

September 24, 2026

At the regularly called meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen/women of the Town of Canton held at 85 Summer Street, Canton NC, September 24, 2026, at 6:00 pm with Mayor-Pro-Tem Mull and Aldermen/women Hamlett and Shepard present the following proceedings were held.

A. Call to Order

Mayor -Pro-Tem Mull called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

B. Roll Call

Mayor-Pro-Tem Mull stated that Manager Stinnett, Assistant Manager Walker, Deputy Clerk Young and Town Attorney Morgan were present. Alderwoman Proctor was unable to attend. Mayor Smathers is running late.

C. Pledge

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

D. Approval of Minutes: September 10, 2026

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the September 10, 2026, minutes as presented. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor-Pro-Tem Mull stated that Mayor Smathers may have comments once he arrived.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Mayor-Pro-Tem Mull thanked everyone for attending. Alderman Hamlett stated we are reaching the time of year for flu and Covid. He urged everyone to make sure they receive their flu and Covid vaccines. Alderman Shepard stated the Fall decorations downtown look great. He thanked the Street Department for their hard work.

G. Public Comments

Debbie King, alleged extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) in Canton. Mrs. King stated the Town of Canton appointed someone with the same name as the conservation director for Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservation to represent the Buncombe County side of the alleged Rough Creek Watershed ETJ. The Town of Canton has operated this seat without the approval of the County Commissioners since at least 2019. Mrs. King stated she was informed by the Buncombe County Planning Director that Canton's ETJ doesn't exist in Buncombe County. He previously instructed the Planning Director of Canton to check with their attorney and Haywood County. Mrs. King stated she feels this creates a severe defect by voting to seat a representative over an unrecognized jurisdiction where they hold zero statutory power. Mrs. King stated on September 24, 2026, the Haywood County Deputy Clerk sent an email to the Town of Canton and other municipalities requesting a full list of current board members. Mrs. King stated public records show the Town of Canton failed to provide the ETJ members. Mrs. King stated per the Town's records sent to the County there were 4 ETJ members with 3-year terms. Mrs. King stated per the records she received from the Town attorney state the non-ETJ Planning Board term expired in 2024. The Town's Resolution on the agenda explains the severe operational breakdown as disruptions from regional disasters such as Hurricane Helene. While our community and county elections managed to maintain regular legal voting cycles including November 4, 2025, when Canton's town seats were up for vote. Canton's core regulatory board seats remain unauthorized, unappointed and completely expired. Mrs. King stated this is a multi-year breakdown in statutory compliance not a temporary disaster disruption. Mrs. King stated the Town of Canton cannot simply wave an administrative magic wand tonight in a retroactive local resolution to make years disappear.

Adam King of 19 Watershed Cove in the alleged extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Mr. King asked if anyone has looked at how big this ETJ is, it's larger than the size of Canton. Mr. King stated he sent a request (see attached) to the Planner about 6 weeks ago that he provided the state statutes and ordinances that are on file. Mr. King stated the ordinances should have been in file for the last 20 years. Mr. King stated he was unable to find them; the state can't find them and Buncombe County can't find them. He is unable to find them on the website and feels after waiting 6 weeks for them from the Town, maybe the Town can't find them either. Mr. King stated he is trying to get a permit through the county, and they are telling him he has to get it through the Town of Canton so in order to get the permit he needs this information. He is also just trying to confirm this is a valid ETJ.

H. Reports from the Manager

Manager Stinnett stated that Haywood County Schools and Pisgah High School have requested to use the land where the Town shoots the fireworks. Manager Stinnett has requested a COI from them. Alderman Hamlett made the motion to let Pisgah High School use the land; Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Manager Stinnett gave an update on the 225 Park Project. Additional funding was needed to finish the restrooms. We have received funds in the amount of \$50,000 and that will cover the cost. The project should be completed by mid-December.

Manager Stinnett also announced that Halloween movie will be shown Saturday October 24th starting when it gets dark. The movie will be Coco.

I. Old Business

None.

J. New Business

Mayor Smathers arrived at 6:11 pm.

1. Co-Sponsorship: Downtown Trick or Treat

Hannah Burnisky presented the Board with a request for co-sponsorship for the Downtown Trick or Treat event (see attached). Ms. Burnisky requested permission to block parking lots, with permission from owners, for activities, the use of the old ABC parking lot for a trunk or treat, banner permission and police presence for safety. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the co-sponsorship. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. The motion carried.

2. Co-Sponsorship: Let's Make Memories

Robin Black presented the Board with a request for co-sponsorship for the Let's Make Memories event (see attached). Ms. Black stated the event will be Saturday December 12. She has lined up 3 musical performers and plans to hand out 100 cold weather packets. She has ordered a snow globe for photo opportunities (see attached), she has offered to let the Town borrow this if they would like. Ms. Black requested the use of the train; she would like to give rides along Main St for event goers to see the Christmas lights and the Christmas décor in the store windows. She also requested the use of additional trash cans. Ms. Black also asked if the ice skate rink could be open that evening. Manager Stinnett stated that if the Board approves use of the train someone will have to follow it in a car for safety reasons. When we drive it from storage to Sorrells Park someone follows it for safety. The Town will have to provide someone to drive it. Ms. Black stated she has volunteers that are willing to drive and/or ride on the train. Manager Stinnett stated only Town employees can drive the train so we can line that up if approved. Manager Stinnett stated there is no guarantee that the ice rink will be available this year. It was planned to be in the A&P building and due to delays aren't sure that is possible at this time. The base that the ice rink usually sits on was not budgeted for this year since it was supposed to be inside. Ms. Black asked how much that base cost, as she might be able to find funds to cover that cost. Manager Stinnett told her it's typically about \$5,000. Ms. Black said that was more than she anticipated the cost

being so if the A&P building is done and the ice rink is open; they would like to use it. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the co-sponsorship of the event. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. The motion passed.

3. Haywood Waterways Presentation

Preston Jacobson from Haywood Waterways presented the Board with the Blueway Development Plan. Mr. Jacobsen presented ideas of things to do with the Old Freeman Tract. He stated the first thing we need to do is choose a name for this area of land. He stated in the plans the FFA farm and baseball fields stay unchanged. They would like to add additional parking and river access. The cost of these things is about \$227,000 and Haywood Waterways has that cost covered. Mr. Jacobsen is asking the Board to approve starting the design process which should start sometime after the first of the year. Mayor Smathers asked if these changes would affect Pisgah's Cross Country track, Mr. Jacobsen stated no, it would not. Alderman Shepard stated as a Pisgah baseball coach there is concern for people having open access to the field. He stated there is a gate that blocks access to the field for a reason. Mr. Jacobsen stated there is no security in the current design, but we could make the hours for the area dawn to dusk. Manager Stinnett asked if security could be added, Mr. Jacobsen stated yes, it could be added. Mayor Smathers told Mr. Jacobsen to make sure that security was added. Manager Stinnett stated we would come up with a name. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to start the design phase. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4. Resolutions for Planning and Zoning: Attorney William Morgan

Attorney William Morgan presented the Board with two Resolutions. Attorney Morgan stated that somewhat recently we learned that several orders had expired in November 2024, Attorney Morgan stated this occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene and was in no way an excuse. Attorney Morgan stated those members continue to serve. The resolutions recognize their continued service is valid. North Carolina follows a Common Law rule that allows Board members to hold over when their term expires until their successors are appointed. The Resolutions acknowledge the seats are expired but the votes are still legal according to North Carolina state law. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the Planning Board Resolution. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. The motion passed. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the Zoning Board Resolution. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. The motion carried.

5. Christmas Parade Theme

Manager Stinnett presented the Board with ideas for the Christmas Parade theme. The themes presented were, "Christmas Through the Years", "Patriotic Christmas" and "1776". Alderman Hamlett stated with the new Town Hall, new Police Department, Fire Department and A&P Building, which needs a new name, "Renewed Hope" would be a good idea. Afterall, we are still recovering from Fred and Helene. Alderman Mull stated we should do a "Red, White and Blue Christmas". Mayor Smathers told Manager Stinnett she could choose the theme.

6. Helene Cash Flow Loan

Manager Stinnett presented the Board with the Helene Cash Flow Loan (see attached). Manager Stinnett stated this is the second round of money and is in the amount of roughly \$2.8 million. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to accept the loan. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. The motion carried.

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

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to 143-318.11(a)(4)(5) at 6:31 pm. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried. At 7:46 pm Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Manager Stinnett let the Board know she had spoken with Hanni Muerdter with Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy and was told we need to name the newly acquired ballpark. If we name the park after a woman, the Town is eligible for an extra \$50-\$100,000. Manager Stinnett suggested Debbie Wilson. Alderman Hamlett asked if it had to be named after a woman. Manager Stinnett stated she was pretty sure it had to be a woman. Alderman Hamlett stated he would like to think of a way to have a memorial for all the women of the Town that have passed. Manager Stinnett stated she would ask if that was possible and report back to the Board.

L. Adjournment

The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 8, 2026, at 6:00 pm at 85 Summer Street, Canton NC 28716. There being no additional business. Alderwoman Mull made the motion to adjourn at 7:50 pm. Alderman Hamlett seconded. The motion carried.

Amanda Young

Deputy Town Clerk