

December 12, 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, December 12, 2024, at 6:02pm with Mayor Smathers, and Aldermen/women Mull, Proctor, Hamlett, and Shepard 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 Manager Stinnett, Assistant Manager Walker, Clerk Dunbar, and Town Attorney Morgan were present.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Alderwoman Mull led the pledge of allegiance.

D. Approval of Minutes:

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the November 14, 2024, minutes as presented. Alderwoman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers thanked Congressmen Chuck Edwards for his help in the \$41 million river mitigation bill. Mayor Smathers stated that it is waiting President Bidens signature. Mayor Smathers stated he was disappointed in the SB State house Bill, Mayor Smathers stated Western North Carolina is fighting every day, hopefully they can continue to fight in Raleigh.

Mayor Smathers commended Chief Scott Sluder for receiving the Dogwood awarded for his efforts during the flood. Mayor Smathers also congratulated WPTL being another recipient of the Dogwood Award for their work after Hurricane Helene.

Mayor Smathers stated that he enjoyed all the decorations in Canton and thanked the business and town staff for their work. Mayor Smathers stated that he enjoyed seeing people smile at all the decorations.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull stated that she enjoyed the Christmas parade, seeing all the attendees, and really enjoyed the snow

machine on the trackless train. Alderwoman Mull also congratulated Chief Sluder for receiving the Dogwood Award. Both Mayor Smathers and Alderwoman Proctor stated they loved the snow machine on the trackless train as well.

Alderman Hamlett thanked Chief Sluder for hosting an awards banquet for his officers and staff. Alderman Hamlett said the Police Department is so great because of Chief Sluder's leadership. Chief Sluder thanked Alderman Hamlett for the compliment, but the staff deserves all the credit.

Alderwoman Proctor stated that she loved the Christmas decorations. Alderwoman Proctor stated that many people came to her before the parade and complimented her on the decorations. Alderwoman Proctor also stated that she was excited to hear about the budget and tax report.

Aldermen Shepard reiterated what the Mayor and Board members stated.

Mayor Smathers stated that all the water leaks that happened were taken care of quickly and thanked the water department for their hard work.

Alderwoman Proctor asked Manager Stinnett about Rhoda Street. Manager Stinnett stated that they are working on Rhoda Street.

G. Public Comments:

There were no public comments

H. Managers Reports

Manager Stinnett gave the tax report
Assistant Manager Walker gave the cash report

Manager Stinnett told The Board that the curator, Caroline, will be retiring in December. Manager Stinnett stated that the museum has been storing their things with two volunteers. Manager Stinnett asked the board to postpone hiring Carolines replacement. Manager Stinnett also stated that she would like to do something special for Caroline to celebrate her hard work for the Town of Canton.

Manager Stinnett addressed the board about the FEMA process and the overlapping of projects with two different disasters. Manager Stinnett told The Board that the new FEMA project

manager has experience working with projects that have been affected by multiple disasters.

Manager Stinnett asked the board to set a date for a work session. Alderman Hamlett stated he did not want to have the work session on Martin Luther King Jr Day, but instead wanted to observe the Holiday.

J. New Business

1. Public Hearing

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to move into a public hearing on additional Dwellings. Alderwomen Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Byron Hickox stated that allowing additional dwellings was not because of the flood. Hickox explained to The Board what an additional dwelling is and the purpose of the additional dwelling. Hickox said that many people could use additional dwellings and read the standards for additional dwellings.

Alderman Shepard asked if additional dwellings affect the tax rate and property value. Hickox stated that the additional dwellings will have different addresses. Alderwoman Proctor asked Hickox about the minimum lot size for additional dwellings. Hickox replied that the additional dwellings must meet correct lot size setbacks. Alderwoman Proctor asked who oversees permitting. Hickox answered that he will issue the permits and so will Haywood County. Alderwoman Proctor asked if detached and attached garages were considered additional dwellings. Hickox answered that attached and detached garages could be additional dwellings, and that could be decided during this board meeting. Manager Stinnett suggested that attached and detached garages should not be additional dwellings because more residents would be parking on the street. Zachary Stines asked Hickox why the 900 square foot minimum for the lot size of the additional dwelling. Hickox stated explained why the minimum lot size is necessary, and Carl Cartwright stated that it is important for a size cap, so the additional dwellings won't be right next to the main property. Stine asked if there was an appeal process for additional dwellings. Hickox answered there is a variation process and Hickox can work with the residents, and not just say no.

Mayor Smathers commended Hickox for his willingness to help the residents, also that it is important to help the community.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to close the public hearing. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.
The public hearing closed at 6:46pm.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to accept additional dwellings in Town limits with some modifications. Alderwoman proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

2. Audit Report

Shelia Gahagan gave the audit report to The Board. Mrs. Gahagan stated that all the reports were good reports. Mrs. Gahagan reported that the finances are correct, she did not find anything that was not in compliance with federal law. Mrs. Gahagan did state that she was concerned about FEMA reimbursements for the temporary Town Hall and Police Department. Mrs. Gahagan did state that this was not at any fault of the Town. Mrs. Gahagan stated that the Town is in good financial standings right now, however, the mill Closure and Tropical Storm Fred expenses are coming up. Mrs. Gahagan complimented Town Staff and Assistant Manager Walker on her work regarding finances. Mrs. Gahagan also stated that a lot of things are coming up and there will be more work to complete. Mrs. Gahagan stated that the Town of Canton has received \$600,000 in donations and it was great to see that kind of community engagement.

Alderwoman Proctor thanked Mrs. Gahagan and Assistant Manager Walker for their hard work. Mayor Smathers stated that we are aware of what we have been through and the work ahead. Mayor Smathers also stated that the Town is lucky to have Assistant Manager Walker in control of the finances and thanked her for her leadership.

3. TDA Ice Sculpture

Clerk Dunbar stated that the TDA is giving the Town of Canton an ice sculpture for the upcoming Ice Fest event. Dunbar asked The Board if they would prefer one big sculpture or four smaller ones. Clerk Dunbar suggested to The Board one bigger ice sculpture in the shape of a bear. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to have a bear ice sculpture. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

4. Pornography Policy

Manager Stinnett addressed The Board on a new policy regarding viewing pornography on Town owned devices and WIFI. Manager Stinnett stated that this is not a response to any Town staff viewing pornography, but a new North Carolina general statute. Alderman Hamlett stated that Town Staff should not only abide by this new policy, but to refrain from any other obscenity that are on social media. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to accept the new policy. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

5. Co-sponsorship Waterwheel Park

The Grateful Table and the 505 Market requested a co-sponsorship at Water wheel Park this Saturday. Clerk Dunbar gave The Board a staff report for the event. Dunbar stated that this event is free to the public, has free food, and live music. Clerk Dunbar stated that this event would be good for the public, however, it went against Town policy for new events. Alderman Hamlett asked why this event did not come to The Board earlier. Manager Stinnett Stated that Town Staff got the application earlier, but it still did not meet the policy. Jeanne Forrest said that they were planning to do the event inside, but they were expecting a larger crowd. Alderman Hamlett stated that policies are only good if they are enforced. Alderman Shepard asked how many people they were expecting. Forrest stated they were expecting 200-250 people for this event. Forrest also stated that there will be perishable items that will be given to the public. Alderman Shepard and Alderwoman Proctor stated that since this event is giving away perishable items that expectations can be made regarding the policy. Aldermen Hamlett made a motion to approve the sponsorship. Alderwoman mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

6. Baptist Mission at The IP Complex

Manager Stinnett stated that International Paper gave permission for the Baptist Mission to use the IP Complex for staging building supplies for flood victims. Alderman Shepard asked if the complex could still be used. Manager Stinnett answered stating that the complex will remain closed to the public until April. Manager Stinnett also stated that this will benefit the people. Mayor Smathers wants to say thank you to the Baptist Mission. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to allow the Baptist Mission to use the IP Complex. Alderman Hamlett

seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

7. Sign Design

The Board was given examples of a welcome sign into Town Limits. The Board tabled this discussion.

8. Creech and Associates

Manager Stinnett asked The Board to pay Creech and Associates the original amount on their initial contract. Manager Stinnett stated that this will help Town Staff move to new town hall quicker. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

9. ARP Funding

Manager Stinnett asked the board to accept ARP Funds. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to accept the funding. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

10. Budget amendment

Assistant Manager Walker presented The Board with a budget amendment to purchase the new living trailer for the fire department. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the budget amendment. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

K. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)(5)(6)

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to 143-318.11 (a)(4) at 7:29pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to go into open session at 8:41pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor and motion passed. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to 143-318.11 (a)(6) at 8:42pm. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion, and the motion carried. After a brief discussion and no action taken, Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 9:03pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to adjourn the

meeting. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:06pm.

L. Adjournment

The next regular Called meeting will be on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Sam Dunbar, Town Clerk