §41A.

These laws are put into place to make sure individuals and families are treated fairly with respect to housing; rental and purchase. It prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or familial status. Linda Vause was appointed the Fair Housing Officer when the grant was first secured and has indicated that she no longer wants to perform those tasks. Ms. Tatum has no problem with this change and presented the board with a resolution appointing her as the Fair Housing Officer. This will allow the town to remain compliant with grant requirements.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-07 – Commitment to Further Fair Housing naming Town Manager Katrina Tatum as Fair Housing Officer. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

#### Proposed Resolution 16-08 - Sick Leave Amendment request for Retiree Health Insurance.

Ms. Tatum stated the staff has asked her to approach the board to amend Resolution 14-13, Health Insurance for Retirees, to include a provision that allows those who have sick leave to use that leave to meet the requirement for years of service in order to obtain retiree health benefits. Thirteen employees could potentially qualify for use of the sick leave for the purpose of qualifying for early payment of retiree health benefits if the board decides to grant this request. This could prove to be very costly for the town. The Local Government Retirement system already allows those retiring to use credible sick leave to qualify for the required years of service to obtain retirement benefits. No analysis of cost has been made. However, theoretically, if this request is approved and a person has one year of sick leave, he or she would qualify for health benefits one year earlier than planned. The town would be paying for their health benefits and the benefits of the person that would be replacing them one year earlier than planned.

Commissioner Kemp thought it would be a marvelous opportunity to reward employees for their longevity. Commissioners Gaddy and McCallum were concerned about the costs. Commissioner Evans made a motion to table Resolution 16-08 - Sick Leave Amendment request for Retiree Health Insurance for further study on costs. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### Proclamation – Older Americans Month.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to consider adopting a proclamation recognizing May as Older Americans Awareness Month. Commissioner Kemp made a motion to adopt the Proclamation recognizing May as Older Americans Month. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Appoint/Reappoint Planning Board members for three-year term.

Ms. Tatum announced that Planning Board members Buddy Taylor, Maurice McMillan and Terry Hunt (out of town member) terms expire in May 2016. Mr. Taylor, Mr. McMillan and Mr. Hunt have agreed to serve again for another three-year term expiring May 2019. Commissioner Evans nominated Dwight McCormick to replace Buddy Taylor and Winona Gause to replace Maurice McMillan. He was willing to reappoint Terry Hunt. Commissioner Kemp wanted to keep Buddy Taylor.

The vote to appoint Dwight McCormick to the Planning Board passed 5 to 1 with Commissioner Kemp voting no. The vote to appoint Winona Gause and Terry Hunt to the Planning Board passed unanimously. The newly appointed members will have a three-year term expiring May 2019.

Fairmont Development Corporation – Dance Area at Community Park.

The Fairmont Development Corporation would like to construct a dance area in front of the Pavilion in the Pines. The area will be approximately 30' x 40'. They intend to pay for the dance floor which will cost approximately \$5,500. Since there will be brick work done, they will be selling bricks to anyone who would like to buy one in their own name, another person's name or in memory of a loved one. The proceeds will help pay for the dance floor. The price of each brick will be \$50.00, which will allow purchasers to be a Pavilion Pal and have an engraved brick at the site. Commissioner Evans made a motion to allow the Fairmont Development Corporation to construct a dance area in front of the Pavilion in the Pines at the Fairmont Community Park. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Town Manager Hiring Contract

Commissioner Evans is afraid of losing Ms. Tatum to another town. He suggested offering her a three-year contract with a salary of \$62,700 annually. Town Attorney Rob Price stated there needed to be a motion to offer the contract followed by a motion to offer the salary. Commissioner Evans made a motion to offer Town Manager Katrina Tatum a three-year contract. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners Evans, McCallum, McLean and Gaddy  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Commissioner Evans made a motion to offer Town Manager Katrina Tatum an annual salary of \$62,700 (base salary not including benefits) effective July 1, 2016. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners Evans, McCallum, McLean and Gaddy  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Ms. Tatum agreed to accept the three-year contract and \$62,7000 salary.

### **Mayor Input**

Mayor Townsend had no input this month.

### **Commissioner Input**

Commissioner Evans thanked Ms. Baker for coming before the board as a concerned citizen.

Commissioner McCallum also thanked Ms. Baker. He said the community needs to come together to deter violence.

Commissioner Gaddy thanked the citizens for coming. She is also concerned about all the recent violence and wondered what the board can do to help.

Commissioner McLean commended the town manager for doing a good job.

Commissioner Kemp was very glad that Mr. McKee appeared before the board tonight and made his presentation. He hopes the town can do all it can to assist Mr. McKee in his plans to start his boat business in Fairmont. He also announced that 204 people attended the recent job fair held in the Heritage Center.

### **Manager's Input**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum presented the following report to the board:

Annexation Project – Two owners have approached the town to be annexed into the city limits. The two parcels are at the intersection of Chicken Road and I-95 at Exit 10. All documents needed by the General Assembly to introduce a bill to allow this annexation have been sent to Senator Jane W. Smith and the bill is in the drafting stage. Anyone needing detailed information regarding the bill may contact me at my office. Emails were sent to all Representatives for Robeson County asking for their support which included Representative Garland Pierce, Representative Ken Goodman, Representative Charles Graham and Representative Ken Waddell.

Code Enforcement – Nothing new to report this month.

Asset Management Project – The plan is complete. If any board members were not present during the presentation of the plan and still need their copy of the plan, please let Jenny know and she will make sure you get one.

Munsingwear Building – 807 E. White Pond Road – The prospective buyer has lost interest in this project, but is now working with one of our property owners on another project.

Sewer System Rehab Project – Phase III – CDBG No. 14-I-2657: Sewer Improvements - Surveying was completed last week and the early stages of the design process has begun. Administrative - A fair housing plan will be prepared to rename the Town's fair housing officer. A Debarment Certification has been submitted as required for 2016.

Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant – Mr. John Vine-Hodge sent a copy of the scope of work for our project. It was reviewed, approved and comments were made on the scope. VHB and NCDOT will now negotiate the final cost before beginning the plan development process. We should be able to initiate the Notice to Proceed sometime around the end of the month or early June. The Scope of Work outlines what part the Pedestrian Planning Committee will play and how often they will meet and what they expect of the town during the planning process.

North Carolina Department of Labor – OSHA Consultation Project – Staff met with Mr. Eric Smith, the Safety Consultant assigned to the town. He inspected Town Hall and the Fire Department and found a number of safety concerns. He will be sending a report that will give us thirty days to complete each item. Most of the issues were electrical in nature and should not be very costly to repair. Ronnie Seals has already contacted Mr. Ray Lupo to begin work on the items identified. Keep in mind that although the town will be given a deadline to complete these items, it will not result in a fine for non-compliance. Entering into the Consultative Contract will prevent the Town from being fined and will remain in force for two years. That gives us a chance to get things corrected without the fear of heavy fines. Mr. Smith also indicated that the Health Consultant would be contacting us soon to begin working with us on health issues.

Bridge Report – I have prepared all documents necessary to advertise the resolution of intent to close the bridges on Mitchell and Floyd Streets and the notices to adjacent property owners have been prepared and will be sent out on May 16, 2016. We can expect to have the public hearing on June 21, 2016 as planned. In compliance with the NC General Statute, the advertisement will be in the Robeson Journal on the following dates: May 18<sup>th</sup>, May 25<sup>th</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 8<sup>th</sup>.

Expenditure Review and Tax Collection: Harger/HNC Expenditure Review – The pretreatment cost of \$525 is now being billed to the client and they have already made two payments. County Collections: Personal Property: 2015 - \$13,559.84 + \$5,137.07, 2014 - \$15,689.26 + \$1,886.56, 2013 - \$17,107.11 (less Robeson County fees) Real Property: 2015 - \$9,665.27+\$354.38, 2014 - \$10,493.72 + \$386.25, 2013 - \$11,322.18 + \$416.63 = Total of \$86,012.27 - Please note that interest will be subtracted from these amounts because the County waived the interest charges. Town Collections: Personal Property - 2009 – 2012 - \$62,765.18 – Without interest. Real Property – 2010 - 2012 - \$582.51 = Total of \$63,347.69

I will continue to work on taxes throughout the year. My next step is to cross reference each street and street range with the county's taxable property list. This should help us fill any holes presently in the system.

Street Light on Pittman – See agenda packet.

Sidewalk Project – As previously mentioned, the town's first estimate performed by Mr. Anderson did not include curb and gutter, nor did it include the engineer's fees. These additional costs could rise to over \$200,000. Let me remind you that USDA is still holding the \$50,000 for the sidewalk installation on Leesville Road. They are attempting to allow us time to find additional funds for this project. Janet Robertson from the LRCOG contacted me on 6/12/2016 to let me know that she is researching to try to find money for this project.

Information for Senior Citizens: Taxes - If you are 65 or older or totally and permanently disabled, you may qualify for a tax exemption on your permanent residence here in Robeson County. Contact the Robeson County Real Estate Department for more information. The number for the tax office is 910-671-3060. The address is 701 N. Elm Street, Lumberton, NC 28358. Housing Rehabilitation Needs: USDA – SECTION 504 Assistance - Also known as the Section 504 Home Repair program, this provides loans to very-low income homeowners to repair, improve or modernize their homes or grants to elderly very-low income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards. Phone Number – 910-739-3349; Address: 440 Caton Road, Lumberton, NC 28360. Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina – Must be an enrolled member of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, must reside in the service area of Cumberland, Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland Counties, must own or have lifetime rights to home requiring repairs. Phone Number – 910-521-7861, or 1-855-801-9738; Address 6984 NC Hwy 711 West, P.O. Box 2709, Pembroke, NC 28372.

### **Town Attorney Input**

Town Attorney Robert Price had no input this month.

### **Department Head Input**

Police Chief Kim Monroe had no input this month.

Public Works Director Ronnie Seals was absent.

### **Announcements**

Thursday, May 19 - Games Night, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., The Stage.

Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21 - Robeson County Relay for Life, 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Robeson County Fairgrounds.

Saturday, May 21 - Lupus Prayer Walk, 10:00 a.m., Fairmont Community Park.

Sunday, May 22 - Genealogy Workshop, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., The Stage. Basic Genealogy and the Federal Census.

Thursday, May 26 - Budget Workshop, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Monday, May 30 - Schools and town office closed in observance of Memorial Day.

Thursday, June 2 - Budget Workshop, 6:00 p.m. Council Chambers.

Thursday, June 7 - Last day of school.

Tuesday, June 14 - NCDMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall parking lot.

Tuesday, June 14 - Budget workshop (if needed), 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Page 9 – Regular Meeting, May 17, 2016

Tuesday, June 21 - Regular Town Board meeting with Budget Public Hearing, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Thursday, June 23 - Budget workshop (if needed), 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Sunday, June 26 - Fairmont's Fantastic Fourth Fireworks, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. concert by the Pizazz Band followed by Fireworks at 9:30 p.m., Fairmont Community Park.

Tuesday, June 28 - Budget workshop (if needed), 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Thursday, June 30 - Special Town Board meeting to adopt Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

The Fairmont Chamber of Commerce meets on the first Monday of the month at 5:00 p.m. at the Fairmont Golf Course.

The Fairmont Downtown Business Association meets on the second Monday of the month at 11:00 a.m. in the Fairmont - South Robeson Heritage Center.

The Fairmont Economic Development Committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 12:00 noon in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting and Budget Workshop – May 26, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a budget workshop on Thursday, June 2, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy, Charles Kemp. Commissioner Amelia McLean was absent. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Finance Director Linda Vause and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Revision of the Recipient's Plan to Further Fair Housing.**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum requested the board to revise the town's Fair Housing Plan so we will not get exceptions during our CDBG audit. Commissioner McCree asked to be excused from voting since he did not receive his agenda packet until 1:30 p.m. today. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt the revised Recipient's Plan to Further Fair Housing. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with Commissioner McCree sustaining from voting due to not receiving his agenda packet on time.

### **Budget Workshop – Fiscal Year 2016-2017**

Ms. Tatum presented the following overview of the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget:

Enclosed, you will find the first draft of the proposed 2016-2017 budget. The projected General Fund budget is at \$1,851,030, not including the Powell Bill Fund estimated at \$89,500. The projected Water/Sewer Fund budget is \$1,282,650. The overall projected budget total for all funds is \$3,153,180.

The only increase in user fees or routine charges entering the budget process is the Reconnection Fee, which was approved to go into effect July 1, 2016; an increase of \$10, from \$25 to \$35. I am, however, asking that you approve an increase in the tampering fee. The offenders are usually predictable and are repeat offenders. I am asking for a tampering fee of at least \$200. The current \$50 fee is no deterrent for repeat offenders. Although I have not requested increases under the water/sewer fund, keep in mind the results of the Asset Management Plan demonstrated the following:

Water Fund – The revenue for this fund are covering its expenses. However, historically, the town has not contributed through the budget to a dedicated Capital Reserve Fund. As stated in the plan, this would provide a cushion for asset replacement. The plan shows that the water rates are below the state median. It also demonstrates this is needed because most of our water assets are in the fair to poor condition range.

Sewer Fund – The revenues for this fund do not cover its expenses. In addition, many of the assets under this fund are also in the fair to poor condition range. The lines installed when the sewer plant was built are considered to be in good condition. The Asset Management Plan shows that the median rates under this fund are below the state median. The plan also indicates that if we do nothing, we will continue to experience deficits that will worsen over the next few years. They have recommended that we reduce gallons in the base charge from 2000 to 1000, increase rates, add administrative charge, increase bulk sewer costs, and add a \$50,000 emergency reserve contribution. It is hoped that the current grant work will reduce some of the operation and maintenance costs.

A 2.0% COLA is projected in the upcoming fiscal year. This COLA, if approved will still leave the town 1.49 percentage points behind the Cost of Living Adjustments reported by 55.2% of other cities and towns our size in North Carolina. An added incentive to provide a 2.0% COLA to our employees is the fact that there is a 2.4% increase in inflation projected by Kiplinger for 2017. I commend Linda Vause for the obvious recovery measures which allowed for a Cost of Living Increase in 2014-2015 and the entire staff for working to reduce costs over the past year, making the current adjustment possible.

**GENERAL FUND REVIEW**

The total projected General Fund Budget has increased by approximately 5% over last year’s estimate. The projections for the current fiscal year real and personal property tax revenues were based on a projected assessed value of \$93,217,439. Robeson County has projected an assessed value of \$93,844,758 for the Town of Fairmont for the upcoming year and the Public Service values are projected at \$5,285,799. Together they total \$99,131,557. Using our current tax rate of .73 per \$100 of assessed value and a projected collection rate of 90% (conservatively estimated-See Additional Supporting Data Below), the total tax revenue is projected at \$650,000 as shown under 10-302-000 on your work sheet. The motor vehicle tax projection is based on 2015 values as of 6/30. You will notice a spike in the current year Prior Year Taxes Revenue (10-302-0100) collections at \$117,416.79, which is the highest yield of prior year collections in the history of this town. Fiscal Year 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 prior year collections were \$23,681 and \$29,515 respectively. The \$75,000 projected in this budget for prior year includes anticipated collections from tax payers who had not previously been billed under the appropriate district. If these anticipated taxes are received prior to 6/30/2016, an adjustment will have to be made to this budget. The RBEG Loan payments are projected to yield \$6,000, a substantial reduction in loan payments, which was approved earlier this fiscal year by the Board.

Data Supporting the Collection Rate:

Collection Rates by Fiscal Years: 2015 – 90.74, 2014 – 90.96%, and 2013 – 88.31% = Average collection rate of 90%, which was used to project Fiscal Year 2016-2017 tax revenues.

The Shared or State Revenue projections were estimated using the North Carolina League of Municipalities as reflected in the chart below:

Revenue Source	Projected Change from FY14-15 to FY 15-16	Projected Change from FY15-16 to FY 16-17
Local Sales Tax	4.5%	3.75%
Powell Bill	n/a	0.0%
Electricity Sales Tax	9.0%	3.5%
Telecommunications Sales Tax	-12.0%	-2.0%
Sales Tax on Piped Natural Gas	-2.0%	-2.0%
Solid Waste Disposal Tax	-2.0%	1.5%
Local Video Programming Revenues	-5.5%	-2.0%
Beer and Wine Taxes	-6.0%	5.0%

Our estimates use the NC League’s percentages of increases and/or decreases, which are then applied to the previous year actuals which is reflected in the budget worksheet. Please keep in mind that although our projections were based in whole or in part on the League’s estimates, we still remain slightly conservative in our revenue projections for some of the categories listed above.

As with the current year, no privilege tax has been listed because of its elimination by the state. The health insurance rates will increase during this upcoming fiscal year by 4.766%. There was an increase from 1.36 to 1.68 in our experience modifier (driven by claims), which resulted in a direct increase of Workers Compensation premiums which are projected at a 40% increase. Please keep in mind that during Fiscal Year 2015-2016, our premiums increased by 25% primarily due to the same claimant. Even though this claim closed out this year, we will experience high payouts for Worker's Compensation over the next few years.

#### **ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE/CLERK/COUNCIL**

Last year, the administrative department included a half year salary for a full time manager. The projections for the upcoming fiscal year include a full time, year round, manager salary. Otherwise, there was very little change in these categories.

#### **PLANNING/CODES AND ZONING**

The sum of \$4,500 was budgeted for nuisance abatement to demolish dilapidated properties and possible handle some code enforcement which is a decrease of \$5,500 from this fiscal year. If we increase this budget back to the \$10,000 range, we need to prioritize or come up with a plan to help staff determine the order or rationale for abatement. We have a need to update our code book and have budgeted \$750 to partially update the codes.

#### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The Interim Chief of Police has agreed to stay on for half of the upcoming year, to assist with recruiting a full time chief. The budget includes salaries for a fully staffed Police Department with a full time Police Chief, which is the primary reason for an increase in the projected budget. In addition, the last payment for the Chargers was made this fiscal year and the projected budget does not show any loan payment. The Chief has requested Body Cams totaling \$3,200 (included in projected budget) and a used vehicle, which is not included in the projected budget.

#### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The last payment for the Volvo fire truck was made during the current fiscal year. We anticipate purchasing turn-out gear under the projected budget. The National Fire Protection Agency recommends that turn out gear be replaced every 10 years or sooner if contaminated and it mandates that helmets be replace every 10 years. Otherwise, the projected Fire Department budget has decreased from \$86,222 in 2015-2016 to \$69,541.30 in the projected budget.

#### **STREETS DEPARTMENT**

The estimated budget for this Department is approximately 10% higher than the current year estimate. The budget includes the cost of \$10,000 to purchase a Scag Turf Tiger Mower 61", which accounts for 6.2% of the increase. The public works Department also requested a John Deere 5085M Tractor at a cost of \$65,000, which is needed, but not included in the projected budget.

#### **SANITATION DEPARTMENT**

Overall, the Sanitation projection is showing a slight decrease over last year's estimates. Although the town's Contracted Services costs will increase by 3% according to our contract, overall costs are down which effectively balances out the increase. The Town's Inert Landfill is strictly monitored by NC DENR and part of our maintenance, as shown in previous budgets, will include \$30,000 to grind and/or chip logs, stumps, and limbs and leaves. The projected budget also includes \$15,000 for fence repair at the Landfill.

**POWELL BILL FUND**

The projected budget for Powell Bill Fund revenues is showing a slight decrease from \$90,500 in the current year estimate to \$89,500 in the 2016-2017 estimates. The projections for Powell Bill are calculated using the estimates provided by the North Carolina League of Municipalities. The maintenance line item shows a projected increase from \$15,064 in the current year to \$30,455 for the upcoming year to accommodate some needed repair items.

**WATER/SEWER FUND**

The total projected Water/Sewer fund budget for Fiscal year 2016-2017 is \$1,212,650, a 4% increase over the current year budget. This fiscal year, the Water/Sewer Fund experienced some higher than normal maintenance costs and those costs have guided the projections for the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 projections. Public Works has requested one new truck estimated at \$25,000 and a Cat Backhoe estimated at \$140,000, neither of which is included in the projected budget.

One full time position (an already approved position) and two part-time positions are included in the projected budget. One of the part-time positions was created to reduce high levels of compensatory and overtime costs. As you know, we are experiencing very high levels of water coming through our sewer plant which also causes expenses to rise.

Operation and Maintenance costs under the Sewer Contract Department are essentially the same as the current year budget.

**WATER/SEWER ADMINISTRATION**

Overall, Administrative costs are projected at a slightly lower level than the current fiscal year. Projected increases in Water/Sewer Administration are related to health insurance and workers' compensation.

**WATER TREATMENT**

As with the current fiscal year, \$10,000.00 is budgeted for a well casing and \$20,000.00 for the second phase of replacement of the Andover System under capital outlay. This system runs the wells from inside the public works building. This system monitors the water levels in the wells, turns the pumps on and off and saves energy by controlling operating hours. Our current system is so old that it is difficult to find parts for repair. Price increase in the supply line is due to an increase in the price of chlorine and other chemicals.

**WATER MAINTENANCE**

With the payment of the Flusher truck behind us this fiscal year, we may want to consider financing some badly needed equipment for the Public Works Department. We have increased Departmental Supplies to purchase a Pipe Saw which is direly needed at an estimated cost of \$3,500.

**SEWER TREATMENT**

Note that even though it appears that we were able to reduce professional services some during the current fiscal year, we have budgeted the same amount to make sure that we will have enough under this line item to cover the cost of sludge removal estimated at \$15,000. There is a capital improvement cost of \$26,000 under capital outlay to cover the cost of repairing the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of V-notch Weir repairs at the sewer plant.

**SEWER MAINTENANCE**

We have projected a decrease of approximately 8% in sewer maintenance. However, the Public Works Department has requested a new truck estimated at \$25,000. We will research costs of used vehicles to determine if this will be achievable during the upcoming year.

Commissioner Kemp suggested increasing nuisance abatement to \$10,000. Commissioner Kemp would also like to see how much more a 2.5% and 3% cost of living raise would be.

The next budget workshop will be Thursday, June 2 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Budget Workshop – June 2, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a budget workshop on Thursday, June 2, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy, Charles Kemp and Commissioner Amelia McLean. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Finance Director Linda Vause and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Sarah Willets.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Budget Workshop – Fiscal Year 2016-2017**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum presented the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget Message to the board:

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to Section 159-11 of the North Carolina General Statutes, the Town of Fairmont's proposed budget for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2017 is hereby submitted for your consideration. This budget is presented in accordance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget & Fiscal Control Act and is balanced as required by North Carolina General Statutes. The budget reflects challenges that are faced in most small municipalities across North Carolina in light of our national, state and local economic states. The budget also provides for routine infrastructure improvements and maintenance as well as funding to maintain the quality of services to which the Town's residents have become accustomed. Tough decisions have been made in developing the budget. Unfortunately, due to the town's financial hardships, no money has been reserved in this budget to create a capital reserve for future infrastructure replacement. As the Legislative Officers for the Town of Fairmont, the Board of Commissioners must review this budget critically and objectively because it is the planning tool and route of operation that the town will be guided by during the upcoming year. The budget planning process is influenced by many external factors including the economic condition of the nation, state, and local government. The existing needs and the needs that continue to materialize throughout our community as identified by the governing body, staff, community boards and citizens must be considered. All of these factors are considered in this budget. Knowing the hard work, the thorough examination of income and expenses and the scrutiny that is represented in this document, I am confident that it will allow the Town move in the right direction to meet the goals for the future growth of this town and maintain the level of services that our citizens deserve.

#### **BUDGET OVERVIEW**

As previously mentioned, the budget presented for your approval is balanced in accordance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act. The Total Proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget is \$3,153,180, an increase of 5.9%, or \$186,450 over the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget. The operating budgets for the three major funds are:

Page 2 – Budget Workshop, June 2, 2016

General Fund	\$1,851,030
Powell Bill Fund	\$ 89,500
Water/Sewer Fund	\$1,212,650
Total Operating Budget:	<u>\$3,153,180</u>

There are two increases in user fees or routine charges assumed in this budget; a Reconnection Fee of \$35, an increase of \$10 over the Fiscal 2015-2016 Budget and a Tampering Fee of \$200, an increase of \$150 over the Fiscal 2015-2016 Budget. The Tax Rate will remain the same at \$.73 per \$100 of assessed value. A 2% COLA is projected for all employees.

**GENERAL FUND**

Overview

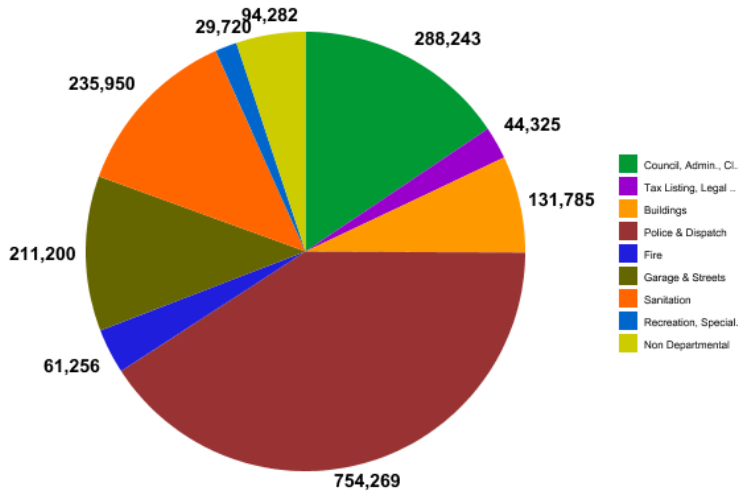
The FY 2016-2017 Proposed General Fund Budget totals \$1,851,030, an increase of 5.1%, or \$94,400 over Fiscal Year 2015-2016. The projections for the current fiscal year real and personal property tax revenues were based on a projected assessed value of \$93,217,439. Robeson County has projected an assessed value of \$93,844,758 for the Town of Fairmont for the upcoming year and the Public Service values are projected at \$5,285,799. Together they total \$99,130,557. Using our current tax rate of \$.73 per \$100 of assessed value and a projected collection rate of 90% (conservatively estimated-See Additional Supporting Data Below), the total tax revenue is projected at \$650,000 as shown under 10-302-000 in the projected budget. The motor vehicle tax projection is based on 2015 values as of 6/30. The \$75,000 projected in this budget for prior year tax revenue includes anticipated collections from tax payers who had not previously been billed under the appropriate district.

Data Supporting the Collection Rate:

Collection Rates by Fiscal Years: 2015 – 90.74, 2014 – 90.96%, and 2013 – 88.31% = Average collection rate of 90%, which was used to project Fiscal Year 2016-2017 tax revenues.

The General Fund revenues reflect the Town’s largest sources of revenue, which are the ad valorem property taxes, sales tax, and the unrestricted state permitted taxes and fees. The unrestricted state permitted taxes and fees were estimated using the North Carolina League of Municipalities estimates for the upcoming Fiscal Year. Local Sales Tax, Powell Bill, Electricity Sales Tax, Telecommunications Sales Tax, Solid Waste Disposal Tax, Local Video Programming Revenues and Beer and Wine Taxes increased or decreased by 3.75%, 0.0%, 3.5%, -2.0%, 1.5%, -2.0%, and 5.0% respectively.

As you know, during the 2011 and 2012 legislative sessions, the General Assembly restricted a municipality’s ability to annex contiguous properties by requiring an agreement from the affected property owners. This decision greatly impeded the Town’s ability to grow and increase the ad valorem tax base. In addition, in 2014, a similar decision was made with regard to the Privilege Tax. It was abolished at that time, reducing the Town’s revenues by about \$10,000-\$12,000. Although the Town continues to receive personal property taxes from large industrial and commercial equipment, we must keep in mind that the value of the equipment reduces each year due to depreciation. We must be relatively cautious in spending related to collections under this category, especially when the expenditures are those that are recurring year after year.



**GENERAL FUND HIGHLIGHTS**

The health insurance rates will increase during this upcoming fiscal year by 4.766%. There was an increase from 1.36 to 1.68 in our experience modifier (driven by claims) for Worker’s Compensation, which resulted in a 40% increase. Please keep in mind that during Fiscal Year 2015-2016, our premiums increased by 25% primarily due to the same claim. Even though this claim closed out this year, we will continue to experience high Worker’s Compensation premiums over the next few years.

**ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE/CLERK/COUNCIL**

Last year, the administrative department included a half year salary for a full time manager. The projections for the upcoming fiscal year include a full time manager salary. Otherwise, there was very little change in these categories.

**PLANNING/CODES AND ZONING**

The sum of \$10,000 was budgeted for nuisance abatement to demolish dilapidated properties and possibly handle some code enforcement. We need to prioritize activity under this category or come up with a plan to help staff determine the order and rationale for abatement. We have a need to update our code book and have budgeted \$750 to partially update the codes.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The Interim Chief of Police has agreed to stay on for half of the upcoming year, to assist with recruiting a full time chief. The budget includes salaries for a fully staffed Police Department with a full time Police Chief, which is the primary reason for an increase in the projected budget. In addition, the last payment for the Chargers was made this fiscal year and the projected budget does not show a loan payment. The Chief has requested Body Cams totaling \$3,200 (included in projected budget). We will be searching for an affordable vehicle just in case the proposed budget permits an acquisition of a used vehicle as requested by the Interim Chief.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The last payment for the Volvo fire truck was made during the current fiscal year. We anticipate purchasing turn-out gear under the projected budget. The National Fire Protection Agency recommends that turn out gear be replaced every 10 years or sooner if contaminated and it mandates that helmets be replaced every 10 years. Otherwise, the projected Fire Department budget has decreased from \$86,222 in 2015-2016 to \$61,256; a decrease of 28.9% or \$24,966.

## **STREETS DEPARTMENT**

The estimated budget for this Department is approximately 10% higher than the current year estimate. The projected budget is \$161,240 and includes the cost of \$10,000 to purchase a Scag Turf Tiger Mower 61", which accounts for 6.2% of the increase. The Public Works Department also requested a John Deere 5085M Tractor at a cost of \$65,000. This item is needed, but is not included in the projected budget. Because of the expense of the tractor, the town may benefit by financing such a purchase.

## **SANITATION DEPARTMENT**

Overall, the Sanitation projection is showing a slight decrease over last year's estimates. Although the town's Contracted Services costs will increase by 0.7% in accordance with our contract, the overall costs are down which effectively balances out the increase. The Town's Inert Landfill is strictly monitored by NC DEQ and part of our maintenance, as shown in previous budgets, will include \$30,000 to grind and/or chip logs, stumps, limbs and leaves. The projected budget also includes \$15,000 for fence repair at the Landfill.

## **POWELL BILL FUND**

The projected budget for Powell Bill Fund revenues is showing a slight decrease from \$90,500 in the current year estimate to \$89,500 in the 2016-2017 estimates. The projections for Powell Bill are calculated using the estimates provided by the North Carolina League of Municipalities. The maintenance line item shows a projected increase from \$15,064 in the current year to \$30,455 for the upcoming year to accommodate some needed repair items.

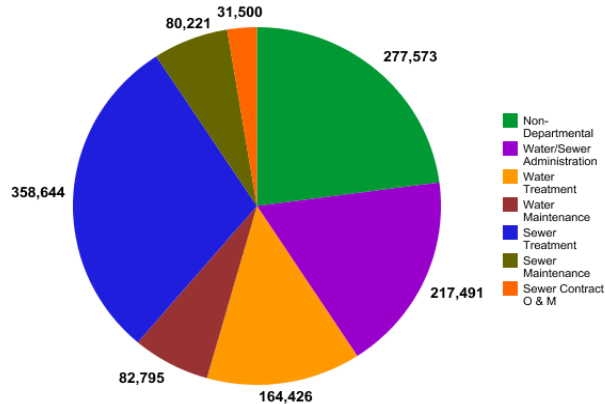
## **WATER/SEWER FUND**

### Overview

The total projected Water/Sewer fund budget for Fiscal year 2016-2017 is \$1,212,650, a 4% increase over the current year budget. This fiscal year, the Water/Sewer Fund experienced some higher than normal maintenance costs and those costs have guided the projections for the Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

One already approved full time position and two part-time positions are included in the projected budget. One of the part-time positions was created to reduce high levels of compensatory and overtime costs currently being experienced in order to maintain current services. As you know, we are experiencing very high levels of water coming through our sewer plant which also causes expenses to rise.

Operation and Maintenance costs under the Sewer Contract Department are essentially the same as the current year budget.



**WATER/SEWER FUND HIGHLIGHTS**

**WATER/SEWER ADMINISTRATION**

Overall, Administrative costs are projected at a slightly lower level than the current fiscal year. Any projected increases in Water/Sewer Administration are primarily related to health insurance and workers’ compensation.

**WATER TREATMENT**

As with the current fiscal year, \$10,000 is budgeted for a well casing and \$20,000 for the second phase of replacement of the Andover System under capital outlay. This system runs the wells from inside the public works building and monitors the water levels in the wells, turns the pumps on and off and saves energy by controlling operating hours. Our current system is so old that it is difficult to find replacement parts for repair. The increase in the supply line is due to an increase in the prices of chlorine and other chemicals.

**WATER MAINTENANCE**

With the payment of the Flusher truck behind us this fiscal year, we may want to consider financing some badly needed equipment for the Public Works Department. We have increased Departmental Supplies by \$3,500 to purchase a direly needed Pipe Saw.

**SEWER TREATMENT**

Note that even though it appears that we were able to reduce professional services some during the current fiscal year, the projected budget amount remains the same as the current year to make sure that we will have enough under this line item to cover the cost of sludge removal estimated at \$15,000. There is a capital improvement cost of \$26,000 under capital outlay to cover the cost of repairing the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of V-notch Weir repairs at the sewer plant.

**SEWER MAINTENANCE**

We have projected a decrease of approximately 8% in sewer maintenance. However, the Public Works Department has requested a new truck estimated at \$25,000. We will research costs of used vehicles to determine if this will be achievable during the upcoming year.

**RESTRICTED FUNDS**

Restricted funds are a reserve of money that can only be used for specific purposes. The funding areas include Economic Development (RBEG), CDBG Infrastructure Grant and state and federal drug funds.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (RBEG)**

This fund has been reduced from \$24,000 to \$6,000. This change, which amounts to a 25% decrease or \$18,000 is attributable to a Board decision to allow loan restructuring for the payback of the RBEG loan. There is a \$4,000 allocation for Economic Development Activities and \$2,000 for Façade Improvements.

### **CDBG INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT**

The original amount of this grant was \$1,765,000. The projected budget is \$1,738,000 which is a reduction of \$27,000 previously expended in the areas of CDBG Administration and Preliminary Engineering.

### **ANCILLARY/SUPPORT FUNDS**

The Ancillary or Support Funds include state and federal drug money. It is difficult to project revenues and expenditures for these funds because drug seizure activity is so uncertain. Therefore, the projections for these funds remain conservative.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Town of Fairmont will continue to face challenges in the upcoming fiscal years. One of the major challenges we face is economic development. Several issues will impact our ability to enhance economic development for the Town. First, I believe we must continue building and strengthening relationships with existing economic development organizations such as the Robeson County Economic Development Office, the Southeastern Economic Development Commission, the Lumber River Council of Governments, and the Department of Commerce. Small towns do not have the staff levels necessary to plan and grow economically and must rely on these partners for guidance, marketing and planning in order to restructure as the economy fluctuates. These agencies are funded to assist us and we need to take full advantage of what they have to offer. The Fairmont Chamber of Commerce has been and is expected to continue to be a valuable resource for the Fairmont community. We must continue to work in tandem with them as we move forward. Secondly, I believe that the Board of Commissioners, in their wisdom, organized the Fairmont Economic Development Committee and the Downtown Business Association, to act as conduits, in our quest to grow economically and become a town where people will want to relocate and live. We must help and guide these organizations so that they can assist with economic growth. The Fairmont community is fortunate to have civic groups that work diligently to improve this town. These relationships will be an integral focus for me in the upcoming year.

There are other challenges that we face, especially in light of the legislative decisions that have effectively reduced funding for small towns. One area of concentration will be efforts to annex properties in or around Exit 10, located at the intersection of Chicken Road and I-95. We have requested a local bill to annex two parcels into our city limits. We must do everything we can to make sure that any satellite annexations we pursue come to fruition, annexing carefully to make sure that these annexations move Fairmont in a positive direction.

We must keep in mind that any decisions that are made today, will impact the future of many generations of Fairmont residents. The Board of Commissioners are charged with making sure that difficult policy decisions are not made in a vacuum, but with the full understanding that our decisions must be geared to creating a better living environment, positively impact our vision for this town and serve to enrich the lives of our residents.

In closing, I would like to thank the Finance Director, Linda Vause and the Assistant Finance Director/Clerk, Jennifer Larson for all the concentrated effort they put into making sure that this budget was balanced and provided our staff with every advantage possible. I would also like to thank our Department Heads for the long hours of work creating their budgets and for the many long hours of work they put in day to day to ensure a better quality of life for our residents. We can't afford to forget that the most valuable asset a town has is its employees. They are the ones who make it possible to provide the services currently offered to our residents. Without them, this would not be possible.

It has been a pleasure to work with, and for the Fairmont Board of Commissioners, Department Heads, employees, and residents during the last three months. I present this Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Town of Fairmont budget for your consideration.

Ms. Tatum increased nuisance abatement to \$10,000 as requested and made some minor reductions in other line items to get to that figure.

Ms. Tatum explained to the board that a 2.5% cost of living increase would cost an additional \$5,408 a year and a 3% cost of living increase would cost \$10,818. However, the budget remains unchanged with a 2% cost of living increase. Commissioner Kemp was disappointed funds could not be found to give the employees a bigger raise. Commissioner McCallum agreed but suggested waiting until the beginning of the year to see how the town stands financially. Commissioner Evans said the town is a business and even though he would love to give the employees a 10% raise, he knows the town cannot afford it. Ms. Tatum said the town needs to continue building up its fund balance. She pointed out that there are other ways to help employees other than raises and suggested a week off at Christmas as an example. She added that the employees also receive a 2% Christmas bonus and employees with over 10 years of service receive longevity as well.

Commissioner McCallum would like to use leftover funds from the May Day Festival to donate to non-profits and clean up the park in Old Field. He was advised that the funds must be spent by June 30.

Ms. Tatum explained that the town should have a good fund balance. Commissioner Evans likes the budget package. He stated that the citizens are very watchful of what we do and he is glad that the fund balance is going up, not down. He would like to adopt the budget at the regular town board meeting on June 21.

It was the consensus of the board to cancel the remaining budget workshops scheduled for June.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Regular Meeting – June 21, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, June 21, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were Monte McCallum, J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Cassandra Gaddy, Charles Kemp and Commissioner Amelia McLean (by phone). Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Finance Director Linda Vause, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, Public Works Supervisor Lonnie Nealy and Police Chief Kim Monroe. Town Attorney Robert Price was absent. Others in attendance included Sarah Willets, Winona Gause, Kelly Johnson, Ned Gaddy, Vanessa Abernathy, Cheryl Cook, Paul Thompson, Sylvia Huggins, Anthony Govan and several citizens.

### **Call to Order and Invocation**

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### **Public Hearing - Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget**

Commissioner Kemp made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:01 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Town Manager Katrina Tatum said there have been no material changes to the budget since the last workshop. There were no comments from the citizens or the board.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of public hearing at 6:03 p.m. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Hearing - Closing of Mitchell and Floyd Street Bridges**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:03 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the closing of the Mitchell and Floyd Street Bridges. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ms. Tatum explained that the purpose of the public hearing is to discuss the permanent closure of two bridges identified as the Floyd Street (BN 770176) and Mitchell Street (BN 770171) bridges. The resolution, declaring the intent to close the bridges, was approved by the town board at the April 19<sup>th</sup> board meeting and was published in the newspaper for four consecutive weeks prior to the public hearing as required by law. Property owners adjacent to the two bridges were notified by certified mail and notices were posted at each bridge. Ms. Tatum has talked to several citizens about closing the bridges and none had strong objections and the majority were in favor of the closures. Some citizens were concerned about the logistics of town events in and around the Fairmont Community Park once the closures take place.

Ms. Tatum stated that repair costs are an estimated \$120,000 per bridge. It would also cost an estimated \$75,000 per bridge to convert them into pedestrian walkways because they would have to be up to NCDOT standards. These high costs guided the decision to close the bridges. The town will still incur an expense in demolishing the bridges and erecting barricades and signage.

Mr. Mike White, a new resident, who would like to keep the bridges but after hearing what the costs would be understands why the town needs to close them. Ms. Vanessa Abernathy is in favor of pedestrian bridges. She suggested the town considering building pedestrian bridges in the future, within 3 to 5 years. Mrs. Cheryl Baxter has no problem with the bridge closures but had concerns about getting in and out of the neighborhood if there was an emergency during the Farmers Festival. Ms. Sandra Pridgen was concerned about the eyesore the barricades and signs would cause. Ms. Tatum said she would look into aesthetics to beautify the signs but the town cannot plant anything due to access to the canals.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of public hearing at 6:35 p.m. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner McCallum asked to add Item I under new business “Distributing May Day Funds.” Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

#### **Star Baldwin, Legal Shield**

Ms. Star Baldwin gave a brief presentation on Legal Shield and the services it offers including identify theft protection, will preparation and power of attorney.

#### **James Moore, Thunder Elite Basketball**

Mr. James Moore is the head coach of the Thunder Elite Basketball traveling team. He would like to the town to consider giving a donation to help with the travel expenses.

### **Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner McCallum it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, May 17, 2016, Special Meeting, May 26, 2016 and Budget Workshop, June 2, 2016.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Fairmont Chamber of Commerce**

Fairmont Chamber of Commerce President Kelly Johnson asked the board to table the request to add William McGirt's name to the town welcome signs citing security issues. He asked anyone willing to volunteer with this year's Farmers Festival to see him or Town Clerk Jenny Larson. Mr. Johnson said he was working with Tabor City Town Manager Al Leonard about the possibility of partnering on an I-95 sign that would lead tourists through Fairmont, Fair Bluff and Tabor City on their way to the beach.

### **Fairmont Economic Development Committee**

FEDC Chairman Winona Gause is working with the Fairmont Downtown Business Association on setting up a joint meeting with Dr. Patricia Mitchell of the NC Department of Commerce for assistance in developing plans and applying for grants.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **Proposed Resolution 16-08 - Sick Leave Amendment request for Retiree Health Insurance.**

Ms. Tatum stated Commissioner Evans asked to put Resolution 16-08 - Sick Leave Amendment request for Retiree Health Insurance back on this month's agenda. The amendment would include a provision that allows those who have sick leave to use that leave to meet the requirement for years of service in order to obtain retiree health benefits. The Local Government Retirement system already allows those retiring to use credible sick leave to qualify for the required years of service to obtain retirement benefits. No analysis of cost has been made. However, theoretically, if this request is approved and a person has one year of sick leave, he or she would qualify for health benefits one year earlier than planned. The town would be paying for their health benefits and the benefits of the person that would be replacing them one year earlier than planned.

Commissioner Evans asked Public Works Supervisor Lonnie Nealy to come speak to the board. Mr. Nealy will have 28 years of service with the town in September. He has over 2,800 hours of sick leave accumulated. He would like to be able to use that time to retire a year early and still have his retiree health insurance benefits from the town. Ms. Tatum suggested stipulating that you have to have a set number of sick leave hours before you can use it to retire early. Finance Director Linda Vause suggested checking with the town attorney and the state about how many creditable sick leave hours can be used for early retirement.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to table Resolution 16-08 pending further research from the town attorney. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ordinance 16-165 – Adopt Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget.

Ms. Tatum explained that the 4,916,260.00 budget includes a 2% cost of living raise for employees and keeps the property tax rate at \$0.73 per hundred dollar valuation. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 16-165 – Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 4 to 2 as follows:

For: Commissioners Evans, McCallum, Gaddy and McLean  
Against: Commissioners Kemp and McCree

Commissioner Kemp stated that he could not support the budget because the town manager was given a three-year contract with an annual salary of \$62,700, which is equivalent to a 16.1% increase over the previous manager's salary. He thinks it is unfair that the employees could not receive more than a 2% cost of living increase. A signed copy of this ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Resolution 16-09 – Order closing Floyd and Mitchell Street Bridges.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 16-09 – Order closing Floyd and Mitchell Street Bridges with the specification that the area be enhanced if NCDOT allows. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

**New Business**

Chamber request to modify Fairmont Welcome Sign to honor William McGirt.

Tabled at the request of the Chamber of Commerce.

FEDC appointments to replace Rod Heasley and Tony Mackey plus discuss other issues.

Ms. Tatum reported that Rod Heasley and Tony Mackey have resigned from the Fairmont Economic Development Committee. In terms of vacancies, the policy set forth by the Board of Commissioners states: "All vacancies shall be filled by the Town Board. All appointments are at will. Appointment to an unexpired term does not extend the period of the term to which a Committee member is appointed." Since the town does not have districts or precincts, all seats are at large and as such elected officials have no seats. There is no way for anyone to be able to determine what new elected official should make a selection. Typically, after the initial selections of an appointed board, the entire board makes suggestions concerning subsequent vacancies. The policy approved by your Board last year states as much.

In addition, there are other issues that the FEDC would like for the Board to address.

#### Membership Terms and Vacancies

1. An error was made during the selection of terms, in that 4 – 2 year terms were chosen instead of 4 – 3 year terms. To promote stability of this group, one of the Committee members serving a 2 year term needs to be placed in a 3 year term slot. I suggest that since the new chairperson is Winona Gause, she would be a logical member to be placed in a three year slot. If not, you could always have the entire board pick term dates again. The turnover is so great, the terms really need to be established as soon as possible.

Committee Members	Expiration of Terms
Vanessa Abernathy	September, 2018
Huel Faulk	September, 2018
Nedward Gaddy	September, 2017
Winona Gause	September, 2017
Kelly Johnson	September, 2017

2. This board was established in September of 2015, not June. The FEDC is asking that the rules be revised to establish the expiration of terms date as September 30th of even and odd years and that the election of new officers be held at the meeting that takes place after the September meeting.

#### Officers

3. The regulations do not include a secretarial position. The FEDC is asking that the position of Secretary be added to the rules governing this Committee.

#### Suggested Language:

Secretary: A secretary shall be elected by the Committee from its members in the same manner as the chairperson and the vice-chairperson and shall be eligible for reelection.

After discussion, the board agreed to let Commissioners Kemp and Gaddy choose the replacements for Mr. Heasley and Mr. Mackey with the understanding that any future vacancies would be chosen by the entire board. Since Commissioners Kemp and Gaddy did not come prepared with nominees, FEDC appointments was tabled until next month.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to move forward with the Fairmont Economic Development Committee changes as presented by Town Manager Katrina Tatum. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Robeson County Special Olympics request for donation.

Mr. Anthony Govan, Local Coordinator, Special Olympics North Carolina Robeson County is asking the Town for a donation. The Special Olympics serves more than 150 school aged children and adults in our County and each year their numbers have increased. These athletes participate in many different ways; as “athletes, coaches, officials, speakers, staff, and volunteers.” Special Olympics allows them to take the stage to demonstrate their capabilities to the world. Commissioner Evans asked the town manager to find a way to give them something on behalf of the town. Ms. Tatum said the town could make a donation after July 1, 2016 and asked the board for a suggested amount. Commissioner Evans said the amount should be left up to her and Finance Director Linda Vause.

Harger Taxpayer Petition.

Ms. Tatum has received a petition for relief of interest and a proposal for payment of taxes from Attorney Chad W. Essick, representing Harger. Attorney Essick proposed the following:

First Installment - \$31,414.96 (50%) no later than January 1, 2017;  
Second Installment - \$15,707.48 (25%) no later than January 1, 2018; and  
Third Installment - \$15,707.48 (25%) no later than January 1, 2019.

The amounts demonstrated above have not been adjusted by the Fire Tax, which must be subtracted from the taxes due. Keep in mind that Harger has already paid and the Town has already received the county portion of taxes due to the Town of Fairmont which amounted to \$67,153.70 for tax years 2013, 2014, and 2015. The county waived the interest and provided a 2% discount if the entire amount was paid by May 31, 2016.

Ms. Tatum noted that Harger paid the taxes to the town and county, whenever billed, in a timely fashion and has no doubt that they would have paid these taxes in a similar manner had the tax district been properly coded. For this reason, she recommended that the interest be waived. However, she does not feel that the repayment of taxes should be dragged out for three years. Ms. Tatum recommended that the taxes be paid without the application of interest in accordance with the following payment plan:

First Installment - \$31,382.59 (50%) no later than January 1, 2017;  
Second Installment - \$31,382.50 (50%) no later than January 1, 2018

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve a two year payment plan for Harger’s back taxes, waiving interest. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

CDBG Equal Opportunity Plan.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to approve the revised Equal Opportunity Plan for the Sewer Rehabilitation CDBG grant. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt the CDBG Equal Opportunity Plan. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the plan is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Small Town Main Street Agreement.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to continue participation in the NC Small Town Main Street Program. Commissioner Kemp made a motion to approve the NC Small Town Main Street Agreement for 2016-2017. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ordinance 16-167 – Water Reconnect Fee and Meter Tampering Penalty.

Ms. Tatum asked the board to adopt Ordinance 16-167 – Water Reconnect Fee and Meter Tampering Penalty. This ordinance changes the reconnect fee from \$25 to \$35 and the meter tampering penalty from \$50 to \$200. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 16-167 – Water Reconnect Fee and Meter Tampering Penalty. Commissioner Kemp seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Emergency Action Plan – Town Hall.

As part of the town's voluntary OSHA inspection, the town needs to update its Emergency Action Plan. Ms. Tatum presented the Emergency Action Plan for Town Hall to the board. Commissioner Gaddy made a motion to approve the Emergency Action Plan for Town Hall. Commissioner Kemp seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the plan is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Distribution of remaining May Day Festival funds.

Commissioner McCallum reported that there is approximately \$800 remaining in the May Day Festival line item. He would like to distribute the remaining funds evenly between Thunder Zone Karate, Fairmont's American Legion post and Thunder Elite Basketball. Commissioner Evans made a motion to distribute the remaining \$800 in May Day Festival funds to Thunder Zone Karate, Fairmont's American Legion post and Thunder Elite Basketball. Commissioner Gaddy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Mayor Input**

Mayor Townsend invited everyone to attend Fairmont's Fantastic Fourth celebration on Sunday, June 26 with the Pizazz Band performing prior to the fireworks show.

Mayor Townsend encouraged the board to attend the RCMA meeting in Rowland on Thursday, June 23.

He also invited everyone to McDonald's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary ribbon cutting on Monday, June 27 at 10:00 a.m.

### **Commissioner Input**

Commissioner Kemp would like to discuss suggestions for how nuisance abatement funds should be spent at the July board meeting.

### **Manager's Input**

Town Manager Katrina Tatum presented the following report to the board:

1. Annexation Project – I received a phone call from Senator Jane Smith indicating that because of the opposition, she couldn't submit our local Voluntary Annexation Bill. Apparently, someone has notified the Legislators that the annexation was not unanimous coming from the town. I found this quite puzzling since all commissioners voted to go forward with the annexation. They also indicated that she was told by the person that we couldn't possibly annex anyone; because of the town's I & I problems we would be unable to tie anyone else on to our system. However, they neglected to let the Legislators know that both Fair Bluff and the Town of Fairmont have grants designed to eliminate this issue, so as far as the annexation is concerned, the ability to tie-on any new accounts is not material. Steps are currently underway to resolve the I&I issues, not just with the two larger entities, but smoke tests are also being conducted with the help of the NC Rural Water Association on the smaller partners that are on the town's system. We have the capacity during relatively dry months, but due to I&I during wet months, our capacity is absorbed. To tie someone on immediately would be a mistake. However, according to the schedule of the prospective investors and our consultants, such a development would take years, not months and we have plenty of time before anyone under annexation would need to be tied in. In addition, the person didn't bother to relay that a public hearing was held and no one came forward to object to this project.
2. Code Enforcement - Commissioner McCallum and I met with an heir to one of the properties on our list. He was interested in paying to tear the house down provided he can get his relatives to sign off on the ownership of the lot. He is also interested in building a home on the lot for his daughter. We provided county and town tax data and are still waiting to find out if this house will be able to be torn down this fiscal year.

Robeson County Solid Waste has been awarded a grant from the NC Department of Environmental Quality to aid in the costs associated with the removal of Abandoned Mobile Homes (AMH) for those candidates that meet the criteria. To find out if you qualify for this program or if you have received a violation notification in the mail, please call Robeson County Solid Waste. The County has limited funds and can only offer up to \$1,000 of the disposal cost. If you have any questions or need additional information: Christina Cummings 910-865-3348.

I had a brief meeting with County Manager Ricky Harris, who seemed to think that the County may possibly be able to help once per year with absorbing some of the disposal costs on one stick built home. I am waiting for Steve Edge, the Director of Robeson County Solid Waste to return from vacation to gain more information.

3. Sewer System Rehab Project – Phase III – CDBG No. 14-I-2657

Sewer Improvements - Surveying was completed during the week of June 6, 2016. The design work is well underway and we expect to submit the full plans in the fall to NC DEQ.

Administrative - A fair housing plan was revised naming Katrina Y. Tatum, Town Manager as the Fair Housing Officer for the Town of Fairmont. The Fair Housing Notice has already been posted in the Lobby of Town Hall on the information board.

Inflow and Infiltration (I & I) Issues – Regional Partners

Proctorville, Orrum Middle School, Boardman and Cerro Gordo - A smoke test has already been completed on the Proctorville system and correction measures are underway to reduce I & I issues. Staff is in the process of scheduling smoke tests at the other locations; Orrum Middle School, Boardman and Cerro Gordo to ascertain any I & I issues needing corrective action.

Town of Fair Bluff - The Town of Fair Bluff was awarded a grant in 2015 in the amount of \$3 million. The project will replace sewer collection lines in much of the low/moderate income areas of Fair Bluff and involves the rehabilitation of 18,550 linear feet of sewer lines and 52 manholes. The environmental requirements for the Fair Bluff grant are basically met now, and the engineers are also wrapping up their surveying. They expect to submit the finished plans to the state in September. Hopefully the state approval of the plans will be attained by January 2017, which will allow the project to be bid out in March of 2017.

4. Information Regarding the Robeson County Solid Waste Program - Our citizens are interested in solid waste free days and hours of operation. In case you are approached, the following may be of some use. The Landfill Hours of Operation are Monday-Friday 6:00 am to 4:30 pm. and Saturday 8:00 am to 11:30 pm. The Solid Waste Collection Sites are Monday – Saturday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm and on Sunday from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Unacceptable items are listed below:



Although the town does not have a free pickup day under the Keep Robeson County Clean and Green, the County does. It is typically in the spring April/May and facts concerning the free day, Special Hours, Acceptance of live Christmas Trees, the Robeson County Clean and Green Committee meeting, and landfill planned closures can be found by visiting their website: [robesoncountysw.org](http://robesoncountysw.org), or calling 910-865-3348. The landfill is located at 246 Landfill Rd., St. Pauls, NC 28384.

5. Fairmont Pedestrian Planning Grant – On June 10th, VHB, the firm contracted to work with the Town, submitted their cost estimate/man hours report. NC DOT will need the firm to make a few minor changes before moving forward. They should be able to forward the updated estimate to NCDOT’s Professional Services Unit next week. If all goes well, then it will probably be about 2 weeks from today for the Notice to Proceed to be issued. At that time, the VHB will be contacting the town. They will probably want to plan the first steering committee meeting around the later part of July (depending on what works for the Town staff).

6. North Carolina Department of Labor – OSHA Consultation Project – As stated last month, staff met with Mr. Eric Smith, the Safety Consultant assigned to the town. He inspected Town Hall and the Fire Department, found a number of safety concerns and sent a report giving the town until July 8, 2016 to correct any violations. He is also able to give us an extension if needed. Mr. Ray Lupo has essentially finished his work at Town Hall, with the exception of labeling, which may take a bit longer. He has started on the Fire Department and is close to completing the work there. Mr. Smith has scheduled an inspection of completed work and the Library and Heritage Building on June 28, 2016. Due to labeling issues stemming from the age of the Town Hall building, we may have to request an extension. Other than labeling, all other work should be completed ahead of schedule. A plan identified in the consultation report as needing updates is included in your monthly board packet.
7. Bridge Report – This project is ready for final disposition.
8. Expenditure Review and Tax Collection - Except for the mass review of properties, this project has been completed and is submitted in the Board Packet for final disposition. HNC has sent a petition for relief of interest, and pay out schedule. It is in your packet for review and disposition.
9. Sidewalk Project – No further data on this project other than what was reported last month.
10. Our State Magazine – I am working on a Town of Fairmont piece for the Our State Magazine. It is intended to gain interest in our town as a destination spot or at the very least let people know what we have to offer.

### **Announcements**

Thursday, June 23 – RCMA meeting hosted by the Town of Rowland, The Pink Restaurant, 104 Church Street, Rowland, 7:00 p.m. Guest Speaker Jan Maynor, LRCOG Executive Director.

Sunday, June 26 - Fairmont's Fantastic Fourth Fireworks, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. concert by the Pizazz Band followed by Fireworks at 9:30 p.m., Fairmont Community Park.

Monday, June 27 – McDonalds 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, remodel ribbon cutting ceremony, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, June 30 - Special Town Board meeting to adopt Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Monday, July 4 - Town offices closed in observance of Independence Day.

Tuesday, July 12 - NCDMV Mobile Driver's License Unit, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Town Hall parking lot.

Saturday, July 16 - Celebrate Lumber River Day, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Lumber River State Park.

Tuesday, July 19 - Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers.

Page 11 – Regular Meeting, June 21, 2016

The Fairmont Chamber of Commerce meets on the first Monday of the month at 5:00 p.m. at the Fairmont Golf Course.

The Fairmont Downtown Business Association meets on the second Monday of the month at 11:00 a.m. in the Fairmont - South Robeson Heritage Center.

The Fairmont Economic Development Committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 12:00 noon in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

## **Special Meeting – June 30, 2016**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Thursday, June 30, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers with Mayor Charles Townsend presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Charles Kemp, Monte McCallum and Terry Evans. Commissioners Cassandra Gaddy and Amelia McLean were absent. Staff present included Town Manager Katrina Tatum, Finance Director Linda Vause, and Town Clerk Jenny Larson.

Mayor Townsend called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

### Write Off Uncollected Water Accounts for 2015-2016 in the amount of \$2,697.45.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to write off uncollected water accounts for 2015 - 2016 in the amount of \$ 2,697.45. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A copy of the 2015-2016 uncollected water accounts is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

### Write Off 2005 Property Taxes in the amount of \$3,988.96.

Commissioner McCallum made a motion to write off the 2005 property taxes in the amount of \$3,988.96. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A copy of the 2005 property tax accounts is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

### Ordinance 16-166 - Amended Fiscal Year Budget 2015-2016

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 16-166 - Amended Fiscal Year Budget 2015-2016 in the amount of \$3,237,030.00. Commissioner Kemp asked what happens to unspent funds. Town Manager Katrina Tatum replied that it goes into fund balance. Finance Director Linda Vause has estimated \$113,156.00 going into the general fund balance. Commissioner McCallum seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the 2015-2016 amended budget ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

---

Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk