

## **Regular Meeting – May 19, 2026**

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were Heather Seibles, Melvin Ellison, Jan Tedder-Rogers, Felecia McLean, and Rasheena Graham. Commissioner J. J. McCree was absent. 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, Fire Chief Veronica Hunt and Police Chief Jonathan Evans. Others in attendance included Rev. Leslie Sessoms, Shea Ann Dejarnette, Joey McLellan, Henry Biernacki, Terry Evans, and several citizens.

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

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. A moment of silence for FHS Senior Ta’Nyah Pittman, great-niece of Commissioner J.J. McCree, who died in a car crash over the weekend. Rev. Leslie Sessoms, Interim Pastor of Godwin Heights Baptist Church, gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Mayor’s Presentations**

#### **Lupus Awareness Proclamation**

Mayor Kemp read a Proclamation naming May as “Lupus Awareness Month”. A signed copy of the proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

#### **Juneteenth Celebration**

Mayor Kemp recognized Mayor Pro Tempore Heather Seibles, who announced a Senior Brunch for this year’s Juneteenth Celebration to be held on Friday, June 19, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Heritage Center.

### **Board of Adjustment Public Hearing**

#### **Call to Order**

Mayor Charles Kemp called the Board of Adjustment meeting to order at 6:14 p.m. The Board of Adjustment members are Charles Kemp, Jan Tedder-Rogers, Heather Seibles, Rasheena Graham, and Felecia McLean. (J.J. McCree and Melvin Ellison are alternates).

Town Attorney Jessica Scott swore in Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, who spoke on behalf of the town and applicant Maurice Townsend.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut explained Mr. Maurice Townsend's Variance Permit Application V-25-26-01 for 310 Iona Street and 207 Trinity Street. The properties are currently located on the same parcel# 300504062. Mr. Townsend is requesting a Variance to allow the subdivision of this property to allow two different parcels. The parcel is zoned R-10 and already has separate addresses and utility accounts. The notice for the Public Hearing was published in The Robesonian on May 9, 2026 and abutting property owners were notified. The hardship is that there is not enough land on the parcel to meet setback requirements and therefore the property owner would have to physically move one of the residences. The additional structure was already in place when Mr. Townsend purchased the property. This request will not result in the extension or expansion of an existing nonconforming situation. It will also not result in a nonconforming use of the property. This variance request does not harm public safety.

There was no testimony or evidence from opposed parties and there was no rebuttal evidence.

Commissioner Tedder-Rogers made a motion to approve the zoning variance of Maurice Townsend splitting 310 Iona Street and 207 Trinity into two separate parcels. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner McLean made a motion to close the Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing and adjourn the Board of Adjustment meeting at 6:31 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing – Closeout of CDBG-Infrastructure Projects #15-I-3158, #17-I-3608, and #20-I-3608**

Motion was made by Commissioner Seibles to open the Public Hearing at 6:32 p.m. to discuss the project closeout of the following CDBG-I grants: 15-I-3158, 17-I-3608, and 20-I-3608. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, stated the purpose of this Public Hearing is to discuss the project closeout for the Town of Fairmont's Community Development Block Grants, CDBG project numbers 15-I-3158, 17-I-3608, and 20-I-3608. The original public hearing held on March 17, 2026, had to be redone due to a clerical error in the amount of deobligated funds. This public hearing will provide citizens with information concerning the CDBG program and authorize LKC Engineering, PLLC to prepare the final closeout report and documents and for the authorized representative to sign the closeout documents. The public hearing will solicit public participation in the closeout of the CDBG Infrastructure project by gathering citizens' views and comments prior to the submission of the closeout documentation to the NC Department of Environmental Quality.

The original scope of work for the 20-I-3608 grant provided \$1,903,000 in CDBG-I funds (CDBG) to include the rehabilitation/replacement of the existing Brown Street pump station and the repair/replacement of the associated mechanical bar screen and grit removal systems which transports 100% of the Town's wastewater to the Town of Fairmont Regional WWTP via approximately 51,000 LF of force main. The project will also make improvements to an existing approximately 51,000 LF of discharge force main along NC Hwy 130 by replacing and adding the air valve along this line and provide for the replacement of approximately 800 LF of 18-inch failing gravity sewer outfall. The low-to-moderate income percentage of the project area is 65.05 percent, and the poverty level for the entire town is 39.8 percent.

The FY20 project was amended a first time to include a revised and reduced scope of work which resulted in negotiations with the low bidder. The revised scope of work includes the installation of a new triplex submersible pump station along the route of the existing force main, replacement & addition of air release valves, providing weatherproof shelters for the existing electrical controls and cleaning & coating of the existing conduit exposed in the wet well and valve vault at the Brown Street pump station. The existing electrical and pump control components will remain in service as they were planned for replacement in the original scope of work. In addition, the revised scope of work will include replacement of the existing Brown Street generator but incorporate use of the existing automatic transfer switch instead of a complete replacement of both components. The wet well and valve vault rehabilitation at the Brown Street pump station are not included in the revised project scope. The proposed benefit will remain unchanged at 65.05 percent low-to-moderate income.

The FY20 project was amended a second time to include revisions to the previously approved scope of work. The revised scope of work includes the purchase of a new two-ton hoist and frame (approximately \$32,000) and an autodialer (approximately \$2,000) for the new intermediate pump station located at 16619 NC130 Hwy E, Fairmont, NC. The Town does not currently have a means of removing the proposed pumps from the pump station when necessary for maintenance. In addition, the proposed pumps are too heavy to be safely removed with a typical davit crane. The addition of the autodialer, or some means of remote monitoring, is required by NCDEQ. The addition of the proposed auto-dialer is the most cost-effective solution that meets NCDEQ requirements. The amended scope of work does not require additional grant funds. The proposed benefit will remain unchanged at 65.05 percent low-to-moderate income.

The Town received additional grant funds provided by the FY17 program. The original scope of work for the 17-I-3608 grant provided \$500,000 in CDBG-I funds (CDBG) to include mobilization and materials for the pump station and additional grant administration activities. The overall project includes installation of a new triplex submersible pumps station along the route of the existing force main, replacement & addition of air release valves, providing weatherproof shelters for the existing electrical

controls and cleaning & coating of the existing conduit exposed in the wet well and valve vault at the Brown Street pump station, and replacement of the generator at the Brown Street Pump Station. The LMI for this project is 65.05%.

There were 2 change orders made throughout the project. All change orders were approved by NCDEQ.

The project financials are as follows:

**CDBG-I Project 15-I-3158 (Total awarded: \$97,000.00)**

Administration:	\$72,000.00
Environmental Review:	\$12,500.00
Engineering Report:	<u>\$12,500.00</u>
Total Expended:	\$97,000.00

**CDBG-I Project 17-I-3608 (Total awarded: \$500,000.00)**

Sewer:	\$483,000.00
Administration:	<u>\$ 17,000.00</u>
Total Expended:	\$500,000.00

**CDBG-I Project 20-I-3608 (Total awarded: \$1,903,000.00)**

Administration:	\$ 39,599.00
Sewer:	<u>\$1,745,254.00</u>
Total Expended:	\$1,784,853.00
Deobligated funds:	(\$ 118,147.00)

Mr. Henry Biernacki, of 405 Mitchell Street, praised the work and feels the town is on the right track.

Motion was made by Commissioner Seibles to close the Public Hearing at 6:42 p.m. Commissioner Tedder-Rogers seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Motion to authorize LKC to prepare the closeout report and final documents and authorize the Town Manager to sign the closeout report and final documents.**

Motion was made by Commissioner McLean authorizing LKC Engineering to proceed with the closeout report and final documents and authorizing Jerome Chestnut, Town Manager, to execute all required documents for the FY15, FY17, and FY20 closeout on behalf of the Town. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Kemp called for a short recess at 6:43 p.m. so the minutes from the public hearing could be finalized, and they could be approved and certified at tonight's meeting. The minutes will be included in the FY15, FY17, and FY20 closeout documents to be submitted soon after the public hearing.

Mayor Kemp reconvened the meeting at 6:49 p.m. Upon reconvening, Commissioner McLean made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the CDBG-I Closeout Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Graham and approved unanimously.

### **Approval of Agenda**

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

### **Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance**

#### Joey McLellan

Mr. Joey McLellan would like town employees to get a pay raise in the new budget for making the town look good.

#### Terry Evans

Mr. Terry Evans feels the new apartment complex will be good for the growth of the town and does not understand the prejudiced views of the neighboring property owners.

#### Shea Ann Dejarnette

Ms. Shea Ann Dejarnette encouraged the board to consider infrastructure and long-term planning when discussing the town's budget. She does not want the future growth of the town to overburden citizens, staff, police and public works.

#### Henry Biernacki

Mr. Henry Biernacki cares about the residents who neighbor the future apartment complex and stated they are afraid.

**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, April 21, 2026.
- b. Ordinance 29-293 – Youth Center Project Budget
- c. Ordinance 29-294 – StRAP Grant#25-008-4044
- d. Ordinance 29-295 – Budget Amendment NCLWF Sediment Control
- e. Ordinance 29-296 – FY 25-26 Budget Amendment #4

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

**Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business this month.

**New Business**

Appointment of Planning Board members – Monte McCallum

Planning Board member Monte McCallum is up for reappointment and would like to serve another three-year term expiring in May 2029. Commissioner Graham made a motion to reappoint Monte McCallum to the Fairmont Planning Board. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Appointment of Planning Board members – Phostenia McCrimmon

Planning Board member Phostenia McCrimmon is up for reappointment and would like to serve another three-year term expiring in May 2029. Commissioner McLean made a motion to reappoint Phostenia McCrimmon to the Fairmont Planning Board. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Resolution 26-06 – Fixing date of Public Hearing on Voluntary Annexation request, Michael Walters, The Reserve site

Town Clerk Jenny Larson has investigated the petition for contiguous annexation of The Reserve site located off Church Street and has certified that it meets the requirements of G.S. 160A-31. The next step is to set a public hearing for June 16, 2026, on the question of annexation. Commissioner McLean made a motion to adopt Resolution 26-06 – Set Public Hearing for Contiguous Annexation of The Reserve site. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of the resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

### Town Manager Updates

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut updated the Board of Commissioners on the following Town Projects:

- Announced that Police Chief Jon Edwards retired May 1.
- Introduced Police Chief Jonathan Evans and Police Captain Joshua Harris.
- The new Town Hall is currently in the architecture/design phase.
- Work has begun on the \$15 million Sewer Rehabilitation project.
- Sediment Removal from Pittman Canal in the Old Field neighborhood has begun. This project is being paid for with a \$150,000 StRAP grant.
- The Water and Sewer Regionalization plan is on hold until the state budget is passed. The town has asked for \$3 million to help fund it.
- The town has spent time and money on code enforcement projects by demolishing two homes and removing vegetation and trash from others.
- Remodeling work is ongoing to convert the old FCX building into a Youth Center using private donations.
- The town annexed two parcels of land next to I-95, Exit 10, through an act of the NC General Assembly in 2017. One of those parcels was recently purchased by the Lumbee Tribe for a potential future casino. The other parcel needs to be zoned by the town for future commercial use.

### Mayor and Commissioner Comments

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming, expressed condolences to Commissioner McCree and his family for the loss of his great-niece, and congratulated Chief Evans and Captain Harris on their promotion. Commissioner Ellison announced that his last meeting as a town commissioner will be October 2026.

Mayor Kemp announced the town's Memorial Day ceremony will be held Monday, May 25 at 12:00 noon in the Heritage Center. He invited the board to attend the quarterly employee luncheon on Wednesday, May 20 at 12:30 p.m. in the Heritage Center. Mayor Kemp encouraged everyone to attend Fairmont's America 250<sup>th</sup> celebration June 26-28.

### Announcements

Wednesday, May 20 – Town Employees Lunch, 12:30 p.m., Heritage Center.

Tuesday, May 26 – Budget Workshop, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Tuesday, June 2 – Budget Workshop, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

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Thursday, June 4 – Fairmont Planning Board, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall.

Saturday, June 6 – Senior Bingo, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Tuesday, June 9 – Budget Workshop, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Tuesday, June 16 – Regular Town Board Meeting with Annexation and Budget Public Hearings, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

America 250<sup>th</sup> 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, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Commissioner Ellison made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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Jennifer H. Larson, NCCMC  
Town Clerk