

Regular Meeting – July 21, 2026

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Heather Seibles, Melvin Ellison, and Felecia McLean. Commissioners Rasheena Graham and Jan Tedder-Rogers were absent due to family matters. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Attorney Jessica Scott, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Deputy Town Clerk Rodney Cain, Police Chief Jonathan Evans, Fire Chief Veronica Hunt, and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Pastor Wayne Brewer, Terry Evans, Henry Biernacki, Tara Ivey, and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Pastor Wayne Brewer of Trinity Methodist Church gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Ellison made a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of commissioner resignation and filling of vacant seat under new business. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tempore Presentation

Mayor Pro Tempore Heather Seible presented the “Legacy of Service” award to Howard Lennon for his humble, genuine love of the community.

Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance

Terry Evans

Mr. Terry Evans advised the board to review the budget every 3 months to make sure the departments are not going over budget. He was concerned that Fairmont has too many police officers compared to other towns.

Henry Biernacki

Mr. Henry Biernacki feels the youth in our community need to be mentored in trade skills like lawn care. He expressed appreciation for the Police Department and shared concern that several stores in town have an odor of marijuana, noting that it is not legal in the state.

Tara Ivey

Mrs. Tara Ivey was concerned about the Stop the Violence Back-to-School event using water guns.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, June 16, 2026, Special Meeting and Closed Session June 23, 2026, and Special Meeting June 30, 2026.
- b. Ordinance 26-301 – Close Main Street for Farmers Festival on October 17, 2026.

Signed copies are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Old Business

There was no old business this month.

New Business

Town Manager updates

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut provided updates on several town projects:

- **Brownfields Grant:** Recent work at 105 Byrd Street uncovered three old fuel tanks, with additional tanks possibly present. This may lead to demolition of two nearby buildings.
- **New Town Hall Project:** Commissioners are expected to receive full drawings for review, followed by detailed planning on design choices such as colors and flooring.
- **Youth Center:** Construction is paused while an insurance claim from the recent rainstorm is processed. Equipment purchasing and interior design planning continue.
- **Regionalization Efforts:** The Town did not receive General Assembly funding but will continue seeking support while reviewing interlocal agreements and encouraging partner towns to pursue grants.
- **Storm Recovery:** Several public buildings have pending insurance claims after the July 6 storm. Damage included a collapsed downtown building, unsafe properties, structural damage, and downed trees.
- **Code Enforcement:** July efforts focused on improving code enforcement procedures, shortening cleanup timelines, and identifying property owners.
- **Street Evaluations:** Sewer-related road cuts are planned, with hopes to complete some roadwork before fall.
- **Housing Projects:** Several housing developments are in engineering or plan-review stages, with some construction expected within 90–120 days after approvals.

Commissioner and Mayor Comments

The board thanked the citizens for coming and expressing their concerns. Commissioner Seibles invited everyone to the August 15 Back-to-School event at the park, noting it offered children a positive way to interact with law enforcement.

Mayor Kemp invited everyone to the quarterly Town Talk citizens forum on Tuesday, July 28 at 6:00 p.m. in the Heritage Center.

Announcements

Tuesday, July 28 – Town Talk meeting, 6:00 p.m. Heritage Center.

Thursday, August 6 – Fairmont Planning Board, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall.

Tuesday, August 18 – Regular Town Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Ellison made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk