

April 27, 2023

At the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen/women of the Town of Canton held at the Town Hall at 85 Summer Street, April 27, 2023, 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/Clerk, and Town Attorney were present.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Boy Scout Troop 316 led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Norman Medford gave the invocation to those that wanted to participate.

D. Approval of Minutes:

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the April 13, 2023, minutes as presented. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers stated that he received a thank you note from Altrussa for co-sponsoring their event. Mayor Smathers commented that it was a great event and was historic to hear the whistle at the end of Balsam Range singing Paper town but extremely sad at the same time.

Mayor Smathers stated that moving forward that the end of May will be the last time the mill whistles sound off at the mill and this will be the time that the employees may need help with mental health as things become real for a lot of them. Mayor Smathers encouraged everyone to check on their neighbors and love on each other.

Mayor Smathers reported that the Secretary of the Division of Environmental Quality, Elizabeth Biser, will be in Canton to meet with leadership at the Champion Credit Union corporate office boardroom on Academy Street at 10am. Mayor Smathers encouraged the Board to attend if possible.

Mayor Smathers thanked Mark Pless, John Bell and numerous others for their help securing monies to help Canton from the

legislature.

Mayor Smathers addressed the boy scout leader, Phil Smathers, stating that the loss of his wife, Linda Smathers, was sad but she would always be remembered leaving a tremendous legacy of what being involved in the community and impacting others looked like and encouraged them to be leaders and make a difference.

G. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull thanked everyone for attending and encouraged everyone to take care of one another.

Alderman Hamlett thanked Mayor Smathers for his words and commented that he had nothing to add.

Alderwoman Proctor thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Alderwoman Proctor stated that she was very happy to see the announcement for the Labor Day Festival featuring Sammy Kershaw and thanked staff for their efforts. Alderwoman Proctor stated that she had attended the merchants meeting and they were planning a lot of new events and encouraged everyone to shop locally to help with the loss of revenue these businesses would be facing with the mill closure. Alderwoman Proctor commented that it was great to see all the leadership from North Carolina be onsite and involved with the flood recovery and economic issues that Canton was facing.

Alderman Shepard thanked staff for keeping the facilities and town clean and looking good.

Mayor Smathers also reminded everyone that the mill had agreed to give the whistles to the town.

H. Public Comments:

Leadership from the Boys Scout Troop 316 commented that they had with them boy scouts that were earning their citizenship award. Mayor Smathers commented that the world needed young people like them now more than ever and they were a symbol of hope and to always do the right thing when most often it was the hardest thing. Alderwoman Proctor thanked the troop for coming and as a former scout encouraged them to work hard and make a difference. The leadership commented that he appreciated all that the Board and staff were doing in Canton and that it was great to live in Canton.

I. Managers Reports

Manager Scheuer reported to the Board that the North Carolina Flood Insurance Director had performed his audit and that the Town passed the audit with no findings, due to staff past and present.

Manager Scheuer stated that Senator Tillis had most likely secured monies to help offset the shortfall for the Town of Canton. Manager Scheuer told the Board he would keep them updated on the status of the budget passing.

Manager Scheuer reminded everyone that the Milltown Farmers Market would be opening on May 25th in Sorrells Street Park.

Manager Scheuer updated the Board that he was applying for the Rural Transformation Grant to update 225 Park Street to better serve the community.

Manager Scheuer reported that he would be having a mini grand opening for the addition of trail openings at Chestnut Mountain Park on June 10th with music, vendors, and food trucks. Manager Scheuer also updated the Board that some of the new trail names would be Champion, Wildcat, and some more to be names but they would all be names from heritage and culture of Canton.

J. New Business

1. Employee of the Year

Manager Scheuer explained to the Board that Finance Officer, Natalie Walker had the idea to name an employee of the year for an employee that was nominated by the Department Heads then chosen by a small panel. This employee will receive a \$500.00 bonus as well in appreciation of their work ethic and dedication to the Town as an employee. Manager Scheuer stated that this year a unanimous decision was to name Gilbert Zamudio as the 2022-23 employee of the year. Manager Scheuer stated that Gilbert always was eager to assist with any task always with a cheerful and happy disposition. Manager Scheuer stated that he was a great role model for the younger employees to model themselves after as Gilbert did what was needed whether he was asked to or not. Mayor Smathers thanked Gilbert for his service and commented that it was well deserved. Gilbert thanked everyone involved stating that everyone treated him so good and like family even with him not being a local and being a Mexican immigrant to this area. Alderman Hamlett stated that Gilbert was a great American and fellow employee that just happened to be of Mexican decent

but mostly family! All attending gave Gilbert a standing ovation.

2. Labor Day Road Closure Ordinance

Assistant Manager Stinnett presented the Board with the annual road closure ordinance for the Labor Day Festival. Assistant Stinnett reminded the Board that this ordinance would be to shut down Park Street routing traffic around the backside of the mill, all other closures would stay the same as in years past. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the ordinance as presented. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Ordinance preventing parking in front of a mail receptacle.

Manager Scheuer presented an ordinance (see attached) that would make it illegal to park within 8 feet on each side of a mail receptacle to prevent the delivery of mail and other deliveries. This ordinance was debated at an earlier meeting from a citizen complaint during the meeting. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to pass the ordinance as presented. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. Request to extension from Calvary Church for temporary trailers for flood workers

Manager Scheuer explained to the Board that Mr. Bill Garner has requested an extension of the zoning allowance that would allow the churches and others to have camping trailers in their parking lot and hooked to our system. These workers are providing flood victims with assistance in rebuilding their homes. Assistant Stinnett left a message with his wife to ask Mr. Gardner to attend. After a brief discussion the Board tabled this issue until Mr. Gardner was available to answer some of their questions.

5. Set Budget Public Hearing

Manager Scheuer asked the Board's pleasure on setting the public hearing for the 2023-24 budget for May 25, 2023. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to set the budget public hearing to May 25th at 6:30pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. Resolution: NC Department of Commerce Rural Transformation Grant Application

Manager Scheuer explained to the Board that he would be applying for the Rural Transformation Grant in the amount of \$400,000 dollars to be able to renovate the 225 Park Street building with bathrooms and garage doors to utilize the space

as an open-air market that could also be rented for other events. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the resolution for the NC Dept. of Commerce Rural Transformation Grant Fund Rural Engagement and Investment Program for Park and Street Revitalization Street. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to 143-318.11 (a)(6) at 7:08pm. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a brief discussion and no action taken, Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter open session at 7:20pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to 143.318.11 (a)(5). Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a brief discussion Alderman Shepard made a motion to enter open session at 7:41pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderman Shepard made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to 143.318.11(4). Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried. The Board had an in-depth conversation with no action taken. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter open session at 8:08pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

L. Adjournment

The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Melisa Stinnett, Town Clerk