

Regular Meeting – June 20, 2023

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, June 20, 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, Deputy Town Clerk Donna Jacobs, Public Works Director Ronnie Seals, Police Chief Jon Edwards, and members of the fire department. Others in attendance included Larry Sampson, Joyce Pernell, FHS track and field team and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Minister Lori Washington, Assistant Pastor at Star of Bethlehem Baptist Church, gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Presentation

Mayor Kemp recognized Coach Joyce Pernell and members of the Fairmont High School FHS Track and Field Team.

Mayor Kemp presented an Appearance Appreciation Certificate to Shirley Smith, owner of Life Changing Behavioral Services

Public Hearing – Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

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 Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget.

The budget includes a 5% or \$4.25 increase on the base utility rates for water, sewer, and sanitation. The budget does not include an increase in property taxes but does include a 2.5% cost of living pay raise for employees. The General fund budget is \$2,393,048, Powell Bill fund is \$111,730, and the Water/Sewer fund is \$1,540,011.

There was no public input on the public hearing for fiscal year 2022-2023 budget.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of public hearing at 6:21 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner McCree requested to table the appointment of the ABC Board Chairman and the appointment of a new ABC Board member until the July board meeting. Commissioner McCree made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Evans 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 Ellison and seconded by Commissioner Evans, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following consent agenda item:

Approval of Minutes – Budget Workshop, May 9, 2023, Regular Meeting, May 16, 2023, and Budget Workshop, June 6, 2023.

Old Business

There was no old business this month.

New Business

Approval of Engineering Contract for Library Upfit Project – The Adams Company

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut presented the Engineering/Inspection agreement for the upfit of the building at 105 S. Main Street (Old Post Office). This agreement allows the town to continue to move forward in the renovation of this building and the onward relocation of the library operations and services to this location. The total value of this agreement is \$31,500 and is within budget and will come from grant funds appropriated for this project.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Engineering/Inspection agreement with The Adams Company in the amount of \$31,500 for the Library Upfit Project. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Announcement of RBDG Grant

Mr. Larry Sampson, with USDA, announced the Town of Fairmont was selected for a Rural Business Development Grant in the amount of \$74,750. This grant does not have a matching contribution and is scheduled to be completed within a 12-month period. This technical assistance grant will help complete a Master Plan for the development of downtown.

Request to remove additional Fluoride from drinking water

Mr. Chestnut is recommending the discontinuation of additional fluoride treatment to the town's water distribution system. Currently the town treats the water with additional fluoride but recent and confirmed tests of the town's three wells show that an acceptable level of fluoride is naturally occurring is already in our water prior to treatment. Discontinuing the additional fluoride treatment will save the town approximately \$7,000/year and reducing the need to maintain additional license for our town and staff.

Commissioner Tedder-Rogers made a motion to discontinue additional fluoride treatment in the town's Water Distribution System. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ordinance 23-240- Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget in the amount of \$4,067,959. 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.

Commissioner Input

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting.

Mayor Input

Mayor Kemp invited the board to the Town employees' quarterly lunch next Wednesday, June 28, at 12:30 p.m. in the Fire Hall. He reminded everyone of the town's annual fireworks show on Sunday July 2 in the park from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Mayor Kemp announced the formation of a Downtown Building Appearance Council which will assist with and recommend to new business operators suggested outward appearances for their buildings. After being notified of a new business creation and prior to their opening, Mayor Kemp and Mr. Chestnut will consult the operators and ask that they share their building appearance plans. Should their ideas not be appropriate for the historic district, the appearance council, consisting of nine members, will meet and offer their suggestions in hopes they will be acceptable to the business operator. The goal and mission of the appearance council is to encourage and promote new business openings while preserving the downtown historic district's look and appeal.

Manager Input

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut recognized members of the Fairmont City Fire Department for installing 54 smoke detectors in 22 citizen homes on June 3.

Mr. Chestnut also recognized Finance Director Jenny Larson and Utility Clerks Veronica Hunt and Kaye Zumbrunnen for encouraging citizens to participate in the Low-Income Water Assistance Program through the Department of Social Services. As a result, our citizens received our \$25,000 in assistance in paying their utility bills.

Announcements

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

Wednesday, June 28 – Quarterly Town Employee Luncheon, 12:00 noon

Thursday, June 29 – Special Board meeting to adopt Amended Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget, 6:00 p.m., Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center

Sunday, July 2 – Fairmont’s Fantastic Fourth Fireworks featuring the Pizazz Band. Music begins at 5:00 p.m. with fireworks at 9:30 p.m. in the Fairmont Community Park

Monday, July 3 and Tuesday, July 4 – Town offices closed in observance of Independence Day
Tuesday, July 18 – Regular Town Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Ellison made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 p.m. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk