Regular Meeting – September 15, 2026

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 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, Rasheena Graham, Felecia McLean, and Jan Tedder-Rogers. 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, Police Chief Jonathan Evans, Recreation Director Mickey Williamson, and Fire Chief Veronica Hunt. Others in attendance included Reverend Steve Johnson, Josh Outlaw, Terry Evans, Matt Moore, Halle Bethea, Noah Hunt, Addyson Hunt, Mason Pittman, Amber Stone, Jalyn Hunt-Williamson, and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Reverend Steve Johnson, of Proctorville Baptist Church, gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Presentation

Mayor Kemp read a proclamation naming September 12-26, 2026, as Keep Fairmont Clean and Green. A signed copy of this proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Mayor Kemp read a proclamation naming September as Smart Start Month. A signed copy of this proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Mayor Kemp introduced the 2026-2027 Golden Ambassadors: Halle Bethea, Mason Pittman, Addyson Hunt, Amber Stone, Jalyn Hunt-Williamson and Noah Hunt.

Public Hearing – 2026 CDBG-NR Application

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:27 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut stated the purpose of this Public Hearing is to advise and receive feedback from the citizens of the Town of Fairmont on applying for the 2026 CDBG-NR Grant Program. The Town of Fairmont applied for this grant in 2023 and 2024 and were successful in both applications. Mr. Josh Outlaw of the Adams Company presented the following:

- Second of 2 public hearings to notify of intent to apply for Community Development Block Grant-Neighborhood Revitalization
- Applications due in Raleigh on October 13
- Applying for the maximum grant amount of $950,000, plus an additional $5,000 in local funds being committed

- Activities to include
    - Reconstruction of 4 homes (demolish and rebuild new) and alternates and 3 homes for rehabilitation
        - 129 Liberia Street – Reconstruction
        - 205 Stephens Street – Reconstruction
        - 603 W. Benjamin Street – Reconstruction
        - 205 Jenkins Street – Reconstruction
        - Alternate #1— 202 Jenkins Street – Rehabilitation
        - Alternate #2— 205 N. Walnut Street – Rehabilitation
        - Alternate #3— 603 Floyd Street – Rehabilitation
- Following this public hearing, Board will vote on a resolution to apply.
- Resolution required as part of application indicating the Town's desire to apply for funding, allows mayor to sign application documents

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to come out of the public hearing at 6:29 p.m. Commissioner McLean seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

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

Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance

Terry Evans

Mr. Terry Evans spoke on the financial problems of the town of Rowland and does not want the same to happen to Fairmont.

Consent Agenda

65Upon motion by Commissioner Ellison and seconded by Commissioner Seibles, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, August 18, 2026
b. Ordinance 26-303 – FY 2026-2027 Budget Amendment #1
c. Ordinance 26-304 – Close Main Street for Christmas Parade

Copies of the signed ordinances are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Old Business

There was no old business this month.

New Business

Resolution 26-06 – 2026 CDBG-NR grant application

Commissioner Tedder-Rogers made a motion to approve Resolution 26-06 – 2026 CDBG-NR grant application in the amount of $950,000 with a local match of $5,000. Commissioner Graham seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this resolution is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Approval of CDBG-I 25-I-4250 Grant Administration and Engineering Services

The Town of Fairmont was awarded a $3,000,000 CDBG-I grant by the State Water Infrastructure Authority in March 2026 for the rehabilitation of the Brown Street Pump Station's Wet Well and Bar Screen. One of the first steps is the approval of grant administration and engineering services. The town received seven requests for proposals for grant administration and three requests for qualifications for engineering services on August 20, 2026. After being reviewed by Town Manager Jerome Chestnut and Finance Director Jenny Larson, it is recommended that the board award both grant administration and engineering services to LKC Engineering, PLLC. Commissioner Seibles made a motion to approve LKC Engineering, PLLC for Grant Administration and Engineering Services for the CDBG-I 25-I-4250 grant. Commissioner Tedder-Rogers seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Ordinance 26-305 – CDBG-I 25-I-4250 Project Budget Ordinance

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut explained the CDBG 25-I-4250 budget ordinance has $2,700,000 for sewer rehabilitation and $300,000 for administration. Commissioner McLean made a motion to approve Ordinance 26-305 – CDBG-I 25-I-4250 Project Budget Ordinance in the amount of $3,000,000. Commissioner Graham seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. A signed copy of this ordinance is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Appointment of Fairmont ABC Board member

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to appoint Winona Gause to the Fairmont ABC Board for a three-year term expiring September 2029. Commissioner Tedder-Rogers seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously with Commissioner Ellison abstaining due to his role as ABC Store Manager.

Acceptance of Commissioner Melvin Ellison's resignation effective October 20, 2026

Commissioner Melvin Ellison announced his resignation from the Fairmont Board of Commissioners effective October 20, 2026 due to his election as the District 2 representative of the Robeson County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner McLean made a motion to accept Commissioner Ellison's resignation. Commissioner Graham seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Appointment to fill vacant commissioner seat effective October 20, 2026

Commissioner Ellison made a motion to appoint John Matthew Moore as the successor to fill his unexpired term as a Fairmont Town Commissioner effective at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2026. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Mr. Moore will be sworn in at the beginning of the next regular town board meeting on October 20, 2026, and will serve until December 2029.

Commissioner and Mayor Comments

The board thanked the citizens for coming, congratulated the new Golden Ambassadors, is looking forward to working with new Commissioner Matt Moore and stated it was a pleasure working with Commissioner Ellison. Commissioner Ellison said he would continue to work hard for Fairmont as a County Commissioner.

Mayor Kemp invited everyone to the next Job Fair on Wednesday, October 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Heritage Center.

Town Manager updates

The Town Manager presented the following:

- Provided updates on facility roof damage claims affecting Town Hall, Youth Center, and Public Works. Temporary repairs remain in place and operations continue without interruption. Equipment purchases for the Youth Center are expected to begin October 1, 2026. New Town Hall planning continues with final plans under development.
- Reported staffing remains stable with all department head and deputy positions filled except Parks and Recreation. Noted that three department heads are eligible for retirement. Discussed the potential need for an Assistant Town Manager position to support future growth, youth programming, and operations.
- Provided updates on active grant-funded projects, including sewer rehabilitation, new Town Hall construction, pump station rehabilitation, housing reconstruction, and Brownfields initiatives. Work is progressing on multiple projects throughout town.
- Identified several unfunded urgent capital needs, including Public Works flusher truck, boom truck, radio read meters, a replacement fire truck, and Parks and Recreation improvements.
- Reported continued progress on housing and development projects and noted that housing repair needs exceed current available resources. A USDA Rural Development community meeting is anticipated in October 2026.
- Discussed key priorities including regionalization efforts, amendment of the Proctorville Interlocal Agreement, USDA loan forgiveness opportunities, and downtown economic development assistance.
- Additional updates included code enforcement activity of 83 cases, wastewater treatment plant erosion concerns, potential funding opportunities through the Water Resources and Development Act, evaluation of alternative energy solutions for the wastewater treatment plant, and ongoing business development interest.

Announcements

Thursday, October 1 – Fairmont Planning Board, 6:00 p.m. Town Hall Courtroom.

Saturday, October 3 – Senior Bingo, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Saturday, October 10 – Farmers Festival Scholarship Pageant, 2:00 p.m., Rosenwald Elementary School

Tuesday, October 13 –Town Talk, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Saturday, October 17 – Fairmont Farmers Festival, 10:00 a.m., Downtown.

Tuesday, October 20 – Regular Town Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Wednesday, October 21 – Job Fair, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Friday, October 23 – Fairmont High School Homecoming game vs. S. Brunswick, 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 24 - 4th Annual Grand Reunion, All day, Fairmont Community Park.

Tuesday, October 27 – Robeson County Municipal Association Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Saturday, October 31 – Halloween Community Event, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Fairmont Community Park.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner McLean made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk