

Regular Meeting – February 20, 2024

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, 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, Heather Seibles, Melvin Ellison, Clarence McNeill, Jr., and Jan Tedder-Rogers. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Attorney Jessica Scott, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Deputy Town Clerk Rodney Cain, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, Police Chief Jon Edwards, and Fire Chief Erick Freeman. Others in attendance included Reverend Doreen McNeill, Rita Green, Brandon Stone, Christ Mitchell, Nate Thompson, Gaines Grantham, Vanessa Abernathy, and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Reverend Doreen McNeill, Assistant Pastor of Jonesville Baptist Church, gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Manager's Presentation

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, along with Fire Chief Erick Freeman and South Robeson Rescue Commander Brandon Stone, recognized Ms. Rita Green for her heroic assistance in comforting a woman who had crashed her car while waiting for rescue and fire to arrive on February 12.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner McNeill made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance

Chris Mitchell

Mr. Chris Mitchell was concerned about the trashy appearance of the town and how motorcycles and cars do burnouts on Main Street during the May Day festival.

Nate Thompson

Mr. Nate Thompson encouraged the elected officials to be more involved in the community.

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, January 16, 2024, and Special Meeting, February 6, 2024
- b. Ordinance 24-251 – Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Amendment #6
- c. Ordinance 24-252 – SCIF Library Project Budget Amendment
- d. Ordinance 24-253 – StRAP Grant Project Budget Amendment
- e. Ordinance 24-254 – NCYVP Grant Project Budget Amendment
- f. Ordinance 24-255 – Closing Main Street for May Day Fun Festival on May 18, 2024
- g. Procurement Policy and Plan for CDBG-I Grantees

Signed copies of the minutes, ordinances and policy are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Old Business

There was no old business this month.

New Business

Approval of Street Signs Agreement with the Fairmont Rotary Club

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut has received quotes from Correction Enterprises on replacing our street signs with the addition of logos of either tobacco leaves, the town seal, or the Fairmont Rotary Club. The Fairmont Rotary Club is proposing to offset the cost to the Town if the Fairmont Rotary Seal is added to the signs. With hardware and possibly a few pole replacements, the total cost to the town is not expected to exceed \$7,000. The Fairmont Rotary Club will pay \$4,000 towards the project and the remaining funds will come from the General Fund.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the street sign agreement with the Fairmont Rotary Club. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

AARP Rural Lab Technical Assistance Grant Award Announcement

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut informed the board that he has applied for AARP Rural Lab Program. This Rural Lab will provide the town’s leaders, staff, and community with guidance on Fairmont becoming an “Age-Friendly Community”. Simultaneously, the town was able to apply for a Technical Assistance grant for the “Safe Streets and Roads for All” Program. AARP validated the receipt of the grant application on January 22, 2024, and notified the Town of the award on February 12, 2024.

US Army Corps of Engineers Public Assistance to the States (PAS) Grant Award Announcement

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut announced the Town of Fairmont has been awarded \$240,000 under the Public Assistance to States (PAS) Program. The PAS program is designed to provide local communities with technical analysis to help make more informed planning decisions. The USACE Wilmington District Office will be receiving approximately \$240,000 to meet the scope of work for the Town of Fairmont. This includes extensive survey work on the ground, the development of a hydraulic & hydrological model (built in-part with input from the field survey) and conducting the analysis using the model to evaluate existing conditions, and evaluating what happens when you implement different potential measures to answer, “how do they improve the drainage issues”. The deliverable products would be the model and a report explaining the analysis and recommendations. After completion of the PAS study, and as the Town is pursuing construction of one of the recommendations or having difficulty securing other funds, we could discuss potential further USACE involvement at that point – if there are any appropriate options/programs we can apply to institute the recommendations from the PAS Study.

Commissioner Input

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting. They praised Ms. Greene for her heroism, thanked the Fairmont Rotary Club for their donation, and look forward to working with the USACE on improving Fairmont’s drainage issues.

Mayor Input

Mayor Kemp announced the formation of the Fairmont Youth T.E.A.M. (Together Everyone Achieves More). The group held a fashion show during Senior Bingo and are planning fundraisers, dances, spring cleanups and tutoring.

Announcements

Wednesday, February 21 – Job Fair/Blood Drive, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center.

Early Voting for Primary Election 2024 – February 19-February 23 and February 26-March 1 – 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Fairmont Fire Hall.

Saturday, March 2 – Last Day of Early Voting for Primary Election 2024, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Fairmont Fire Hall.

Tuesday, March 5 – Primary Election Day, 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Fairmont Fire Hall.

Thursday, March 7 – Fairmont Planning Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center

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Tuesday, March 19 - Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center.

Saturday, March 23 – Easter Egg Hunt, 10:00 a.m., Fairmont Community Park.

Saturday, March 23 – Senior Bingo, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk