

## **January 13, 2022**

At the Special Called Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen/women of the Town of Canton held at the USW Local 507 Union Hall, January 13, 2022, at 6:30pm with Mayor Smathers and Aldermen/women Mull, Hamlett, Proctor and Shepard present, the following proceedings were held.

### **A. Call to Order**

Mayor Smathers called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **B. Roll Call**

Mayor Smathers stated that the Manager, Assistant Manager/ Town Clerk, Finance Officer and Town Attorney were present.

### **C. Pledge**

Alderman Hamlett led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **D. Approval of Minutes: November 11<sup>th</sup> and December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to approve the November 11, 2021, and December 9, 2021, minutes as presented. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

### **E. Mayor Comments**

Mayor Smathers stated that he wanted to congratulate the re-elected officials again at the first regular meeting of the new year.

Mayor Smathers inquired if the Town had partnered with the Daily Planet to help promote their business expanding into Canton. Manager Scheuer stated that the Town had not partnered with the Daily Planet, but they were welcome to promote their business as they see fit. Mayor Smathers stated he had received a letter in protest of the town supporting the Daily planet being it was based out of Asheville and not local. Manager Scheuer reiterated that we placed ads with the Daily Planet for events, but we did not help pay for them to advertise in Canton.

Mayor Smathers stated that he had received a gift certificate for furniture to help a flood victim from Judy Bodicker and asked staff to see that a flood victim received the voucher. Manager Scheuer stated that staff would honor the request.

Mayor Smathers asked staff to give Veteran Phil Smathers several letters from an elementary class to be shared at the local American Legion or VFW.

### **F. Aldermen/women Comments**

Alderman Shepard stated it was good to be back and he looked forward to getting back to business.

Alderman Hamlett stated that he was glad to be back in session and he encouraged everyone to use all covid safety precautions as many were ill with the Omicron version in Haywood County.

Alderwoman Mull wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked them for attending.

Alderwoman Proctor stated that she was excited to plan and move forward in the 2022 new year. Alderwoman Proctor encouraged all to be safe and check on one another during the forecasted snowstorm.

### **G. Public Comments**

Mr. Scott Mauller, property owner on Asheville Highway asked the Board what he could do on his land. Mr. Mauller stated that he was going to install a metal warehouse, but that contract was cancelled. Mr. Mauller stated that he owns a Motor Home and without notice the Town shut off his water and sewer. Attorney Morgan stated that he had been contacted by his attorney and that he would respond to all issues through his attorney. Mr. Mauller stated that he did not have an attorney and had not paid an attorney. Mayor Smathers stated that the attorney had made contact on his behalf and that all responses would go through the attorney or if the attorney confirmed that he did not represent him then Attorney Morgan would correspond with him directly. After a brief discussion as to whether an attorney had been hired, Manager Scheuer stated that Mr. Mauller was previously informed of the violation and illegal use of water and sewer prior to any cut off action being done that afternoon. Manager Scheuer stated that he had met with Mr. Mauller numerous times regarding what was and was not allowed on this lot. Manager Scheuer stated that he was given a zoning letter for the metal warehouse, which was an allowable use, however, the Motor home was not allowed nor permitted and in fact was in violation of the flood restrictions and must be removed immediately. Manager Scheuer informed Mr. Mauller that before anything was constructed or placed on this property, he must make sure that it met all flood permits

and zoning requirements of the Town of Canton. Mr. Mauller insists that he had not hired a lawyer. Mayor Smathers instructed Mr. Mauller to contact the Town Attorney, William Morgan with all matters regarding this issue.

Mrs. Angela Bleckley, owner of Nailology, reported to the Board that she had been working with Assistant Manager Stinnett and Chief Sluder for over a year to resolve business owners from using the 3-hour parking on Main Street. Mrs. Bleckley asked if the Town could not just ticket business owners and not the public? Chief Sluder stated that the law had to be equal and the same across the board and he could not pick and choose who was ticketed in violation of parking for more than 3 hours. Mrs. Bleckley stated that she had spoken with the dentist office to try and resolve the abuse that his staff uses the 3-hour parking all day instead of leaving open for patrons of the businesses, but he was not responsive. Mrs. Bleckley stated that some of her elderly clients were having to walk from Southern Porch with walkers and canes because no parking was available. Mrs. Bleckley stated that she had even considered moving her business because of the parking issues. Mrs. Bleckley asked if handicap parking spaces could be added on Adams Street? Manager Scheuer stated that he would look and see but he did not think that would be an issue if enough space was available. Mayor Smathers stated that he understood the problem, but it was a good problem to have a considering several years ago parking was never an issue. The Board thanked Mrs. Bleckley for coming and addressing the Board.

## **H. Reports from the Manager**

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with the cash report.

Manager Scheuer introduced Josh Piurowski, Street Superintendent, Artie Wias, Crew Leader, Amelia Carlton, Customer Service and Brandy Proctor, Communications Officer to the Board and welcomed them to their new positions.

Mayor Smathers welcomed and congratulated the new and promoted employees but also reiterated that they had big shoes to fill from the recently retired employees. Johnny Gibson will be hard to replace because of his unwavering dedicated service to this Town. Denise Holcombe will also be hard to replace because both individuals have set a high bar, however, Mayor Smathers stated that he had no doubt that the employees would strive to obtain the same achievements.

Manager Scheuer reported that the tax collections for the projected amount was at 99 percent and 93 percent overall. Manager Scheuer stated that Wanda continued to do an outstanding job with collections.

Manager Scheuer reported that with the forecasted weather, crews were already pretreating the streets and had salt, trucks, and crews scheduled to work around the clock to keep the roads as clear as possible for emergency vehicles and those that had to be out to be able to reach their destination.

## **I. New Business**

### **1. Storm Recovery Update**

Manager Scheuer reported that staff continued to work with FEMA to report all the projects that were eligible for funding along with all the paperwork that was required. Manager Scheuer advised the Board that engineers had agreed that opening one lane of Rhoda Street to allow travel in both directions was slated for the end of February. Manager Scheuer stated that the final completion of this area would be approximately 18-month before fruition. Manager Scheuer presented the Board with a spreadsheet of the current projects and status (see attached).

Manager Scheuer reported to the Board that the temporary/semi-permanent town hall would be set the first of March on the lot the town owned beside the Town garage.

Manager Scheuer stated that all Town facilities still were on hold and in the FEMA process and no monies had been allocated for repairs to these facilities at this point. Manager Scheuer stated that a lot of repairs with wiring and moving service above flood levels was costly and until the mitigation process was finished, he would not spend any money on repairs that might be unnecessary.

Manager Scheuer reported that the Sorrells Street Park Project that was budgeted for was on schedule to begin in February and should be open in late Spring. The equipment was previously budgeted for and purchased prior to the flood.

Alderman Hamlett thanked staff for the forward vision that was taking place and being proactive instead of reactive in this process.

### **2. Chestnut Mountain Update**

Manager Scheuer reported to the Board that he was working on the RFQ for the concessionaire development on the property that had been cleared of the old Sweet Tea restaurant. Manager Scheuer stated that a VIP event would be scheduled for the grand opening of the Chestnut Mountain Park in the Spring sometime in April. Manager Scheuer stated that an

Advisory Board would need to be developed and if the Board could submit recommendations of individuals that would be suited for this Board to him in the next several days, he would appreciate it. Alderwoman Proctor thanked the Manager for all his work on this project

### 3. Budget Amendments

Manager Scheuer asked Finance Officer Natalie Walker to present the budget amendments (see attached). Finance Officer Walker presented the budget amendments individually with explanation. Finance Officer Walker explained to the Board that the unknowns of monies with the flood recovery were concerning because of the unknown date of reimbursement. Alderwoman Proctor inquired how long that it could possibly take. Finance Officer Walker stated around 6 months. Alderwoman Mull thanked Finance Officer Walker for her diligence in governing taxpayer dollars. Mayor Smathers stated that the uncovered amounts is where the State Budgeted amounts were going to be so helpful and appreciated. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### 4. Recreation Update

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with a staff report (see attached) prepared by Recreation Director Ben Williams, who was out being exposed to covid. Manager Scheuer stated that Ben was great working with the little old ladies of the Kiwanis Club (Manager Scheuer later apologized for this comment stating that he meant it in a very nice way) and that they loved to work with him as he had worked with them in the past. Manager Scheuer stated that "all" abilities playground was a project that was wanted and needed so that all children could play and have fun in the park. Mayor Smathers stated that the Kiwanis Club does a lot for Canton but does not get the recognition they deserve because of the projects that they do behind the scenes. He hoped that this project would allow the community to see what good they do in the community, and they get the credit for the projects that they work tirelessly to complete for the betterment of all. Manager Scheuer stated that he would get the ticket information for the fundraiser and that he would ask that everyone sell the tickets to help with this incredible project for all children.

### 5. Set Work session Date, Time, and Place

Manager Scheuer stated that the work-session would be a special called meeting and would also be the normal meeting agenda as well as the planning session. Alderman Hamlett

made a motion to cancel the regular meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 and set the Special Called meeting to 9am on January 27<sup>th</sup> at the Aramark Uniform Services (Old Plus Laundry) business in the Beaverdam Industrial Park. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)(5)(6)

Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter closed session at 7:43pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to enter open session at 9:14pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion.

After a long discussion, Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve Manager Scheuer's contract with the addition of the pre-audit statement and a salary of 102,000, which is in accordance with other municipalities as well as the former Manager. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

## **J. Adjournment**

The next Regularly Scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, February 10, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. at the USW Local 507 office located at 111 Park Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 9:16 p.m.

---

Melisa Stinnett, Town Clerk