

August 28, 2025

At the Special Called Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen/women of the Town of Canton held at the Town Hall at 85 Summer Street, August 28, 2025, at 6:00pm with Mayor Smathers, and Aldermen/women Mull, Hamlett, Proctor, Shepard 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 Manager Stinnett, Assistant Manager Walker, Clerk Dunbar, and Town Attorney Morgan were present. Attorney Morgan arrived at 6:07pm

C. Pledge/Invocation

Alderman Shepard led the pledge.

D. Approval of Minutes:

Aldерwoman Proctor made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 14, 2025, meeting. Aldерwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers stated he is seeing a lot of small businesses open back up since the flood. Mayor Smathers reminded everyone that the 117th Labor Day Festival is this weekend and said tickets are selling quickly. Mayor Smathers asked both Chief Wheeler and Chief Sluder if there were any safety concerns for the festival. Both Chief Sluder and Chief Wheeler stated that they have everything covered for the weekend. Mayor Smathers asked Chief Sluder to explain how the Police Department got the new watch tower.

Chief Sluder stated that the new watch tower came from the Navy through

a grant. Chief Sluder explained that the watch tower is going to be used for Labor Day, sporting events, and other festivals that the Town has. Chief Sluder stated that an officer can be on the top of the watch tower and be able to see the entire festival. The Board thanked Chief Wheeler and Chief Sluder for their work.

Mayor Smathers stated that Mill Around Town is this Friday and wished the Pisgah football team luck this Friday.

Mayor Smathers stated that on this date of 8/28/2025 the Town of Canton is still waiting for FEMA money from the Federal Government. Mayor Smathers stated that the money for Tropical Storm Fred and Hurricane Helene is frozen in Washington.

Manager Stinnett stated that the first wave of money was obligated, but it is just for debris removal, but the funds have not been rewarded.

Mayor Smathers stated we will take any form of payment, and the citizens need the money.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull asked Chief Sluder about the loud muffler ordinance that the Town has. Alderwoman Mull stated that a friend asked about getting a ticket for having a loud muffler on their car to bring it to the car show. Chief Sluder stated that the Police Department will be too occupied to worry about a loud muffler. Alderwoman Mull told a story about when she was five years old and was chosen to pull a name for a raffle, and the prize was a free pony. Alderwoman Mull stated that the winner gave her \$5 and she still has the \$5 bill.

Alderman Hamlett stated he appreciates the hard work and dedication from the staff, for their work for this celebration. Alderman Hamlett stated he prays it doesn't rain this weekend.

Alderman Shepard thanked Town Staff for getting Chestnut Mountain opened. Alderman Shepard stated we are starting to move in the right

direction.

Mayor Smathers stated looking back from a year from today, we have completed a lot of projects.

Alderwoman Proctor thanked Clerk Dunbar for his work getting Chestnut Mountain opened and thanked town staff for getting the pickleball lights on again.

Alderwoman Proctor Talked about the Mill Around Town event and encouraged people to attend.

Mayor Smathers asked Clerk Dunbar about basketball poles at Recreation Park. Clerk Dunbar answered that the basketball poles are two different lengths, and we are looking at ways to fix them without replacing them.

G. Public Comments

Mellissa Houch came to the Board meeting to find out what the board does.

Judy Lathom had a list of questions about the new water rates and asked them to the Board.

Mrs. Latham stated she lives in an apartment in Town, when the meters were read, she claims that she did not use any water, and she still got charged. Mrs. Latham asked if she could get the rates for the entire apartment complex. Mrs. Latham asked if there was subsidized program for senior citizens. Mrs. Latham asked how water rates can be the same for different sized apartments.

Mayor Smathers answered Mrs. Latham stating that since the mill closed, the Town is responsible for paying for the waste treatment.

Mayor Smathers thanked both women for attending the meeting and stated this is where to get the correct information. Mayor Smathers stated that he has been working with different nonprofits to help people with their

utilities.

Manager Stinnett stated that the Towns water billing policy is 0-3,000 gallons, so if you use 0 to 3,000 gallons you will be charged the same amount. Manager Stinnett then explained how the meters are read and the billing cycle.

Mayor Smathers stated said the Board appreciates the ladies upfront and stated that they get the bulk of the frustration from the citizens.

H. Manager's Reports

Assistant Manager Walker gave the Cash Report.

Mayor Smathers added a closed session to the agenda.

Manager Stinnett stated that Chestnut Mountain is opened, phase 1 is complete, and we are waiting for the phase 2 scope of work, and we hope to start phase 2 in the colder months when the park is closed. Manager Stinnett stated that the emergency bridge construction will start after Labor Day. Manager Stinnett stated that the FEMA process is a long and tedious process, but we are still fighting.

Manager Stinnett stated that we will not open the pool this year, it was a huge loss for us, but the pump house was impacted more then what we were anticipating. Manager Stinnett stated that we hope to have an early opening for the residents next year and hopefully have the polar plunge in Canton this year.

Manager Stinnett stated that the debris pick-up money was obligated from FEMA.

Manager Stinnett stated that we received the scope of work for the concession stand and the ticket booth for the pool and we will put those bids out shortly.

Manager Stinnett stated that we are ready for the 117th Labor Day Festival.

Manager Stinnett stated she asked Joe Garnace to take over the car show and I wanted to recognize him for his hard work in putting this together. The Board thanked Joe.

Manager Stinnett stated that the audit starts next week.

Mayor Smathers asked about the status of the A&P building. Manager Stinnett stated that by the first of October she will bring the design to the board. Mayor Smathers asked if it was grant funded. Manager Stinnett said yes.

Old Business

Watts St Easement

David Chasen stated that he got an estimate from green scape works, with the help of Chief Sluder, the group was able to measure the area for the proposed fence. David gave the quote for the fence to Manager Stinnett to distribute to the Board.

David is proposing that the Town attorney write up a deed or easement and give the Town 20,000 on purchase to do with what they please.

Alderwoman Mull asked if the Town would own the fence, David said we will give you \$20,000 for the fence, or whatever you want to use it for.

Mayor Smathers stated that the Board needed to look at this and revisit during the next meeting.

Alderman Shepard stated he wanted to see the proposal and re visit this issue during the next meeting.

J. New Business

1. Memorandum of Understanding: Haywood Advancement Foundation

Jeff Goss explained the Memorandum of Understanding with Haywood Advancement foundation. Mr. Goss stated that Haywood Advancement Foundation will apply for grants for due diligence phase for the purchase of the west side of the mill site. Mayor Smathers thanked the Haywood Advancement Foundation and the work they do. Mayor Smathers stated that David Francis will be working with Haywood Advancement. Mr. Goss stated yes, Mr. Francis will be working for Haywood Advancement.

Alderman Proctor made a motion to approve the memorandum of understanding with Haywood Advancement Foundation. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

Alderman Proctor asked if the Town needed to provide additional funding. Mr. Goss stated that it is unlikely that all the funds will cover the cost, but it will cover most of the cost for the due diligence period.

2. **RFQ: Technical Assistance & Engineering for Infrastructure Project**

Mr. Goss reminded the Board that the Town received a direct appropriation of funds from the water resources development act in the amount of \$41 million. Mr. Goss stated the next step of the process is to provide a scope of work for the Army Corp of Engineers, where they will design, put out for bid, and then construct the project. Mr. Goss stated that the purpose of the RFQ is to identify an engineering firm to prepare a scope of work for these projects.

Mayor Smathers stated that this is the \$40 million from Representative Edwards office and Mayor Smathers thanked Representative Edwards for his work in acquiring these funds. Mayor Smathers stated that the Town would not have been able to accomplish these water projects in decades without this allocation.

Manager Stinnett stated that these funds will improve the Towns' current water infrastructure and help alleviate the water issues the

Town has.

Mayor Smathers thanked Tommy Long for working with Representative Edwards. Mayor Smathers added that we would not have been able to get the \$41 million if it was not for Tommy.

Alderman Shepard asked how long it takes to get bids from engineering firms. Mr. Goff stated that it will take a month or six weeks for engineering firms to respond to the RFQ.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the Request for Qualification for the Technical Assistance & Engineering for Infrastructure Project. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

3. **RFQ: Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements**

Mr. Goss asked the mayor to table this agenda item.

4. **RFQ: New Wastewater Treatment Plant**

Mr. Goss asked the mayor to table this agenda item.

5. **Mill Reunion: Sunday October 5, 2025, at Recreation Park**

Eric Allan requested to use the pavilions at Recreation Park for a mill retirement party for no charge.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the mill reunion request. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

6. **PHS Band: Donation Request**

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to donate \$250 to the Pisgah High

School Band. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

7. Bikers and Towers

Adam Hatton stated that the group of Bikers and Towers try's to help kids as much as they can.

Mr. Hatton stated that the group Bikers and Towers want to continue the toy run on November the 8th. Mr. Hatton is asking the Board if they can use Canton as their starting spot and then end in Maggie Valley. Mr. Hatton stated that the Town of Canton will be one of the three primary sponsors at no cost. Mr. Hatton asked the Board if they would approve the use of Sorrells Street Park, trash cans, and for law enforcement to block lanes.

Mayor Smathers thanked Mr. Hatton and his group, people do not understand what bikers do for the community. Mayor Smathers stated that if there is anything we can do for this event, we are happy to help.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the Bikers and Towers toy run. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

k. closed session N.C.G.S. §143-318.11 (a)(3)

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter Closed Session: Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11 (a)(3). Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried. With no action taken, Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 8:28p.m. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

L. Adjournment

Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried. The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, September 11, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.