

JULY 16, 2024

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, July 16, 2024, at 9:00a.m. with Mayor Zeb Smathers, and Aldermen/women Mull and Hamlett and Proctor present, absent was Alderman Shepard the following proceedings were held.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Smathers called the meeting to order at 9:00a.m.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated that the Interim Manager, Stinnett, Finance Officer Walker and Deputy Clerk Lurvey were present as well as Attorney Morgan.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Chief Kevin Wheeler led those in attendance in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

D. Approval of Minutes:

N/A

E. Mayor Comments

N/A

F. Aldermen/women Comments

N/A

G. Public Comments:

N/A

H. Managers Reports

Interim Manager Stinnett asked Finance Officer Walker to present the Budget Amendment for Recreation.

Finance Officer Walker explained to the Board that this was a two (2) part Budget Amendment. The first was to amend the Recreation Budget for \$20,000.00 and the second part was to transfer \$100,000.00 from the General Fund. Finance Walker stated the \$100,000.00 would have to be transferred into the General Fund from the Town's Fund Balance.

Mayor Smathers then asked Finance Officer Walker if approving the \$120,000.00 Budget Amendment would cover all expenses to get the Playground complete. Finance Officer Walker stated that it was as close as she could get based on the information that she had as of this time. Resiliency Recovery Manager Scheuer then made the statement assuring the Board that it will.

Mayor Smathers then asked if there was an open date for this project and Resiliency Recovery Manager Scheuer stated there was not.

Finance Officer Walker then told the Board that in reviewing the estimate from Carolina Parks and Play there were items on these listed as in kind which are not in kind.

Mayor Smathers then asked Interim Manager Stinnett if there was a date for the installation of the fencing. Interim Manager Stinnett stated that in her discussions with Asheville Fence Company it was approximately 4-6 weeks out. Interim Manager Stinnett said that as soon as she had an installation date the Board would be informed. Resiliency Recovery Manager Scheuer stated that once the fencing was in the curbing would be completed. Interim Manager Stinnett stated that the Donor Wall would be in the 4–6-week time frame as well.

Mayor Smathers then stated that we have an obligation to be finished by August. The Board was first told it would be July and we sit here at the eleventh hour discussing a Budget Amendment to finish this project and that is not acceptable. We have an obligation to the public to finish this project. Completing this project has always been a priority of the Board.

Alderman Hamlett stated that the public puts their trust in us for making decisions which are legitimate and transparent and that the Board's reputation is on the line. If we lose legitimacy, then we will lose the confidence of the public. Alderman Hamlett then stated that the Board's question of honesty grieves him. This Board has always been honest and transparent and to have to make this Budget Amendment to shift funds grieves me.

Mayor Smathers then asked Alderwoman Mull if she wanted to make a statement and she deferred to the statement made by Alderman Hamlett which she stated that Alderman Hamlett covered quite well.

Alderwoman Proctor then stated that she echoed Alderman Hamlett that trust is extremely important. Alderwoman Proctor stated that we are elected to make these types of decisions and to be transparent and vigilant. Alderwoman Proctor stated that

to not get the project finished is unacceptable. That we have an obligation to continue fund raising efforts to get the job done.

Mayor Smathers then asked the Board if everything was clear as far as we know relative to the surfacing, final grading, donor wall and site amenities. Mayor Smathers stated that it should be only the necessary items to get this playground open for the kids. Kids are more important than anything else.

Mayor Smathers then asked if there was a motion to approve the Budget Amendment in the amount of \$120,000.00 to the recreation fund. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment to fund the recreation fund in the amount of \$120,000.00. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion with concerns. All were in favor and the motion passed.

At 9:16a.m. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to **N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6) Personnel** and Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All were in favor and Alderman Shepard will join via zoom.

Interim Manager Stinnett, Finance Officer Walker, and Deputy Town Clerk Lurvey left the meeting at 9:17a.m.

M. Adjournment

The next Regular Called meeting will be held on Thursday, July 25, 2024, at 6:00p.m. at Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at

Wanda M. Lurvey, Deputy Town Clerk