

Regular Meeting – June 16, 2026

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, June 16, 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, Jan Tedder-Rogers, Rasheena Graham, and Felecia McLean. 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 Terry Evans, Henry Biernacki, Shea Ann Dejarnette, Tara Ivey, and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Commissioner Felecia McLean gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing – Contiguous Voluntary Annexation of the Reserve apartment site

Commissioner Ellison made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:05 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to discuss the contiguous voluntary annexation of the Reserve apartment site located off Church Street, parcel# 050505020, owned by Michael Walters. Town Manager Jerome Chestnut stated that Michael Walters submitted a petition to voluntarily annex parcel # 050505020 in April, and it was certified by town clerk in May. The parcel meets the requirements of G.S. 160A-31.

Mayor Kemp opened the floor for public comments. Henry Biernacki, Shea Ann Dejarnette, and Tara Ivey spoke out against the annexation. Mr. Terry Evans spoke in favor of the annexation. Concerns included cost of providing services versus benefits received and potential increase in crime/traffic. There were no comments from the board.

Commissioner Ellison made a motion to come out of the public hearing at 6:25 p.m. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Public Hearing – Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget

Commissioner Graham made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:25 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to discuss the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget. The budget includes a 2.5% cost of living pay raise for employees, no tax increase, sanitation base rate increase of \$1.50, water base rate increase of \$1.05, sewer base rate increase of \$1.35, increasing the minimum gallons from 1,000 to 2,000 and increasing the price per thousand step rate tier by \$0.25 each for water and sewer. The General fund budget is \$2,995,993, Powell Bill fund is \$97,380, and the Water/Sewer fund is \$1,779,843.

Mayor Kemp opened the floor for public comments. Terry Evans was concerned about budgeting fund balance in the General Fund. Mr. Henry Biernacki understood projected numbers can be very difficult to predict. Mrs. Tara Ivey would like the Public Works employees to receive a livable wage. There were no comments from the board.

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to come out of the public hearing at 6:48 p.m. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

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

Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance

Henry Biernacki

Mr. Henry Biernacki thanked the town staff.

Tara Ivey

Mrs. Tara Ivey stated the town should use additional methods, beyond Facebook, to communicate with citizens about work being done in town, since not everyone uses social media.

Terry Evans

Mr. Terry Evans wondered how residents would feel if the apartments were mobile homes instead. He also asked why the budget did not cut any positions.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, May 19, 2026, Budget Workshops June 2, 2026 and June 9, 2026..
- b. Water Write Offs 2025-2026 - \$9,965.25

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

Ordinance 26-297 – Annexation of the Reserve apartment site off Church Street

Commissioner Graham made a motion to adopt Ordinance 26-297 – Annexation of the Reserve apartment site off Church Street to be effective June 30, 2026. Commissioner Ellison 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.

Consider adopting Ordinance 26-298 - Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget and Fee Schedule

Commissioner Ellison asked if the town could hold another budget workshop and Mayor Kemp said yes. Commissioner McLean made a motion to table approving Ordinance 26-298 - Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget and fee schedule and to hold a special budget workshop on Tuesday, June 23 at 6:00 p.m. in the Heritage Center. Commissioner Graham seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Town Manager updates

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut had no updates to report.

Commissioner and Mayor Comments

The board thanked the citizens for coming and expressing their concerns. They wished everyone a Happy Father's Day. Mayor Pro Tempore Heather Seibles invited everyone to attend the Juneteenth Brunch on Friday, June 19 from 11 to 2 in the Heritage Center.

Mayor Kemp announced there will be a town cleanup on Saturday, June 20 in memory of Tre Watson.

Announcements

America 250th Celebration: Friday, June 26 – “American Voices” Concert, 7:00 p.m., Heritage Center, Saturday, June 27 – “Patriots on Parade”, 10:00 a.m., Downtown followed by vendors and patriotic contests in the Town Hall parking lot from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Sunday, June 28 - Fairmont Fantastic Fourth Fireworks, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., Fairmont Community Park.

Tuesday, June 30 – Special Board Meeting to adopt FY 2025-2026 Amended Budget and FY 2026-2027 Budget (if not already adopted), 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Thursday, July 2 – Fairmont Planning Board, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall.

Friday, July 3 – Town Offices closed for Independence Day.

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Wednesday, July 15 – Job Fair, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Tuesday, July 21 – Regular Town Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

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

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Ellison made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk