

February 9, 2023

At the Special Called Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen/women of the Town of Canton held at 85 Summer Street, Canton NC, February 9, 2022, at 12:00 pm 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 12:08 pm.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated that the Manager, Deputy Clerk/Finance Officer were present. Assistant Manager Stinnett was in the hospital due to illness.

C. Pledge

Alderwoman Mull led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Approval of Minutes:

N/A

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers stated that the mill was shutting down 20 machine and this would have an impact on some employees but hopefully they would get this machine back online in the near future. Mayor Smathers asked everyone to keep Assistant Manager Stinnett in their thoughts and prayers.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderman Shepard commented that Sorrells Park was looking good with the new tree plantings.

Mayor Smathers reminded everyone about the Polar Plunge this weekend at the Champion Credit Union Aquatics Center.

G. Public Comments

N/A

H. Reports from the Manager

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with the cash report and

the tax report. Manager Scheuer reported to the Board that the Town was awarded the CRL Grant for Meadowbrook Drive. Alderman Shepard inquired when that repair would start. Manager Scheuer responded that the engineering portion would be first.

I. New Business

1. All-Abilities Playground

Manager Scheuer reported to the Board that the design firms had submitted their proposals and a panel had looked at the firms and one of the items that was looked at closely was flood resiliency. Manager Scheuer stated that he recommended Carolina Parks and Play to receive the bid award. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve Carolina Parks and Play bid award as presented. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Mayor Smathers asked about a timeline. Manager Scheuer replied that it would depend on the grant that was scheduled to be awarded the 2nd week in March which included several variables but approximately 3 to 4 months. Mr. Freeman with Waynesville Kiwanis Club stated the club raised \$100,000 and would be happy to help in the future.

2. Work-Session

Manager Scheuer explained to the Board that he and Finance officer Walker would go through a slide show presentation and at any point the Board could chime in and ask questions or voice concerns (see attached). Finance Officer Walker stated that the next steps would be bringing budget books back to a meeting with the Department heads, presenting the proposed budget and the adoption. Mayor Smathers thanked the Board members for some of which were celebrating their 10 year anniversary together and that he could not pick a better team to work with. Alderwoman Mull stated she hates to brag, seriously stating that she cant imaging anyone working as hard as Nick, Lisa, and Natalie, she stated we appreciate you all. Alderwoman Mull stated that we do the best we can with what we have and that she did not see any issues with the presentation. Alderwoman Proctor commented that the grants worth 10 million in one year was amazing! She stated that she appreciated optimizing taxpayer funds and is was incredible what the team has done. Alderwoman Proctor commented that she did not want to over commit if the funds were not available. Alderwoman Proctor asked if it were possible to do more than a cost of living increase for the employees? Alderwoman Proctor stated that we need to work to get the infrastructure where it need to be and she also agreed on the paving condition study. Alderman Shepard thanked staff for

their hard work and inquired as to the status of the Powell Bill Fund. Finance Officer Walker stated that the fund had \$250,000 to date which was not a lot of money when it cost \$150,00 for a small project. Finance Officer Walker stated that the Motor Vehicle tax was still on the table and she would not be doing her job if she did not mention that option. Alderman Hamlett commented that so much had been accomplished during the last 10 years such as Bear Waters, Food Trucks, Sorrells Park, Labor Day, revitalizing the downtown, with 4 Town Managers, new Mayor and he celebrated all those that came before but now with FEMA and COVID that the Manager and leadership and Finance Officer Walker with the budget that everyone was optimistic for the future. Alderman Hamlett stated that he was so glad to have the team where they are. Alderman Hamlett commented that Chief Sluder was doing an amazing job with the grant writing on top of all the other duties. Alderman Hamlett stated thank you too all. Alderman Hamlett asked if the debt ceiling affected the 401K, and what can we do about it? Finance Officer Walker stated that she would get some information and report back to the Board. Alderman Hamlett asked about the state of the Fund Balance. Finance Officer Walker commented that it was about the same maybe a little better but it still remained a concern and everyone should be mindful. Alderman Hamlett stated he was glad she was with the Town! Attorney Morgan asked if the paving study would be ranked in order? Manager Scheuer stated that it would be ranked in order. Mayor Smathers stated that he and administration had their first meeting with the Foundation Forward and if the Board so chose the Charters of Freedom settings would be the first in Haywood County. Mayor Smathers commented that he was glad to have this work session to see how we are and basically for the next year would be finishing up all that we have in the works along with the rebuild of all the damaged facilities. Mayor Smathers stated that with people looking to relocate to Canton it is time to stand up, but we must not change who we are, we are a mill town. Mayor Smathers asked about any debt service. Finance Officer Walker stated that the Board would be adding the police fleet. Alderwoman Proctor asked if the zoning needed to be reevaluated? Manager Scheuer stated that it did especially with minimum lot size etj zoning, and possible annexation. Mayor Smathers stated that we needed a skate park but where would it go? Alderman Hamlett stated possibly where the tear down for old Town Hall but the major concern was all the damage and bad behaviors that came from the last one located at rec park. Mayor Smathers stated that speeding downtown was also a concern.

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

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session to discuss economic development at 2:06 pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a short discussion and update Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 2:24 pm. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session at 2:24 pm to discuss personnel. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a very lengthy discussion Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 3:59pm. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve a 6% pay increase for the Town Manager that will be calculated from July 1 of 2022 as his evaluation was delayed and he will be reevaluated in 6 months. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

J. Adjournment

The next Special Called meeting will be on Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 4:07 p.m.

Natalie Walker, Deputy Clerk