

July 13, 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, July 13, 2023, at 6:30pm with Mayor Pro-Tem Mull, and Aldermen Hamlett, and Shepard present, the following proceedings were held.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Pro-Tem Mull called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Pro-Tem Mull stated that the Manager, Town Attorney and Deputy Town Clerk Lurvey were present. Absent were Mayor Smathers and Alderwoman Proctor.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Alderman Hamlett led those in attendance in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

D. Approval of Minutes:

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the June 28 and July 6, 2023, minutes as presented. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Pro-Tem Mull thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Mayor Pro-Tem Mull stated that she did not have any comments at this time.

G. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderman Shepard thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Alderman Shepard stated that he wished to express his appreciation to Champion Credit Union for sponsoring the fireworks show at the July 4 + 1 event. Alderman Shepard also commented and thanked the town employees for the appearance of the parks and grounds. Alderman Shepard stated that it appeared to be a record crowd and that he met a lot of nice people that attended the event.

Alderman Hamlett echoed Alderman Shepard's comments. Alderman Hamlett also wanted to express his thanks to the Canton Police Department as well as town staff on such a successful event.

H. Public Comments:

N/A

I. Managers Reports

Manager Scheuer presented cash and tax reports.

Manager Scheuer mentioned to the Board that the tax collection rate as of June 30, 2023, was 99.37% and was the highest rate achieved in the history of the town and was the highest collection rate in the County. Manager Scheuer thanked Wanda Lurvey for her collection efforts on behalf of the town.

Manager Scheuer advised the Board that National Night Out sponsored by the Canton Police Department and the Town was scheduled for August 1st, from 6:00pm – 9:00pm in Sorrells Street Park. Manager Scheuer also stated that the shade sails for the park should be installed within the next week.

Manager Scheuer also wanted the Board to know that thanks to the Cruso Endowment the new street signs are in to replace the signs from Pisagh Drive to Newfound Street to the town limits. They are black signs to match the others in town.

J. Old Business

N/A

K. New Business

Mayor Pro-Tem Mull made an exception to the order of the agenda for the benefit of Megan Taylor

Chief Scott Sluder: Recognition of Megan Taylor, Police Detective

1. Chief Sluder presented Megan Taylor with a Criminal Investigators Certificate of Achievement plaque for completing an extensive course which included 400 hours of investigative training. Chief Sluder stated that those 400 hours were actual class hours and covered such subjects as Crime Scene Investigations, Robbery, and Homicide etc. Chief Sluder stated that Megan put forth the effort to the agency betterment with her training. Alderman Hamlett congratulated Det. Taylor on her achievement and what a positive example she set and exemplifies what the town is all about.

2. Public Hearing: 365 Day Moratorium on Development Approvals within the L-I and H-I Zoning Districts

Alderman Hamlett made a motion at 6:42pm to open the public hearing for the proposed 365 Day Moratorium on L-I and H-I Zoning Districts. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried. Manager Scheuer stated that with the Mill closure that this brought land use concerns both positive and negative to the town. Manager Scheuer said the moratorium would provide the town with breathing room for compatible development. The town is tasked with the re-imagining of this property and its proximity to the downtown business district as well as our residential community and it was not only a prudent step, but it was ensuring that the town had a seat at the table as to future development of the Mill property. In addition, we must bear in mind the flood damage when considering development. Manager Scheuer also pointed out that there are knowns and unknowns in the remediation of soil contamination. Alderman Shepard then asked that if the hold on development was for a period of one year and during that year a compatible business opportunity should arise would the town be able to move forward or would the moratorium prevent that. Manager Scheuer explained that if such an event were to arise, the Board could make the appropriate amendments to the Moratorium and Attorney William Morgan concurred. That effectively the compatibility and Board amendment would end the Moratorium. Alderman Hamlett then stated that as a young boy growing up in Canton and up through the Mill closure there was never any ill will about the Mill. Livelihoods depended on the workers and the Mill. However, today is today. In previous years we were not aware of environmental impact, dangers due to pollution, people depended on industry. But times have changed, and Canton is able to protect her people and do what is right. Canton is full of good people and because of that we must do what is right, not expeditious, but what is right because the town folks deserve what is best. Mayor Pro-Tem Mull stated that the Board must do this because it is the right thing to do. Alderman Shepard added that the Town must protect its people and when I say this, I mean all people in the town. Mayor Pro-Tem Mull then mentioned that the Mill has received no less than fourteen (14) EPA violations since closing.

Carl Cortright, of Allen Street and a member of the town's planning board stated that his thoughts were the Mill has acted as a bad neighbor. Citing the 14 EPA violations as cited by the DEQ. Mr. Cortright stated that the board was protecting the future of Canton and that it is good that we all pause and find a proper development, a better owner for the property.

Alderman Hamlett then noticed Mr. Jon Hardister, State Representative and House Majority Whip. Mr. Hardister then introduced himself and explained that he is running for NC Labor Commissioner but has kept abreast of the Mill closure and its effects. Mr. Hardister offered any assistance that his office could provide. Without further comments, Alderman Shepard made a motion to close the public hearing at 7:15pm. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Alderman Hamlett made a motion at 7:16pm to go back into regular session. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried. Alderman Hamlett made a motion at 7:17pm to approve the Moratorium. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion and the motion carried.

3. Dogwood Funding: Planning for Opioid Issues

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with the Dogwood funding grant in the amount of \$250,000.00 for needs assessment of opioid use in the town. Manager Scheuer stated the town would put out an RFQ for a opioid plan and process to incorporate issues such as current abuse in the town, available programs to assist the community in dealing with addiction, Law Enforcement response and education. Alderman Shepard made a motion to approve the Dogwood Grant. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. Rural Transformation: Contract Approval

Manager Scheuer stated this contract is for an investment opportunity for the community. It will permit the town to bring upgrades to the building which was purchased by the Town in November of 2022 for the purpose of providing bathroom facilities needed at Sorrells Street Park, providing a community center with possible uses in the future of and indoor/outdoor market. The last part of the building will be utilized for much needed storage for the Water and Street Departments. Alderman Shepard made a motion to approve the Rural Transformation contract. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

5. Audit Contract

Manager Scheuer then presented the Board with the audit contract from Sheila Gahagan, C.P.A. for the year ended June 30, 2023. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the audit contract. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. The motion carried.

6. Work Session: Colonial Theatre/Armory

This was tabled for later discussion.

7. Next Regularly Schedule Change

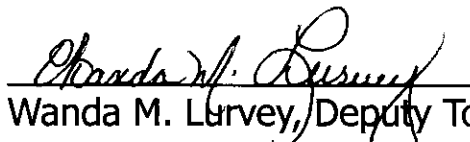
Manager Scheuer stated that he had a request from Mayor Smathers to change the date and time of the next meeting to Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at 5:00p.m. Alderman Shepard made a motion to change the date and time of the regularly scheduled meeting, to Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at 5:00pm. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

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

Alderman Shepard made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N. C. G. S. 143-318.11 (a) (4) economic development at 7:24pm. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a discussion Alderman Hamlett made a motion to enter open session at 7:58pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

L. Adjournment

The next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at 5:00p.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Pro-Tem Mull adjourned the Meeting at 7:59p.m.


Wanda M. Lurvey, Deputy Town Clerk