

Regular Meeting – September 17, 2024

The Fairmont Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center with Mayor Charles Kemp presiding. Commissioners present were Terry Evans, Heather Seibles, Melvin Ellison, J.J. McCree, and Clarence McNeill, Jr. Commissioner Jan Tedder-Rogers was absent due to illness. Staff present included Town Manager Jerome Chestnut, Town Attorney Jessica Scott, Town Clerk Jenny Larson, Deputy Town Clerk Rodney Cain, Police Chief Jon Edwards, and Public Works Director Ronnie Seals. Others in attendance included Rev. Jerry Love, Joshua Outlaw, Tia Moore, Kaye Burns, Henry Bernacki, Fairmont Babe Ruth Team, Fairmont Coach Pitch Team, and several citizens.

Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Charles Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Reverend Jerry Love, Pastor of House of Refuge Non-Denominational Ministries of Lumberton, NC, gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Presentation

Mayor Kemp read a proclamation in memory of former Commissioner Frank McCree, Sr. He presented a copy of this proclamation to Commissioner J.J. McCree. A signed copy of this proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

Mayor Kemp recognized the champion Fairmont Babe Ruth and Coach Pitch Teams.

Approval of Agenda

Town Manager Jerome Chestnut asked the board to remove closed session from the agenda. Commissioner Ellison made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period/Citizens Appearance

Henry Bernacki

Mr. Henry Bernacki heard that Atlantic Building Components wants to purchase the Little League ballfield to expand their company.

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, August 20, 2024
- b. Ordinance 24-263 – USDA RBDG Streetscape Project Budget Ordinance for \$74,750.
- c. Ordinance 24-264 – Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Amendment #1

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

Public Hearing – CDBG-NR application

Commissioner Evans made a motion to go into public hearing at 6:35 p.m. Commissioner McNeill seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to discuss a second CDBG-NR application.

The Town of Fairmont is working on an application to the Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization Program for the 2024 cycle. The Town of Fairmont applied for the grant in 2022 and was awarded \$950,000 to be used to reconstruct 5-7 homes. The Town of Fairmont is applying to the program again to assist those who qualify to reconstruct or rehabilitate their homes. This public hearing was advertised in The Robesonian on August 28, 2024. Information received from potential applicants will be forwarded to The Adams Company to complete the field surveys. They have 9 potential applicants at this point.

Mr. Joshua Outlaw with the Adams Company stated the following:

- First of 2 public hearings to gather community input
- Community Development Block Grant-Neighborhood Revitalization
- Maximum grant amount of \$950,000
- Total of approx. \$12 million funding available
- Eligible activities
 - Housing (must be included)
 - Infrastructure related to housing
 - New utility services
 - Streets
 - Flood and Drainage improvements
 - Sidewalks/pedestrian ways
 - Public facilities
 - Shelters, community center, recreation center

- Must meet 1 of 3 national objectives
 - Benefit LMI persons
 - Prevent or eliminate slums or blight
 - Meeting other urgent needs (often storm/disaster related)
- Homes must be owner occupied LMI, real property (can include mobile homes if taxed as real property)
- Can include rehabilitation of housing or demo/rebuild
- 2nd public hearing will be held prior to submitting application on October 15, 2024
- Applications due October 23, 2024

A citizen asked about the difference between NC Rebuild and CDBG-NR. Town Manager Jerome Chestnut explained NC Rebuild uses federal disaster recovery funds and CDBG-NR uses state funds and does not need to be disaster related to apply. Commissioner Evans made a motion to come out of the public hearing at 6:45 p.m. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Old Business

There was no old business this month.

New Business

ABC Board appointment

Mr. Butch Lennon's term on the ABC Board expires this month. The board can reappoint him or choose someone new. Mr. Lennon has indicated that he would like to serve another term. The appointment is for a three-year term expiring September 2027.

Commissioner Evans nominated Winona Gause to the Fairmont ABC Board, but it died for lack of a second. Commissioner McNeill made a motion to reappoint Mr. Butch Lennon to the Fairmont ABC Board for a three-year term expiring September 2027. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed with a vote of 3 to 1 as follows:

For:	Commissioners McCree, McNeill and Seibles
Against:	Commissioner Evans
Absent:	Commissioner Tedder-Rogers
Abstained:	Commissioner Ellison (ABC Store Manager)

Real Property Acceptance Request – Center Street

Mrs. Jeanne Stevens has reached out to the Town of Fairmont. Mrs. Stevens and her family wish to donate their Center Street property (#30060302401) to the Town of Fairmont. All taxes have been paid but they do not have the funds to bring this building into code enforcement compliance or up to building codes. Accepting this property will allow the town to clean it up with abatement funds, conduct an environmental study with Brownfields funds, and redevelop prime real estate in the center of downtown for future jobs and retail space. Commissioner McNeill made a motion to accept the property from Mrs. Jeanne Stevens on Center Street subject to a clean title search. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Subdivision Approval – B&B Southern Properties, LLC on Industrial Dr.

Mrs. Kaye Burns, of B&B Southern Properties, LLC, has submitted Plans for a subdivision to be located on Industrial Drive (#050202018) in the ETJ, zoned Residential Agricultural (RA). Current plans call for only the subdivision of one large 32-acre property into ten individual lots to be sold. No roads or infrastructure are required for this subdivision. All parcels have road frontage. The planned subdivision has been reviewed against subdivision requirements by the staff and Planning Board on August 1 and September 5. The Planning Board recommended approval and the staff has no opposition regarding the approval of this subdivision. Mrs. Burns told the board they plan to start selling lots the first of the year for manufactured homes with brick underpinning. Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the subdivision plan from B&B Southern Properties, LLC on Industrial Drive. Commissioner Ellison seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Resolution 24-04 Intent to Create Regional Public Works Authority

The Town of Fairmont is currently serving as a Regional Wastewater provider to the towns of Fair Bluff, Cerro Gordo, Boardman, and Proctorville. Fairmont, with assistance from Fair Bluff's Public Works, has been operating and maintaining this system since 2010. As time has passed, the system has struggled under its current form. Consideration has been taken over the past two years to understand and consider the consolidation of water and sewer systems under a Regional Authority concept. The goal of this resolution is to serve a supporting document along with our capital improvement plan to address funding needs for this authority concept. Mr. Chestnut and Al Leonard (Town Manager for Fair Bluff, Cerro Gordo, and Boardman) plan to approach the NC General Assembly with funding requests to start a regional public works authority. Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt Resolution 24-04 – Intent to Create Regional Public Works Authority. Commissioner Seibles 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.

Brownfields Grant Update

Over the last month, the Town Manager, along with LFNC Fellow Madison Johns, has been working on the list of potential Brownfields sites in town and are starting to connect with property owners to get access to their properties to begin Environmental Site Assessments. The Town Manager encourages citizens to inform the staff of any former sites of industry that may have environmental concerns.

Project Forward Presentation

Ms. Tia Moore presented a proposal to partner with the Town of Fairmont to build single family tiny homes on town-owned properties. Ms. Moore and her team presented this proposal to the Planning Board on September 5, 2024, where they received positive feedback from them and citizens in attendance.

Commissioner Comments

The commissioners thanked the citizens for coming to the meeting and encouraged the citizens to continue to come. Commissioner Seibles is excited about the possibility of new housing opportunities in our community.

Mayor Comments

Mayor Kemp encouraged citizens to take advantage of upcoming events in town. He announced the Fairmont Housing Authority will have a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 30 at 1:30 p.m. renaming their office in honor of long serving member Percy Hill, Jr.

Announcements

Saturday, September 21 – Litter Pickup, Various Sites, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Saturday, September 28 – Fall N 2 Fairmont Yard Sale, Town Hall, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 3 – Fairmont Planning Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Heritage Center

Friday, October 4 – FHS Homecoming game

Saturday, October 5 – Senior Citizen Trip to Northwood Temple in Fayetteville

Saturday, October 5 – 2nd Annual Grand Reunion, Fairmont Community Park

Saturday, October 12 – Fairmont Farmers Festival Pageant, Rosenwald Elementary E.R. Gause Auditorium, 2:00 p.m.

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

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Wednesday, October 16 – Job Fair/Blood Drive, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Heritage Center

Friday, October 18 – Grand Marshal’s Dinner, Fairmont Golf Course

Saturday, October 19 – Fairmont Farmers Festival, downtown all day, parade at 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, October 22 – RCMA meeting hosted by Fairmont, 7:00 p.m., Heritage Center.

Thursday, October 31 – Drive thru Trunk or Treat, Railroad Street (location moved due to early voting at the Fire Hall)

Early Voting Dates at the Fire Hall: October 17-18 – 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., October 20 – 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., October 21-25 – 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., October 28-November 1 – 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., and November 2 – 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Election Day – November 5 – 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Commissioner Seibles seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Jennifer H. Larson
Town Clerk