

Regular Meeting – July 18, 2023

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, July 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, Heather Seibles, Melvin Ellison, Clarence McNeill, Jr., and Jan Tedder-Rogers. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Attorney Jessica Scott, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, and Police Chief Jon Edwards. Others in attendance included Rev. Ed Wilcox, David Richardson, Cassandra Gaddy, Shameicha Wade-Ford, Rodney Cain and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and asked everyone to remember the family and friends of Deputy Town Clerk Donna Jacobs, who passed away today after a three-year battle with metastatic breast cancer. Rev. Ed Wilcox, Pastor of Centerville Baptist Church, gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut read a conflict-of-interest statement to the board.

Mayor Presentation

Mayor Kemp recognized Shameicha Wade-Ford, Owner/Operator of Alpha Elite Cheerleading.

Public Hearing – Zoning Ordinance Update

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:17 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to discuss the Zoning Ordinance update. The Lumber River Council of Governments worked with the Fairmont Planning Board to update the town's zoning ordinance to make it compliant with North Carolina General Statute Chapter 160D. The Fairmont Planning Board met in June and recommended approval of the zoning update.

There was no public input on the Zoning Ordinance update.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of public hearing at 6:18 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

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

Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance

Larry Shumpert – FHS Booster Club project

Mr. Larry Shumpert, FHS Booster Club member, asked for the community’s support to help purchase new home and away basketball uniforms for the Fairmont High School Junior Varsity and Varsity Boys and Girls teams.

Cassandra Gaddy – Utility Bill increase

Ms. Cassandra Gaddy had concerns about the reasons behind the recent utility bill increase.

Consent Agenda

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

Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, June 20, 2023, and Special Meeting, June 29, 2023.

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

Old Business

Appointment of ABC Board Chairman

Commissioner Evans made a motion to appoint Dwayne McCormick as the ABC Board Chairman effective August 1, 2023. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Consider Appointment of ABC Board member to become effective August 1, 2023

Commissioner Evans made a motion to appoint Khairalla Aziz (Mr. G) to the Fairmont ABC Board. His motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Tedder-Rogers made a motion to appoint Vayda Taylor to the Fairmont ABC Board. Her motion died for a lack of a second.

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to appoint Doreen McNeill to the Fairmont ABC Board. Commissioner McCree seconded the motion. Before a vote was taken, Town Attorney Jessica Scott asked the board to go into executive/closed session for the purpose of discussing attorney-client privilege as allowed under G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4).

Executive/Closed Session – Attorney-Client Privilege G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3)

Commissioner McNeill made a motion to go into executive/closed session for the purpose of discussing attorney-client privilege as allowed under G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) at 6:32 p.m. Commissioner Tedder-Rogers seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of closed session at 6:37 p.m. Commissioner Tedder-Rogers seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mayor Kemp announced that no action was taken.

Continuation of Appointment of ABC Board member to become effective August 1, 2023

A vote was held on the appointment of Doreen McNeill to the Fairmont ABC Board. Commissioners Seibles and McCree voted yes, Commissioners Evans and Tedder-Rogers voted no. Commissioner Ellison could not vote since he is the ABC Store manager and Commissioner McNeill could not vote since Doreen McNeill is his wife. Mayor Kemp broke the 2-2 tie by voting no.

Commissioner Evans again made a motion to appoint Khairalla Aziz to the Fairmont ABC Board. His motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner McNeill made a motion to appoint Gerald Gaddy to the Fairmont ABC Board effective August 1, 2023 for a three year term expiring September 2026. Commissioner Seibles seconded his motion and it passed unanimously with Commissioner Ellison abstaining.

New Business

Ordinance 23-241 – Adoption of Zoning Ordinance update

Lumber River Council of Governments Executive David Richardson explained the LRCOG worked with the Fairmont Planning Board for a year and a half to update the zoning ordinance to bring it into compliance with NC Chapter 160D. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Ordinance 23-241, Zoning Ordinance update. Commissioner Ellison 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.

Approval to host Climate Action Corp member

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut was approached by the NC Climate Action Corps to host a Resilience Project Coordinator, who will increase the town staff's capacity to address flooding and stormwater issues without having to fund an additional position. Commissioner Ellison made a motion to approve hosting the Climate Action Corp Resilience Project Coordinator. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Resolution 23-05 - Accepting the NCDEQ DWI ARPA Viable Utility Reserve Grant in the amount of \$14,769,667 and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan in the amount of \$230,333 with Principal Forgiveness of \$230,333

Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 23-05 - Accepting the NCDEQ DWI ARPA Viable Utility Reserve Grant in the amount of \$14,769,667 and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan in the amount of \$230,333 with Principal Forgiveness of \$230,333. Commissioner Seibles 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.

Approve Engineering Contract with LKC Engineering, PLLC for the Fairmont Collection System Rehabilitation NCDEQ Project No. VUR-W-ARP-0071 & CS370618-03

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Engineering Contract with LKC Engineering, PLLC for the Fairmont Collection System Rehabilitation NCDEQ Project No. VUR-W-ARP-0071 & CS370618-03. Commissioner McNeill seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Input

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting and expressed their condolences in the passing of Deputy Town Clerk Donna Jacobs.

Mayor Input

Mayor Kemp encouraged citizens with business ideas to attend the Tornado Tank Creative Business Forum on Tuesday, July 25 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center.

Manager Input

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut introduced Rodney Cain as the town's newest employee who will be assisting him in administration.

Executive/Closed Session – Personnel and Attorney-Client Privilege G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3,6)

Commissioner Seibles made a motion to go into closed session at 7:04 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel and attorney-client privilege as allowed under G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3,6). Commissioner McCree seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Tedder-Rogers made a motion to come out of closed session at 7:23 p.m. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Kemp announced the board extended the contract of Town Manager Jerome Chestnut for another year.

Announcements

Tuesday, July 25 – Tornado Tank Creative Business Forum, 6:00 p.m., Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center.

Saturday, August 5 – Senior Bingo, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., Fire Hall.

Tuesday, August 15 – Regular Town Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Wednesday, August 16 – Job Fair, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk