

Regular Meeting – November 19, 2024

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were Terry Evans, Melvin Ellison, Clarence McNeill, Jr., Heather Seibles, and J.J. McCree. Commissioner Jan Tedder-Rogers was absent. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Attorney Jessica Scott, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Deputy Town Clerk Rodney Cain, Police Captain Jonathan Evans, and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Rev. Charles Cumming, Ricky Lewis, Halona Hunt, 2024-2025 Fairmont Farmers Festival queens, Brad Martin, and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Reverend Charles Cumming of Fairpoint Freewill Baptist Church gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Presentation

Introduction of 2024-2025 Fairmont Farmers Festival Queens

Mayor Kemp introduced the 2024-2025 Fairmont Farmers Festival Queens. They are Miss Jailyn Newberry, Teen Miss Emmaleigh Higgins, Junior Miss Isabella Collins, Tiny Miss Chloe Graham, Little Miss Lexi Britt, Wee Miss Addelyn Sampson, Royal Ambassador Kensley Rogers, Ambassador Jahana Jones, and Mini Ambassador Kendall Oxendine.

Halona Hunt, FHS Veteran's Day essay winner

Mayor Kemp recognized Halona Hunt, winner of the Fairmont High School Veteran's Day essay contest. Ms. Hunt read her essay for the board and audience.

Recognition of Public Works employee Ricky Lewis

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut recognized Public Works employee Ricky Lewis for actions taken to assist one of our citizens during a medical emergency.

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Kemp asked the board to move Commissioner/Mayor comments before Closed Session. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance

There was no public comment this month.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, October 15, 2024
- b. Resolution 24-08 – Stormwater Planning Grant
- c. Resolution 24-09 – CDBG-I compliance plans

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

Old Business

There was no old business this month.

New Business

Interlocal Agreement – Robeson County Sheriff’s Office for the Provision of Animal Shelter and Animal Control Services

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut is proposing an interlocal agreement with the Robeson County Sheriff’s Office to provide Animal Shelter and Animal Control Services beginning February 1, 2025, at a cost of \$600.00 per month. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement with the Robeson County Sheriff’s Office to provide Animal Shelter and Animal Control Services. Commissioner McNeill seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Subdivision Approval – Chicken Road

Linkhaw Development Group, LLC has submitted Plans for a subdivision to be located on Chicken Road in the town’s extraterritorial jurisdiction. Current plans call for only the subdivision of one large tract (43.26 acres) into 19 individual lots to be sold for residential construction of single-family homes. The area is currently zoned Rural Agriculture (RA). No roads or infrastructure are required for this subdivision. All parcels have road frontage. The Planning Board reviewed the plans for the Fairbrook Farm Subdivision on October 3 and November 7 and have approved the proposed subdivision. Mr. Brad Martin, who represents the development group, stated the homes will be double wide mobile homes with brick underpinning or stick built. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Fairbrook Farm subdivision on Chicken Road by Linkhaw Development Group, LLC. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Proposal – Downtown Signage

The Fairmont Rotary Club would like to partner with the town on a marketing campaign to highlight the town. The Rotary Club is requesting permission to install a 10' x 20' sign on the side of the former library at 106 S. Main Street. This is a town-owned property and requires board approval. Commissioner Seibles made a motion to approve the Rotary sign on the side of the old library. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Surplus Property – Former Library, 106 South Main Street

The Town of Fairmont owns a building located at 106 South Main Street, Fairmont, NC. This is the location of the former Fairmont Branch of the Robeson County Public Library System. There has been interest from for-profit and nonprofit organizations in the use of the building. Options for disposition of this property include offering the building for sale, or rent/lease. Commissioner Evans made a motion declare the former library, located at 106 South Main Street, as surplus property to be leased. Commissioner McNeill seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Economic Development Support for Housing

The Town of Fairmont is dealing with a shortage of housing options for residents. Over the last few months, the staff has studied various methods of increasing the housing stock in town. There are ongoing projects with North Carolina Rebuild (NC Rebuild), Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR), and a pending application for another CDBG-NR Application.

The NC Rebuild and CDBG-NR programs are home replacements programs based on disaster recovery and currently occupied homes that requires reconstruction or rehabilitation. These programs do not provide housing for incoming residents, nor does it cover homes going into foreclosures or homes requiring minor repairs.

The staff recommends establishing funding for assistance in the construction of smaller footprint homes, purchase and rehabilitation of foreclosed properties, and small budget repairs for those citizens of low to medium income. The staff is requesting economic development support in the amount of \$100,000. These projects will be overseen by the Town Manager and staff and the status of projects and funding will be reported to the board of commissioners monthly.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve creating an economic development fund for housing support in the amount of \$100,000. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Comments

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting and encouraged the citizens to continue to come.

Mayor Comments

Mayor Kemp recognized Public Works Director Ronnie Seals for 30 years of service to the town. He invited the board to the quarterly employee luncheon on November 20 at 12:30 p.m. in the Heritage Center.

Executive / Closed Session

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to go into closed session at 6:40 p.m. to discuss personnel and to consult with an attorney retained by the board to preserve the attorney - client privilege between the attorney and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Fairmont per N.C.G.S. 143-318-11 (a)(3,6). Commissioner Evans seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of closed session at 6:48 p.m. Commissioner McNeill seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Mayor Kemp stated that attorney-client privilege was discussed.

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to approve the Town Attorney contract with Jessica Scott, of Hunt & Brooks, Attorneys & Counselors at Law, PLLC in the amount of \$800 monthly retainer and \$175 per hour for additional work. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Announcements

Wednesday, November 20 – Town Employee Luncheon, 12:30 p.m., Heritage Center.

Tuesday, November 26 – Fairmont Rotary Club auction, 5:30 p.m., Heritage Center.

November 27-29 – Town offices closed in observance of Thanksgiving.

Thursday, December 5 – Fairmont Planning Board meeting, 6:00 p.m.

Friday, December 6 – Holiday on Main Twilight Christmas Parade. Tree Lighting Ceremony 6:00 p.m., Twilight Parade, 6:30 p.m. and Entertainment in the Heritage center, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 13 – Motown Christmas Dinner & Concert, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Saturday, December 14 – Fabuleus Christmas Craft Fair, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Heritage Center.

Sunday, December 15 – Senior Citizens trip to Carolina Civic Center Christmas Show, 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 17 – Regular Town Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

December 23-27 – Town offices closed for Christmas.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk