

March 28, 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, March 14, 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 6:03 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated that the Manager, Assistant Manager, Town Attorney and Deputy Clerk Walker were present.

C. Pledge/Invocation

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

D. Approval of Minutes:

Mayor Smathers then asked the Board for approval of the minutes for the March 14, 2024, meeting. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the minutes of that meeting and Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers commented that no one knows the future or how our story will be remembered. Today we are announcing a significant opportunity in core beliefs and leadership change. The Town must be run well, and the Town Manager position is more important now than ever and we must remain who we are. With that said, Nick has done an amazing job and will be transitioning to Flood Recovery, Mill Recovery, and Economic Development. Lisa will be serving immediately as Town Manager. Lisa is a Canton success story even an American success story and will do an amazing job. Even though the roles are changing they are equally important. The recovery position will be paid for with grant funds not taxpayer's dollars. Alderwoman Mull thanked both employees, stating we have never had times like these, and the Board had never been let down. Alderwoman Mull stated the future looked bright. Alderman Hamlett commented that so much had fallen on the leadership's shoulders, COVID, the flood, mill closure, and even earthquakes. The urgency depends on solutions. Alderman Hamlett stated that he celebrated both employees and teamwork that now provides opportunities and collaboration.

Alderwoman Proctor commented that we think boldly here. Alderwoman Proctor thanked Nick for all his work from the bottom of her heart. Alderwoman Proctor stated that as acting Town Manager Lisa has the relationships, knowledge and drive to perform the job and she has complete confidence in her abilities. Alderwoman Proctor stated that it was fitting that Lisa would be the first official female Town Manager in the history of the Town and that it was also Women's history month. Alderman Shepard thanked Nick for his past work, and he was looking forward in the opportunities from his new role. Alderman Shepard thanked Lisa for her willingness to step up and commented that she is so valuable to this Town. Mayor Smathers commented that we are in uncharted territory, commenting that patience will be appreciated as we navigate moving forward and that this transition is a win win for Canton. Mayor Smathers congratulated Lisa on being the first female to ever serve as Assistant Town Manager and now the first female to serve as Town Manager. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to appoint Lisa Stinnett as acting Town Manager immediately until the approximate time of July 1st or until a replacement is determined. Mayor Smathers stated that they would not put a timeline on the transition at this point. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. Nick Scheuer stated that this Board had done a fantastic job with all the adversity that they had been faced with, and that the future looked bright. Lisa thanked the Board for their confidence in her to perform the job at hand and that she loved the Town and would always put their best interest first.

Mayor Smathers asked for an update on the playground. Interim Manager Stinnett commented that the project was in the permitting stage. Mayor Smathers reminded everyone about the Easter Egg hunt at the Recreation Park on Saturday produced by the Canton Police Department.

G. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull thanked everyone for coming.

Alderman Hamlett thanked Vicki Hyatt for her recent comments.

Alderwoman Proctor reiterated that it was Women's History Month encouraging everyone to seek out the wonderful women in Town.

Alderman Shepard thanked the Police Department for their efforts with the drug clean-up in the residential neighborhoods.

H. Public Comments:

Mr. Mike Woods, representing the Charters of Freedom thanked the Board for allowing the Charters of Freedom to be in the Town of Canton. Mr. Woods commented that he had worked with a lot of people all over the United States and Lisa and Nick had been great to work with on this project. Mr. Woods made the Board aware that the ribbon cutting would be May 20th at 1:30 at the display located at 53 Park Street. Mr. Woods handed out a brochure that would allow pavers to be purchased to enhance the area in honor of those that had fought for the freedoms that we enjoy every day. The Board thanked Mr. Woods for all his work on this project.

I. Managers Reports

Interim Manager Stinnett presented a cash report.

Interim Manager Stinnett presented the Board with the monthly tax collection report.

Interim Manager Stinnett updated the Board regarding an insurance change for all employees, commenting that representatives from the League would be onsite to answer all questions from employees and retirees.

Interim Manager Stinnett made the Board aware that Recreation Director Sam Dunbar and his wife Samantha welcomed a baby boy, Henry Dunbar and both the baby and mother are doing well.

Interim Manager Stinnett made the Board aware that the Prebid meeting had taken place and the bid award for the Rhoda, Skyline, and Meadowbrook project would be awarded in mid-April.

Interim Manager Stinnett updated the Board that the Museum project should be completed within the next couple of weeks barring no unforeseen hold ups.

Interim Manager Stinnett made the Board aware that the lift stations at Fibreville and Asheville Highway were on the schedule to be inspected next week.

Interim Manager Stinnett reported that the bridge at Camp Hope had been processed and repair contracts should be going out to bid soon.

Interim Manager Stinnett lastly, made the /board aware that

the paving of the gravel of Town roads would begin the first of May.

J. Old Business

N/A

K. New Business

1. Audit Contract: Sheila Gahagan CPA

Interim Manager Stinnett presented the Board with a proposed contract with Sheila Gahagan to perform the annual audit for the town of Canton. Interim Manager Stinnett stated that the Town worked well with Mrs. Gahagan during the audit process. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the audit contract as presented. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Ordinance: Amending Chapter 8)“ Offenses”), Chapter (“Other General Nuisances”) of the town of Canton Code Ordinances by the Adoption of a New Section 6-0019 (“Living in tents, RVs, Boats, Storage Buildings and the like Prohibited”)

Interim Manager Stinnett presented the Board with an Ordinance drafted by the Town Attorney (see attached) to help with the complaints of people trying to live in tents and other structures on residential property. Chief Wheeler stated that this would allow him to enforce the homeless from just showing up and taking up residency on vacant property and rental properties throughout Town. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the ordinance as presented. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. An Ordinance amending Part 3 (“Public Safety”) Chapter 2 (“Fire Prevention and Protection”) of the Town of Canton Code of Ordinances by the Adoption of a New Section 3-2009 (“Technical Codes and Standards Adopted by Reference”)

Interim Manager Stinnett presented the Board with an ordinance drafted by the Town Attorney (see attached) that adopted the Fire Prevention and Protection standards. Chief Wheeler stated that this would give him more legal ramifications to help enforce the code. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to adopt the ordinance as presented. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. Budget Amendments

Interim Manager Stinnett then presented budget amendments (Bear Country Sign, Chestnut Bridge, Special Olympics) to the

Board (see attached). Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion, and all were in favor and the motion passed.

5. Set Special Called Meeting April 8, 2024, and Cancelling April 11, 2024, meeting.

Interim Manager Stinnett asked the Board to set a Special Called Meeting for the budget work session to be held on April 8th, 2024, at 11:00am, as well as cancel the regular scheduled meeting that was scheduled for April 11, 2024. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to set the meeting for April 8th at 11am and to cancel the April 11th meeting as discussed. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N. C. G. S. 143-318.11 (a) (4) economic development at 7:08 pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a brief update, Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 7:21pm.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N. C. G. S. 143-318.11 (a) (6) Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion Carried. After a lengthy discussion, Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 9:21pm. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

At 9:10pm Alderwoman Mull moved to enter open session, Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion, and it was unanimously adopted.

L. Adjournment

The next scheduled meeting will be on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 11:00a.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 9:11p.m.

Natalie Walker, Deputy Town Clerk