

May 25, 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, May 25, 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, Finance Officer, and Town Attorney were present.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Representative Mark Pless led those in attendance in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

D. Approval of Minutes:

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the May 11, 2023, minutes as presented. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers thanked everyone for attending and thanked Representative Pless for being at the meeting and for all his help for the Citizens of Haywood County but more specifically Canton.

Mayor Smathers thanked Alderman Tim Shepard for delivering the first pitch at the Western Carolina baseball game that was honoring Canton.

Mayor Smathers announced that Governor Cooper and the First Lady would be visiting downtown Canton to shop and show support and to encourage others to patronize the local merchants.

Mayor Smathers also reported to the Board to mark their calendars for the meeting with Congressman Edwards and the Mayor of Kannapolis on Wednesday May 31 from 6pm to 8pm at the Pisgah High Media Center. Mayor Smathers stated that Attorney General Josh Stein would be eating downtown and meeting with leaders during the day on May 31st starting at 10am at Smathers Square. Mayor Smathers stated that all the

help and resources from the Administration and legislators was most appreciated and critical for the community.

Mayor Smathers commented that the last 24 hours was what we had hoped would never happen took place in Sorrells Park as the community and mill workers past and present gathered to hear the final whistle blow in the Pactiv paper mill; to watching kids play and honoring Huber Thomas at the naming ceremony of the new pickle ball courts giving the roller coaster of emotions from devastation to hope. Mayor Smathers stated that one of this Board greatest achievements was getting to pave the pickle ball courts with the encouragement and funds from Representative Mark Pless and Representative Corbin and naming it after one of the community's greatest mentors for the Youth of this community and now we get back to work to help our community and move Canton forward despite all of the adversity.

G. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull thanked all our local partners for their help and resources. Alderwoman Mull stated that we have had a long history with the local papermill, and we honor that tradition and all that worked there past and present, but we have a future, and we will work tirelessly to continue to provide the citizens the best we can moving forward.

Alderman Hamlett stated that he echoed Alderwoman Mull's comments as well as thanked Representative Mark Pless for all he is doing for our town and community. Alderman Hamlett made an observation that on his way to the last whistle blow at Sorrells Park he noticed a solitary man sitting on the side of the road listening for the last whistle blow and it was sad to see and he wanted to remind everyone to check on your family members, friends, neighbors in the days ahead to make sure that their mental health was okay and offer a helping hand to one another. Alderman Hamlett stated we would start a new day with each other.

Alderwoman Proctor stated that she did not realize how emotional that the last whistle would be but hearing the whistle at 7am was so sad knowing what was in store later in the day. Alderwoman Proctor stated that Canton is a town that will not stay down, and that grit, grace, and work ethic is what makes Canton Strong!

Alderman Shepard commented that he drove down Newfound and noticed the stacks were quiet and it was close to the end of the mill operation was sad to see. Alderman Shepard stated that the kids at Pisgah High School came outside for the final whistle blow, and everyone was talking and cutting up like

normal kids do but when the final whistle blew it was silence. Alderman Shepard stated it was time now to put our head to the grindstone and work hard to make things even better than before.

Representative Mark Pless stated that a lot of work was still to be done and he was going to do whatever he could to provide us with what we need as he and other legislators are able. Representative Pless commented that Haywood County people do not quit and neither does he and he is just a phone call away for the people of this County.

H. Public Comments:

N/A

I. Managers Reports

Manager Scheuer presented cash report.

Manager Scheuer reminded the Board that the Charrette for the Colonial Theatre and Armory would be on Monday May 31st at 4pm

Manager Scheuer gave the Board several dates for their knowledge: The pool was set to open on June 3rd for the season, Picking in the Park would begin on Friday, June 2nd, Momma T's Spring Fling would be on Saturday May 27th from 9am to 3pm, Backwood Bash would be on June 24th from 11am to 3pm, and the Office would be closed on Monday May 29th for Memorial Day.

J. Old Business

Mr. Bill Gardener from Calvary Baptist Church requested an extension for their temporary housing units for the Baptist Men doing work for the flood victims. Mayor Smathers stated that these people have done an amazing job helping the people that were affected by the floods. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to extend the temporary housing request. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

K. New Business

1. Public Hearing: 2023-2024 Proposed Budget

Alderwoman Proctor made a motion at 7:11pm to open the public hearing for the proposed 2023-2024 budget. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried. Manager

Scheuer stated that this budget was dramatically cut from the work session considering the mill closure and projected revenue losses. Manager Scheuer commented that the contracted services had been cut out of the budget and to keep in mind that the fleet for the Police Department and other equipment that has been ordered for the past year and previously approved would also show in this budget. Manager Scheuer also reminded the Board that this budget would not have any reduction of employees and the administration would always do everything possible to keep staffing levels the same or increase as possible. Manager Scheuer turned over the budget presentation to Finance Officer Natalie Walker. Finance Officer Walker explained the revenues and expenditures in the proposed budget highlighting each department with graphs to show the impact of the numbers. Finance Officer Walker also stated that the 2% percent COLA for all employees chosen by the Board was included in this budget as well as the Christmas bonus for all full-time employees. Assistant Manager Stinnett commented that this was something that the employees really appreciated that not only affected the employee but their families during the holiday season. Finance Officer Walker called on Assistant Manager Stinnett to talk about the Labor Day Festival. Assistant Manager Stinnett stated that this year the Labor Day Festival would be produced at a normal level for several reasons, one being that the Town was contractually obligated for the musical acts as well as other events for the festival and with all the devastating news that this Town had faced she felt it was extremely important to provide something positive that was not extremely expensive for the families of Haywood County especially the workers that had lost their jobs. Assistant Manager Stinnett stated that this might be the only vacation for some folks this year as they transition to new jobs and with all the uncertainty it was important to have some normal for the community. Finance Officer Walker moved on to the Water and Sewer equipment that was listed in the expenditures and asked Assistant Manager Stinnett to explain the necessity. Assistant Manager Stinnett explained that it was very important to purchase this equipment as it provided a valuable service for the residents by allowing the sewer to be cleaned not only at a manhole but at a clean out as well providing the best service for the taxpayers when they had a blockage in the sewer line. This will also allow the Town to have more accurate information and locate an issue before a repair is affected. This helps to eliminate the guessing game. Finance Officer Walker moved on to Recreation stating that most of the facilities were still in the FEMA process at this point and the Police Department had the previously approved fleet that would be debt service and just normal equipment that was necessary. The Fire Department would be adding new radios to keep them up to date and allow them to respond and communicate in a timelier manner as well as for their safety. Finance Officer Walker commented that there were no frills in

this budget, and she appreciated the department heads cutting the wants and submitting the needs for the proposed budget (see attached). The Board thanked Finance Officer Walker for her great job on this budget and being so conscientious of how taxpayers' money was spent while providing the necessary services to the residents. Manager Scheuer stated that Ms. Walker did an outstanding job and deserved all the credit.

2. Budget Amendments

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with several year-end budget amendments (see attached). Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve as presented. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Set Public Hearing for Moratorium for land uses in the Heavy and Light Industrial Zones

Manager Scheuer explained to the Board that a public hearing on the Heavy and Light Industrial zones would be needed to consider a moratorium on development in these zones to allow environmental studies for safety concerns, residential impacts, and zoning uses for this area. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to set a public hearing on July 13, 2023, at 6:30pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Manager Scheuer Asked that everyone have a moment of silence in memory of former Fire Chief Jimmy Smathers. Fire Chief Wheeler talked about the friendship, mentorship, and kindness that Jimmy showed everyone over the years.

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

N/A

L. Adjournment

The next Special Called Public Hearing meeting will be on Monday, May 31, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Melisa Stinnett, Town Clerk