

## **Regular Meeting – December 20, 2022**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Melvin Ellison, Jan Tedder-Rogers, and Clarence McNeill, Jr. Commissioner Heather Seibles was absent. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Town Attorney Jessica Scott, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, and Police Chief Jonathan Edwards. Several citizens were also present including Rev. Rodney Hunt, John Masters, Chalmus Hood, Stacy Bethea, Bessie McLean, Nate Thompson, and Lowavia Floyd.

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

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Rev. Rodney Hunt of Cedar Gove Missionary Baptist Church gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Kemp asked the board to allow the audit report to be presented first. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **2021-2022 Audit Report – John Masters of S. Preston Douglas & Associates**

Mr. John Masters, of S. Preston Douglas & Associates, presented the 2021-2022 Audit Report. The town's unassigned fund balance for the general fund is 32%, which is the same as 2021. The town's tax collection rate is 92.69% down slightly from the previous year. The town had two performance indicators of concern due to a decrease in the general and the operating loss in the water/sewer fund.

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

#### **Chalmus Hood**

Mr. Chalmus Hood would like the ministers who give the invocation to stay for the entire meeting and encourage their church members to attend as well. He would like candidates for office to introduce themselves at board meeting before the election so citizens can see who they are voting for. He added the board members need microphones because it is hard to hear.

#### **Stacy Bethea**

Mr. Stacy Bethea is a real estate appraiser for Robeson County and encouraged code enforcement in the community.

#### **Bessie McLean**

Ms. Bessie McLean reported that her car got shot up during the recent shootings in North Fairmont and requested increased police presence in the area.

Nate Thompson

Mr. Nate Thompson was also concerned about the recent shootings in North Fairmont.

Lowavia Floyd

Mr. Lowavia Floyd reported drainage issues at the intersection of Red Cross and Powell Streets.

**Consent Agenda**

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

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, November 15, 2022, and Strategic Plan Meeting, December 6, 2022.
- b. Designation of Applicant’s Agent and MOA for WWTP Generator.

**Old Business**

There was no old business this month.

**New Business**

Resolution 22-24 Authorizing the advertisement of an offer to purchase certain property - vacant lot on 401 South Main Street (former location of Lumbee River EMC).

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut informed the board that Melecio’s Restaurant has offered \$5,000 for the vacant lot located at 401 South Main Street (former location of Lumbee River EMC). They plan to use the lot for parking. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 22-24 Authorizing the advertisement of an offer to purchase certain property - vacant lot on 401 South Main Street. Commissioner Ellison 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.

**Commissioner and Mayor Comments**

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting, are concerned about the recent shootings in town and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mayor Kemp said it has been a joy to work with the town board and staff this past year. He thanked Stop the Violence for agreeing to host the Dr. Martin Luther King ceremony on Monday, January 16 at 12:00 noon in the Heritage Center. Mayor Kemp also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Town Manager Comments**

Mr. Chestnut acknowledged the recent criminal activity and stated the police department is working hard to combat it. He informed the board that NC Rural Water will conduct a water audit beginning in January to help identify water loss and unbilled usage.

**Announcements**

Saturday, December 24 – 20<sup>th</sup> annual Santa Visits the Kids.

Monday, December 26 to Monday, January 2 – Town offices closed in observance of Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Saturday, January 14 – Senior Bingo, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Monday, January 16 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, 12:00 noon, Heritage Center.

Monday, January 16 – Town offices closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Tuesday, January 17 – Regular Town Board Meeting, Heritage Center, 6:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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Jennifer H. Larson  
Town Clerk