

June 28th, 2018

At the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Canton held at the Walter Clark Board Chambers, June 28th, 2018 at 6:30pm with Mayor Smathers and Aldermen/women Mull, Hamlett, and Smith present, the following proceedings were held.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Smathers called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Smathers reported that Alderman Markey and Attorney Morgan were both on vacation and would not be in attendance.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated the Town Manager, Town Clerk and Town Finance Officer were present.

C. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Pam Kearse gave the Invocation, Alderwoman Smith led those present in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Approval of Minutes: June 14th, 2018

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the June 14th minutes as presented. Alderwoman Smith seconded the motion with all members voting to approve the minutes.

Mayor Smathers requested that the Public Hearing be moved to this portion of the agenda.

Mayor Smathers asked everyone in attendance to please limit their comments to 3 minutes and to address the Board in a civil manner. Mayor Smathers stated that whether you agree or disagree it can be a positive conversation.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to open the public hearing to discuss the proposed motor vehicle tax at 6:35 p.m. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion with all members in favor.

Manager Burrell presented a power point presentation regarding the proposed motor vehicle tax.

Mayor Smathers stated that the Manager's presentation was a very informative and well-presented proposal that the Board had requested from Manager Burrell.

Public Comments:

- Steve Pressley of 115 Pisgah Drive inquired if portions of the paving on Holtzclaw could be negotiated with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) when they constructed the roundabout? Manager Burrell stated that the NCDOT would only do the paving in their scope of work. Mr. Pressley stated that due to safety concerns with school buses and other forms of transportation that he would be in favor of the tax to pave the streets.
- Mayor Smathers stated that Johnny Gibson and his crews did an outstanding job with street and sidewalk repairs with the funds they were allocated. Mayor Smathers stated these employees always go above and beyond what you would receive in other towns.
- Mr. Nate Washington of 186 Newfound Street asked what the options for the tax would be? Manager Burrell stated that the options would be which monetary amount the board chose to do or not to do. Mr. Washington stated that he was not in favor of the tax because it would hurt those people that were on a fixed income.
- Mrs. Lynn Pressley of 115 Pisgah Drive asked if Powell Bill funds would be available again next year and if the funds we had in that fund drew interest? Manager Burrell stated that this was always a topic at the legislative level that they might cut funding for, however, it was his understanding at this point the funds would still be available for this fiscal year. Mrs. Pressley inquired if half of the Powell Bill funding could be utilized to do paving? Manager Burrell stated that it could be used for paving but the needs for street paving would drain the fund with little progress to show for it. Manager Burrell stated that the primary and secondary list of paving needs to date would be over a million dollars at this point.
- Mrs. Vivian Poppas of 45 Fourth Street stated that this would be hard on those citizens that were on a fixed income and if the Board chose to implement the tax that it should be at a lower fee but she was against the tax.
- Mr. Russell of 47 Newfound Street stated that his street was full of potholes and he watched the town crews fill them up at least three times last year. Manager Burrell stated that the cold patch that was used caused problems all over the State of North Carolina because of mixture issues. Mr. Russell stated that he was on a fixed income and was

against the motor vehicle tax.

- Mr. Curtis Bradley of 66 Cherry Street spoke against the motor vehicle tax because he had several vehicles that he kept so if one was in the shop he would still have a way to work and this tax would be a burden because it would be implemented on all three of his vehicles. Mr. Curtis commented that the Board needed to work on a priority basis not beautification and other things. Mr. Curtis also commented that he was speaking for his father and a neighbor whom were all against the tax.
- Mr. Kenny Holland of 51 Skyline Drive stated that he agreed the streets needed attention but he wanted to expend the Powell Bill Funds before implementing a tax. Mr. Holland stated that when he was on the Board they did not keep that much in the fund that they used every year to do paving. Mr. Holland complimented the Manager stating that he was doing a good job but he would ask the Board to vote against this tax.
- Mr. Ed Underwood of 20 Hampton Heights complimented the Manager on the proposed motor vehicle tax presentation, however, he asked the Board to either lower the amount or not vote for the tax at all. Mr. Underwood stated that he wanted the Board to use all the Powell Bill funds before voting on the tax and if after that if they needed to add the tax he would support it next year.
- Mayor Smathers stated that he wanted to make it clear that the Board asked the Manager and staff to suggest and seek new sources of revenue and that the number one complaint was streets and potholes.
- Mr. Mike Holland of 226 Newfound Street stated that the Board needed to use all the Powell Bill funds before adding a tax to the people. Mr. Holland asked if Powell Bill funds were used to add the speed calming bulb out downtown? Manager Burrell stated that some of the funds were used for this project. Mr. Holland asked if they felt like they got their money's worth because they were ridiculous. Mr. Holland stated that he was not for the tax.
- Mr. Bob McCarter of 19 Lane Street stated that he had just moved back to the area and he was ashamed of Canton. Mr. McCarter asked if a bond issue could be done for street paving? Mr. McCarter stated that his taxes were ten times higher here than they were in Alabama and he was against adding anymore taxes. Manager Burrell stated that he

would check on the bond requirements but was almost certain this would not qualify for a bond.

- Mr. Jimmy Flynn of 30 Johnson Drive stated that he felt that this was an unfair tax to the residential people of the Town because most of the commercial businesses tagged their vehicles in other states and they would not be required to pay the tax, yet they used the streets. Mr. Flynn also spoke against the 19/23 bike and pedestrian pathway that the Town was going to pay approximately \$70,000 to install. Mr. Flynn stated that he would support a 1% tax increase that could be earmarked for paving but not the proposed motor vehicle tax.
- Melissa Ergle of 6 Patton Avenue stated that she had seven vehicles and this would negatively impact her household budget. Mrs. Ergle stated that if the Board implements the tax then it should be at a lower amount. Mrs. Ergle stated the Town was dead with nothing to do and the Board needed to do more programming for people to have things to do.
- Mr. Russell of 47 Newfound Street stated that if the tax passed then the Board would continue to keep coming to the residents for more and more money.
- Mrs. Carver of 11 Walnut Street stated that she was against the tax because this would cause hardships on the residents especially those on a fixed and lower incomes and she was against the tax. Mrs. Carver commented that she felt that the \$75,000 for the pathway on 19/23 was not a good idea either.
- Mr. Steve Pressley asked how many cars would the tax affect. Finance Officer Natalie Walker stated that it was approximately 3900.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 8:00 p.m. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion with all members voting to close the hearing.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to implement the motor vehicle tax ordinance for road improvements. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Alderman Hamlett stated that he would not be in favor of the motion because the tax was a regressive tax and would hurt the people that could least afford it. Alderman Hamlett commented that he promised the people that voted for him that he would not raise taxes unless no other options were available. Alderwoman Mull thanked all those that came and voiced their opinions to the Board and that she would not be in

favor of the motion. Alderwoman Smith thanked the Manager and staff for the information as they were asked to do by the board, however, she would not vote for the tax. Mayor Smathers commended Town staff for seeking all options to help with revenues and that it was the Board's job to evaluate the options and decided what was best for the citizens. Mayor Smathers stated that this was the system at work and he thanked the public for the manner in which they spoke during the hearing. Mayor Smathers called for a vote on the motion. Alderman Hamlett along with Alderwomen Mull and Smith voted against the motion. Motion denied.

Mayor Smathers asked for a 5-minute break at 8:26 p.m.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers thanked the folks in attendance for coming to the meeting.

Mayor Smathers reported that the Better Homes and Gardens Heritage Real Estate company had their ribbon cutting ceremony earlier at 6p.m. and that they are a welcome addition to the downtown area.

Mayor Smathers invited everyone in attendance to attend the July 4th plus 1 event on July 5th downtown in Sorrells Street Park. Mayor Smathers commented that the fireworks sponsored by Champion Credit Union were second to none.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Smith stated that the economic development and businesses coming to town was still moving forward and that the town had made a lot of progress. Alderwoman Smith stated that the pool had been full every time she drove past and was a nice addition for the community. Alderwoman Smith commented on the tragedy with the newspaper shootings. Alderwoman Smith thanked our local reporters for the job they do also stating that the media provides service to the community and this was a senseless tragedy.

Alderwoman Mull thanked the media for their coverage and those that came to share their opinions and concerns. Alderwoman Mull thanked Manager Burrell for the presentation and the time it took to get all of this information for the Board.

Alderman Hamlett stated that he appreciated all the time and effort that the Manager had put into the demonstration.

Alderman Hamlett commented that he was a big advocate of the 1st amendment and that the public disclosure in the public hearing was exactly the way it should be handled.

G. Public Comments

- Mr. Mike Holland stated that he did not agree with water and sewer rates going up. Mr. Holland also stated that he would like the option to receive or not receive garbage pick-up.

H. Reports from the Manager

Manager Burrell presented the cash report.

Manager Burrell gave a report on the Champion Credit Union Aquatics Center stating that it was averaging 289 people a day with a revenue of \$25,835 dollars to date.

I. New Business

1. Adoption of the 2018-2019 Budget

Manager Burrell presented the proposed 2018-2019 Budget. Manager Burrell stated that this would be without the proposed motor vehicle tax revenue. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the 2018-2019 budget as presented. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All members voted to approve the budget.

2. Adoption of the 2018-2019 Budget Ordinance

Manager Burrell presented the Board with the 2018-2019 budget ordinance. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the 2018-2019 budget ordinance as presented. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

3. Haywood County Hazardous Weather Communication Plan

Manager Burrell presented the Board with the Haywood County Hazardous Weather Communication Plan. Manager Burrell made the Board aware that he had reviewed the plan and it met with his approval. After a brief discussion, Alderwoman Mull made the motion to endorse the Haywood County Hazardous Weather Communication Plan as presented. Alderwoman Smith seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

4. Spruce Street Loan Approval

Manager Burrell asked the board to table this issue as he and Richard Hodge had a meeting the first of the week with McGill Engineers to finalize the details at which point he would bring to the Board at the next meeting for approval.

5. Budget Amendments

Manager Burrell presented year-end budget amendments. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

The next Regularly Scheduled meeting will be held on July 12th at 6:30 p.m. in the Walter Clark Board Chambers.

J. Adjournment

There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 8:51 p.m.

Melisa Stinnett, Town Clerk