

## **February 8, 2024**

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, January 25, 2024, at 6:00pm with Mayor Zeb Smathers, and Aldermen/women Mull, Hamlett, Shepard and Proctor present, the following proceedings were held.

### **A. Call to Order**

Mayor Smathers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **B. Roll Call**

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

### **C. Pledge/Invocation**

Alderwoman Mull led those in attendance in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

### **D. Approval of Minutes:**

Mayor Smathers presented the January 5, January 11, and January 25<sup>th</sup> minutes. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve all the minutes as presented. Alderman Hamett seconded the minutes. Motion carried.

### **E. Mayor Comments**

Mayor Smathers thanked staff for their efforts during the water crisis issues. Mayor Smathers thanked Robbie Hyatt of Hyatt Pipeline for their emergency help during this time. Mayor Smathers commented that all negative comments should be directed at the Board or Administration but not the employees. Mayor Smathers stated that if you see our workers out just give them a thank you for their long hours and dedication.

Mayor Smathers stated he received a letter regarding the opening of the Armory. Manager Scheuer stated that it will be a while before that space will be renovated and open to the public.

### **G. Aldermen/women Comments**

Alderwoman Mull thanked the Town staff and Hyatt Pipeline for all their work repairing the broken water lines. Alderwoman Mull also agreed that all complaints should be directed to the Board.

Alderman Hamlett echoed the mayor's comments and thanked Lisa and Nick for the continued update and communication during the event.

Alderwoman Proctor thanked everyone involved, especially the staff that were out all hours of the night.

Alderman Shepard echoed the other Board comments, Alderman Shepard thanked the staff for all their hard work.

## **H. Public Comments:**

Mr. Zack Schmitt of 125 Lawrence Street addressed the Board regarding issues with dogs running at large off lease. Mr. Schmitt stated that he and his dog had almost been bitten numerous times and it was dangerous to walk on the sidewalks. Mayor Smathers asked that Mr. Schmitt let the Town Manager and Code Enforcement Officer Kevin Wheeler know when, where, and animal that we could address at that time.

Mr. Tracy Watson of 360 Trammell Avenue and a Buncombe County fireman came to encourage the Board to pay the fireman more money that they are not paid anywhere close to Buncombe County. Finance Officer Walker stated that she agreed that every employee needed to be paid more money, however, in local government your pay scale is based on the size of the population that you serve and that the current pay scale study for the fireman was in line with other municipalities our size. Finance Officer Walker stated that these studies were conducted through the North Carolina League of Municipalities and that she checks these on a regular basis to make sure we are competitive with salaries as much as we can be.

## **I. Managers Reports**

Manager Scheuer presented the cash report.

Manager Scheuer thanked staff for working many 24-hour shifts during the water crisis. Manager Scheuer stated that this crisis just highlighted the substantial work that needs to be done. Manager Scheuer thanked the NC Rural Water Association for sending their team members with leak indicator equipment to help us locate any possible issues within our system. Mayor Smathers asked for a full system assessment at the next meeting.

Manager Scheuer stated that we were awarded the Economic Transition funding of \$917,000 to do the Comprehensive Plan in the post mill world, Capital Improvements Plan, Master Recreation Plan, Pigeon River Corridor Study, Stormwater Plan,

and the Mill Site Remediation Plan with Planner, Byron Hickox will be in charge of this process.

Town Manager, Scheuer, stated that the work session would need begin soon regarding the budget, and he would bring dates to the next meeting.

Assistant Manager Stinnett asked the Board's pleasure on moving forward with the Milltown Market as last year with the dates of May through October with the Kringle market in December. Manager Scheuer stated that they were great partners and that he did not feel a formal process was necessary to move forward. The Board gave consensus to have the Market as last year.

Assistant Manager Stinnett addressed the Board regarding notifications of late bills to the Board. Assistant Stinnett commented that citizens were notified by mail twice with a bright colored sticker as well as online payments receiving an email reminder as well. The issue that staff is facing is that the list for habitual is eating up a lot of staff time with call, texts, and emails that still have no effect with the outcome. Assistant Stinnett suggested that a notification on the bill making people aware that these notifications will no longer be done other than the late notice with the bright colored sticker, an unusual usage amount, or a citizen that has never been cut off before or rarely to receive an extra notification. The Board agreed to the change in notifications.

Assistant Stinnett addressed the Board with a request from Terryll with WPTL to host a homecoming parade. Assistant Stinnett commented that this is a great endeavor and strain on employees and budgets to have a full parade. Assistant Stinnett asked the Boards pleasure if she suggested a walking trail parade that would not require road closures and still allow the special event for all, and she would gladly work with Terryll to work out the details. The Board came to consensus to move forward with the walking trail parade.

## **J. Old Business**

N/A

## **K. New Business**

### **1. Cody Grasty from Haywood County**

Mr. Grasty made the Board aware that four residences in Canton had been processed and would soon be demolished and then the property would be deeded back to the Town

and the process should be complete by March 2025. Mayor Smathers stated that Cody was a blessing to Canton and Haywood County as well, thanking him for all his work on these flood properties.

## 2. Creech Presentation on Town Hall, Police Department and Fire Department plans for the future sites.

Mr. Mike Supino and Peter Wasmer from Creech Associates gave a presentation (see attached) on new facility renovations. Mayor Smathers inquired if this allowed space for future growth. Mr. Wasmer stated that it did allow for future growth. Alderwoman Proctor commented that the set-up for expansion was great, thanking them for the presentation. All members thanked the firm for their work and presentation.

## 3. Ordinance: Speed Limit Trammell Avenue

Manager Scheuer presented the Board with the speed limit ordinance lowering the speed limit to 15mph, as well as installing a 3 way stop at Walnut and Trammell and a 4 way stop at Blalock and Trammell to cause a break in speed on the street. The Manager presented cost estimates for the different types of signage. Mr. Jason Aytes stated that he appreciated the efforts but asked the Board to please revisit the speed bumps in the future. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the ordinance as presented and installing the 3 and 4 way stops. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## 4. ABC Board Appointment

Assistant Manager Stinnett presented a nomination of Neal McCracken for reappointment for a one-year term by Hugh Williams from the ABC Store. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to reappoint Neal McCracken for a one-year term to the ABC Board. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## 5. Police Policies Update

Police Chief Sluder presented the Conducted Energy Weapons, Specialized Vehicle Program, Social Networking, Safety Checking Stations, Personal Relationships with the workplace, Involvement with Litigation, New Computer/MDT and Internet Use, and Code of Ethics policies that have been updated with current legal information to be approved by the board. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the policies as presented. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N. C. G. S. 143-318.11 (a) (4) economic development and (6) Personnel at 7:17 pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a lengthy discussion on both topics. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to enter open session at 10:11pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Manager Scheuer presented several budget amendments to the Board (see attached). Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**L. Adjournment**

The next scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 6:00p.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 10:12p.m.

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Melisa Stinnett, Town Clerk