

Regular Meeting – April 18, 2023

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were J.J. McCree, Terry Evans, Melvin Ellison, Jan Tedder-Rogers, and Heather Seibles. Commissioner Clarence McNeill, Jr. was absent. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Town Attorney Jessica Scott, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, and Police Chief Jonathan Edwards. Several citizens were also present including Copeland Jacobs, Dr. Leslie Sessoms, Mike Brill, Leon Burden, Mary Hernandez, Jan Sellers, Phillip and Helene Wall.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Rev. Dr. Leslie Sessoms, Co-Founder and President of Ministers for Justice gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor's Presentations

Mayor Kemp recognized the following Big Business Boosters for opening businesses or improving buildings in town: Phillip and Helene Wall – Fig Tree Inn, Jan Sellers/Betsy Harrington – Downtown building owners, Mary Hernandez – Melecio's Fiesta Bar, and Maurice Townsend – The Picnic/Barber Shop.

Public Hearing – Curfew Ordinances

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into Public Hearing to discuss the Curfew Ordinance at 6:13 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut stated the curfew ordinance changes include keeping a computer file of all minors who have violated the curfew ordinance, imposing a misdemeanor fine not to exceed \$100, and any minor who violates the ordinance is subject to being judged delinquent.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of Public Hearing at 6:20 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the 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 Ellison, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, March 21, 2023
- b. Ordinance 23-234 – Budget Amendment #8 - \$37,794
- c. Ordinance 23-235 – Project Budget Ordinance for SCIF Library Grant - \$500,000.
- d. Ordinance 23-236 – Project Budget Ordinance for LISC DOJ Rural Violent Crime Reduction Police Grant - \$150,000.

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

Old Business

Ordinance 23-237 - Adopt revised Curfew ordinance.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut asked the board to adopt the revised curfew ordinance. The curfew ordinance changes include keeping a computer file of all minors who have violated the curfew ordinance, imposing a misdemeanor fine not to exceed \$100, and any minor who violates the ordinance is subject to being judged delinquent.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 23-237 Curfew ordinance amendments. Commissioner Seibles 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.

New Business

Resolution 23-04 – Designated Official for ABC Commission for ABC permit signatures.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut asked the board to designate the position of Town Manager as the designated official for the ABC Commission to sign ABC permit applications. Commissioner Seibles made a motion to adopt Resolution 23-04 – Designated Official for ABC Commission for ABC permit signatures. Commissioner Evans 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.

Announcement of the LISC DOJ Rural Violent Crime Reduction Police Grant.

Mike Brill with NC Youth Violence Prevention Center, and Leon Burden with the Colors of Life, announced the Fairmont Police Department is receiving a \$150,000 LISC DOJ Rural Violent Crime Reduction grant. This grant will be used to offset salary and fringe costs for police officers, purchase crime analysis software, cameras, radios, and license plate readers and conduct community engagement.

Announcement of the 2023 NCDOT Bicycle Helmet Initiative.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut announced that the town has received a 2023 NCDOT Bicycle Helmet Initiative grant. The police department will receive 50 helmets in various sizes to give out to children in the community. The Fairmont Rotary Club will receive 100 helmets and will partner with the police department for an event later in the year to fit kids for the free helmets.

Commissioner and Mayor Comments

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting and are excited about Fairmont's future. Commissioner Evans thanked everyone for their show of support following the passing of his son. Commissioner Tedder-Rogers encouraged everyone to visit Fairmont's recently remodeled ABC store.

Mayor Kemp made the following statement:

I'd like to add a few additional comments to those I made at the start of our meeting, as anyone who is observant has seen downtown Fairmont has begun to change and improve since January 2022. Passers-through may not have noticed but those of us who live, and work here must certainly have. New businesses such as The Picnic, The Barber Shop, Rainey's 2nd hand shop, several beauty shops, Melecio's restaurant, The Fig Tree Inn, remodeled ABC Store, a brand-new medical facility, and the improvements being done to some vacant stores are all perfect examples that Fairmont is on the move. Fairmont's downtown and, in a larger sense, our entire community is undergoing an attitude change. Gone, or going, is the "woe is us" philosophy. What is now the current trend is "Wow! What's up next"! There is much more to come, more progress, more innovation, more positive changes. When Mr. Chestnut initiates code enforcement procedures and begins efforts, there will be even more positive signs emerging. Yes, right now and tomorrow is an exciting time to be in Fairmont. Stand by for more great things.

Town Manager Comments

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut appreciates the personal investment being made in Fairmont.

Announcements

Wednesday, April 19 – Job Fair, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Thursday, April 20 – RCCCC Food Box Distribution, 9:30 a.m., Morro Street

Tuesday, April 25 – Town Issue Forum, 6:00 p.m., RCMA meeting at 7:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Saturday, April 29 – River Voices Concert, 4 to 7 p.m., Community Park.

Thursday, May 4 – Fairmont Planning Board meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Saturday, May 6 – May Day Fun Festival, 10:30 a.m., Downtown.

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

Saturday, May 13 – Senior Bingo, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Adjournment

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk