

## **Budget Workshop – June 2, 2026**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held a budget workshop meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Rasheena Graham, and Heather Seibles. Commissioners Jan Tedder-Rogers, Melvin Ellison, and Felecia McLean were absent. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Deputy Town Clerk Rodney Cain, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, Fire Chief Veronica Hunt, Police Chief Jonathan Evans, and Police Captain Joshua Harris.

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

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. and gave the invocation.

### **Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget discussion**

The Town Manager presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget totaling \$4,789,155, consisting of the General Fund, Powell Bill Fund, and Water/Sewer Fund. The budget is balanced and complies with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

#### **General Fund**

- Budget: \$2,981,044
- Tax rate: \$0.73 per \$100 valuation
- Estimated tax revenue: \$995,515 (94% collection rate)
- 3% increase in sanitation costs
- No employee pay raises included
- \$154,948 appropriated from fund balance

#### **Powell Bill Fund**

- Budget: \$108,605
- State allocation: \$97,380
- Fund balance: \$11,225
- Supports one part-time employee

#### **Water/Sewer Fund**

- Budget: \$1,699,356
- No changes to rates or minimum usage (1,000 gallons)
- Potential future rate adjustments under review
- No employee pay raises included
- Possible assumption of ownership and management of four additional systems by January 1, 2027, subject to feasibility and state funding. The town has requested \$3 million for the regionalization and for the current USDA sewer loans to be forgiven.

#### **Additional Considerations**

- Stable financial outlook with focus on cost control, maintaining service levels, and pursuing grants
- Continued development activity including new subdivisions and planned 64-unit multi-family housing
- New Youth Center nearing completion and plans being finalized for new Town Hall
- Capital needs include fire and sewer flusher trucks, with grants being pursued
- No funding for additional staff, small business assistance, or home repairs

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Commissioner Graham asked if the town could give utility bill discounts to senior citizens and veterans and was told it is not allowed under state law. Commissioner McCree was concerned about using fund balance in the general fund and depleting the town's savings. Commissioner Seibles asked if the town receives any revenue from code enforcement and Mr. Chestnut replied it is mainly an expense. He added that Robeson County is currently foreclosing 66 properties, which prevents the town from pursuing code enforcement activities.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kemp announced that another budget workshop will be held on Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Heritage Center.

Commissioner McCree made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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Jennifer H. Larson  
Town Clerk