

December 14, 2023

At the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen/women of the Town of Canton held at 85 Summer Street, Canton NC, December 14, 2023, at 6:30 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 6:30 pm.

B. Roll Call

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

C. Pledge

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

D. Approval of Minutes:

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the November 9th and December 1, 2023, minutes as presented. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers thanked everyone involved with decorating the Town for Christmas. Mayor Smathers commented that Assistant Manager Stinnett asked the Board to trust her several years ago and they did, and they are very happy with the results. Mayor Smathers stated the tree was awesome. Assistant Manager Stinnett stated that was Alderman Hamlett's vision that he had pushed for a long time, and she was happy to be able to bring his vision to life. Assistant Stinnett commented that the Street Department along with other office employees helped make the decorations spectacular and they deserved a lot of credit for their efforts on top of performing their normal duties.

Mayor Smathers stated that the Tour of Homes was a great well attended event.

Mayor Smathers thanked the Cruso Endowment and the Canton Merchant Partnership for the Ice Rink donation, commenting that it had been well received and attended.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull thanked everyone for coming and wished everyone a very Merry Christmas.

Alderman Hamlett commented that he and Alderwoman Mull attended the Oath of Office Ceremony for the Clyde Officials, and they had received numerous comments on how great Canton looked. Alderman Hamlett stated that during their meeting they commented that they wanted to look as good as Canton in the future. Alderman Hamlett stated that the Waynesville Christmas parade was a fun event and he even got mistaken for Mayor Zeb Smathers which made his Christmas for sure.

Alderwoman Proctor also complimented the staff for decorating the Town. Alderwoman Proctor stated that the parade was great, and everyone seemed to have a great time. Alderwoman Proctor commented that it was a huge difference from three years ago and the decorations and events were very impressive. Alderwoman Proctor also encouraged everyone to shop locally and that it was great to see all the shoppers and people throughout the downtown.

Alderman Shepard thanked everyone involved for decorating the Town so beautifully. Alderman Shepard also commented that this seemed to be the best parade route so far and that traffic was able to clear out much faster than in years past. Alderman Shepard commented that he had received comments of wanting more lights and more of the same decorations, he responded that he agreed and hopefully that could be achieved but due to monetary constraints would be in small steps.

Mayor Smathers thanked the Police department for their efforts with the Christmas parade also agreeing with others that this was the best route so far.

Assistant Manager Stinnett also thanked Ingles Markets for the Food give away of 200 full Turkey meals commenting that everyone involved was so happy to be able to help others this Christmas season.

G. Public Comments

N/A

H. Reports from the Manager

Manager Scheuer gave the cash and tax report.

Manager Scheuer thanked the Board for the extra day for the

employees to enjoy Christmas with their families.

Manager Scheuer thanked Cruso Endowment and the Canton Merchant Partnership for the ice rink donation and being involved with the community.

Manager Scheuer updated the Board that the Rhoda, Skyline, and Meadowbrook projects were combined, approved, and were slated to begin in the next couple of weeks.

Mayor Smathers asked about the Armory, Town Hall, and Camp Hope Projects. Manager Scheuer stated that the Armory and Colonial were in the design stage, Town Hall would be torn down soon, and that Camp Hope was still in the FEMA process but hopefully would be soon. Manager Scheuer also made the Board aware that the playground would be started in early Spring and the equipment that had been ordered 6-months prior was starting to be delivered.

I. New Business

1. Audit Report

Town Auditor Sheila Gahagan presented the Board with the annual audit report (see attached). Mrs. Gahagan explained to the Board that this was a State and Federal audit and was extremely detailed. Mrs. Gahagan stated that she found two issues that could easily be fixed, and neither were criminal issues, rather mistakes by employees, not the Finance Officer. Mrs. Gahagan commented that she was pleasantly surprised that the Town had been able to do all the federal projects with FEMA as well as the normal day-to-day operations and only have these mistakes. Mrs. Gahagan commended the Administration and especially the Finance Officer for the job they were doing, stating that she was not sure how they managed this type of workload. Mrs. Gahagan also bragged about the collection rate for taxes, stating that it was phenomenal and that this was most likely the best in the entire State. Mrs. Gahagan reiterated to the Board that the workload was extreme, and the staff should be recognized for the job they are performing. Mrs. Gahagan finished with the items to improve on would be pre-audit certifications and policies to protect the Town from equipment/travel liability.

Mayor Smathers thanked Mrs. Gahagan for the audit report and making us aware on things to put into place to protect the Town and how to improve our operations.

2. Speed Cushion Request

Manager Scheuer explained to the Board that the request had

to meet certain criteria to qualify for speed cushions and that the Police Department was still doing traffic counts and speed monitoring in the Trammell Avenue area. Manager Scheuer stated that the process should be completed by the next meeting. Mr. Aytes from Trammell Avenue commented that a 400 car count would be unlikely in the area but speeding was still a major concern and he did not feel that the traffic count should matter in this instance. Mayor Smathers asked if that mattered. Manager Scheuer stated that the current policy as it was that it would matter. Mr. Jon Frappier of 526 Trammell Avenue commented that dogs and kids were playing in this area, and it was dangerous due to the high speeds in the area. Mrs. Sharon Theroet of 390 Trammel Avenue stated that it was mainly due to the people using Trammell as a cut through and they do not even reside in the area. Mayor Smathers asked the Board if they wanted to wait to see the counts at the next meeting and then decide if the policy should be amended or what measure the Board wanted to take moving forward. Mr. Aytes stated he could fill the Boardroom with concerned people. The Board by consensus tabled the issue until the next regular meeting.

3. Budget Amendments

Finance Officer Natalie Walker presented the Board with budget amendments for the playground, ice rink and Planning Director (see attached). Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. TDA Appointment

Manager Scheuer asked the Board's pleasure on an appointment for the TDA Board. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve Alderwoman Mull as the TDA appointment. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5. Ice Sculpture

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with a request to have an ice sculpture in Sorrells Street Park for the Ice Festival that would be throughout Haywood County in January. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve a \$350 ice sculpture as requested. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. Work Session Date

Manager Scheuer asked the Board pleasure on a work session date to discuss their vision for the 2024-25 budget year. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to meet on January 5th at

9am. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

7. Schedule of Fees

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with a recommended change to the existing schedule of fees due to the price increase to the Town for water and sewer meters/parts. Alderman Shepard made a motion to amend the fees as presented (see attached). Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

8. Martin Luther King Prayer Breakfast Request

Manager Scheuer asked the Board's pleasure with running an ad in the prayer breakfast program. Alderwoman Mull inquired what amount was done in prior years? Assistant Manager Stinnett responded that in the past the \$150.00 back page was done in the past. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to sponsor the \$150.00 back page ad for the MLK Breakfast program. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

9. Resolution: 2021 Records Retention and Disposition Schedule

Assistant Manager Stinnett presented the Board with the 2021 record retention and disposition schedule for municipal government. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

10. Purchase Order Policy

Finance Officer Natalie Walker presented the Board with the new purchase order policy (see attached). Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the purchase order policy as presented. Alderman Hamlett second the motion. Motion carried.

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

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session at 7:34 pm pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)(6) economic development and personnel. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

After a lengthy discussion with no action taken, Alderman Hamlett made a motion to enter open session at 9:41pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

J. Adjournment

The next meeting will be on Friday, January 5, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 9:42pm.

Lisa Stinnett, Town Clerk