

AUGUST 22, 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, August 22, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. 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 6:02 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated that all members were present. Mayor Smathers stated that Interim Town Manager Stinnett and Finance Officer Walker were present.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Alderman Shepard 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 August 5, 2024 meeting. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the minutes of that meeting and Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers stated that Haywood County Schools had resumed session and asked Chief Sluder if any issues had occurred. Chief Sluder informed the board that all was well and only had a few minor speeding issues. Mayor Smathers asked for a street update and Interim Manager Stinnett stated she would provide an update later in the meeting.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull recognized the Miss Labor Day winners: Anna Warren-Miss Labor Day; Maybel James- first runner up; Kinley Hollingshed-second runner up; Chloe Allison-Miss Congeniality; Kinley Hollingshed-People's Choice Award. The scholarship is in increments of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 for the winners. Alderwoman Mull thanked the Cruso Endowment for their support in financing the pageant. Alderman Hamlett inquired about the recent police chase. Chief Sluder stated all officers were fine. Alderman Hamlett thanked all officers for their service.

Alderwoman Proctor stated she was excited about the Labor Day Festival coming up. She inquired about the success of the pool this season. Finance Officer Walker said it was well attended and would have financials in the coming weeks. Alderwoman Proctor asked when the splash pad would close. Interim Manager Stinnett stated it would be in late October. Alderwoman Proctor asked about speeding on Rhoda Street. Chief Sluder said a new speed limit sign would be ordered. Alderwoman Proctor also stated that Haywood Pathways was in dire need of funding and donations were appreciated. Alderman Shepard mentioned the importance of being aware of buses and walkers at the schools. He bragged about SRO Officer Booth. Alderman Shepard stated that Officer Booth was visible and personable at the high school.

G. Public Comments:

The new Chamber of Commerce President, David Francis, informed the board of three ribbon cuttings for Canton businesses. He stated that Flyfishing Outfitters, Timber Ninja, and Geek Mountain would all have the ribbon cuttings on Friday as a kickoff to the Labor Day weekend. He invited all members to attend.

Carl Cortwright bragged about the street department and their efficiency at pickups.

H. Managers Reports

Interim Manager Stinnett presented the tax report. Finance Officer Walker presented the cash report. Interim Manager Stinnett made the board aware that the town would be selling Labor Day Festival shirts this year and that we are selling tickets online. She stated that this is the first time doing it ourselves and that we are pleased with the process and sales. She stated that the Labor Day map would be published next week for parking areas and road closures. She also made the board aware that the Air Dogs and Kids Zone areas would be switching locations. Interim Manager Stinnett inquired about the Grand Marshall. She stated the employees would not be able to during this parade, but it could be possible for the Christmas parade. Alderman Hamlett recommended the Cruso Endowment for their tireless work and generosity in giving to the Canton community. Mayor Smathers said he would reach out to the endowment to see if they can attend. Interim Manager Stinnett said that the patching of potholes on North Main, Newfound, and Locust would begin soon. Interim Manager informed the board that Town Planner Byron Hickox was doing the RFP for the Comp Plan and the Land Use Plan.

Interim Manager Stinnett inquired if the board was amenable to closing the pool for the season on August 25 due to a lack in lifeguards. The board gave consensus to close a week early. Kevin Wheeler made the board aware of two grants that the fire department received. The first was from Cruso Endowment for equipment to assist in carrying out individuals injured on trails. The award was for \$2,097. The second was the AFG- Association of Firefighters Grant. He mentioned that Dorner Grant Associates assisted with the grant writing. The fire department applied for \$58,000 for hoses, appliances, washer, monitor, and thermal cameras. The award amount was for \$55,509 and the town would pay \$2,775.

Interim Manager Stinnett said that the town was almost fully staffed. We had one opening in the street department and one in the fire department.

Interim Manager Stinnett informed the board that Skyline and Meadowbrook culverts were complete, and that Charles Street would begin next week. Rhoda Street will begin shortly after Charles Street and will hopefully be complete before the end of the year. Interim Manager Stinnett informed the board that the old Sagebrush building was under contract and would keep the board updated as information was released. She mentioned that Finance Officer Walker had her Worker's Compensation audit next week and that the Camp Hope bid had to go back since it did not receive adequate responses. Interim Manager Stinnett stated that she was appreciative of the planning board and all that they have done recently. Carl Cortwright chimed in and stated that Byron Hickox was great to work with and had extensive contacts in the area. Interim Manager Stinnett said that the Summer Camp was a huge success this year and that she had received many compliments. Alderwoman Mull asked about the playground. Interim Manager Stinnett stated it was moving forward.

I. Old Business

N/A

J. New Business

1. Camp Hope Historian- McGill vetted the responses and it has been awarded to Acme Preservation Services. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the award. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.
2. Fundraiser NJROTC- The chief of NJROTC is requesting Sorrells Street Park on September 7 for a fundraiser. This does not meet the requirements for a new event. Interim Manager Stinnett said she would offer a free booth to them

at the Labor Day Festival since they could not allow use of the park.

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

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter a closed session at 6:42 P.M. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. Motion carried. Alderwoman Mull made the motion to enter an open session at 8:49 P.M. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion.

In open session, a motion was made by Alderwoman Mull to approve a contract with BLE. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

L. Adjournment

The next scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, September 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. Alderwoman Mull made the motion to adjourn, and Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 8:50 P.M.

Natalie Walker
Town Clerk