

## **Strategic Planning Meeting – February 8, 2022**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a special Strategic Plan meeting on Tuesday, February 8, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Jan Tedder-Rogers, Melvin Ellison and Clarence McNeill, Jr. Staff present were Town Manager Hank Raper, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. David Richardson was also in attendance.

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

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

### **Strategic Plan Discussion**

David Richardson, Executive Director of the Lumber River Council of Governments stated the goals of the fourth strategic plan meeting are human capital and capital water/wastewater infrastructure.

Some of the suggestions/concerns discussed:

- The need for an updated personnel policy, competitive pay for employees and succession planning. It takes 6 to 8 years to obtain necessary water/sewer operator certificates.
- Sewer/Water Asset Inventory Assessments to determine future needs.
- Consider the possibility of creating a regional water/wastewater authority to operate and set fees for Fairmont, Fair Bluff, Proctorville, Cerro Gordo, Boardman and possibly Rowland. This process would take 4 to 5 years.
- Fairmont's utility rate is too low and has not been kept up to cover the cost of doing business. It needs to be increased because the infrastructure is old and failing and the town does not have enough staff. Mr. Richardson suggested increasing the rates annually, around 2 to 3%, to keep up with the cost of inflation.
- Public Works Director Ronnie Seals suggested increasing the sanitation fee by \$5.00 to cover the cost of brown goods disposal.
- Finance Director Jenny Larson suggested dropping the minimum water usage from 2,000 to 1,000 gallons because customers are using less water.

The board agreed to meet again on Tuesday, March 22 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss communication and information technology.

### **Adjournment**

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

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Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk