

June 12, 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, June 12, 2025, at 6:00pm with Mayor 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 6:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated Assistant Manager Walker, Clerk Dunbar, and Town Attorney Morgan were present. Manager Stinnett was absent.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Alderwoman Mull led the pledge

D. Approval of Minutes:

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the minutes from April 22nd and May 8th 2025. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion but asked Clerk Dunbar to correct the minutes from May 8th. Alderwoman Proctor recused herself from a vote, but it was not recorded in the minutes. Clerk Dunbar will make the corrections. All voted in favor of approving the minutes and the motion carried.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers stated that there seems to be major dead spots in the Highland Park area. Mayor Smathers has been getting a lot of phone calls for lack of cell phone coverage and hoped that the cell phone companies can fix this issue soon. Mayor Smathers asked for a moment of silence for Kelly Worth, she passed away earlier this week. Mayor Smathers stated that she believed in Canton and this Board and was an outstanding citizen.

Mayor Smathers stated that he has gotten some emails and phone calls about some big divots near Academy Street and Pivot Street, said he would bring it up to the Head of the Street Department in hopes to resolve this issue.

Mayor Smathers asked Chief Sluder about the broken-down RV near Town limits. Chief Sluder said it is outside of our jurisdiction and believes it is a County issue.

Mayor Smathers stated that no one is happy about trucks in the Thickety Road area, we have talked to Two Banks about this issue. Mayor Smathers said that this is also a County issue and it is outside our jurisdiction. Mayor Smathers believes that we have helped with this issue as much as we can. Mayor Smathers asked that the truck drivers would be careful around this area at all times, but especially during the summer with kids being out of school.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull thanked town staff and said town looked nice and she loves the flower beds.

Alderman Hamlett introduced Meagan Hall, a PhD candidate studying disasters in Appalachian communities, and wanted to study Canton because of the tragedies Canton has endured these past few years.

Mayor Smathers stated that one of our greatest fears is that we will be forgotten, and he thanked Meagan for telling our story.

Alderman Hamlett commended Chief Wheeler for his department's quick response for the hayfield fire. Chief Wheeler bragged about his department, and said they did a great job handling that fire.

Alderwoman Proctor stated that she got an email that said someone wanted an Aldi in Canton. Alderwoman Proctor stated that an Aldi in Town would be great, but she does not believe Aldi is planning on building a location in Canton. Alderwoman Proctor stated that there will be an Appalachian event in Waynesville, telling stories about Hurricane Helene,

and June 17th is the date for the event.

G. Public Comments:

Jason Yates stated he came back to the Board meeting to discuss again speed bumps on Trammel Avenue. Mr. Yates asked chief Sluder about how many tickets they have written since adding the four way stop signs. Chief Sluder believed the officers have written three tickets. Mr. Yates said he has seen many people run the stop signs because they are in his front yard. Mr. Yates stated that he had an issue with neighbors parking in front of his driveway and could not properly park. Mr. Yates stated that it was not the Towns fault, but the lack of intelligence from his neighbors.

Chief Sluder stated that the only thing we could do is patrol the area more and write more tickets.

Alderman Hamlett stated that Ground Hog Road is 45 mph and people fly by me all the time while I am driving. Alderman Hamlett recommended putting out yard signs that ask drivers to slow down. Alderman Hamlett stated that people are stupid, and they are stupid for speeding, maybe investing in yard signs with your community could help with this issue.

Mayor Smathers asked both Chief Sluder and Chief Wheeler if their vehicles can make it down Trammel. Both Chiefs answered yes.

Howard Knepper stated my roots go back to Canton since 1967, I can remember the smell of the mill, and thanked God he was living in Waynesville and not in Canton living with his mother. Mr. Knepper, who owns a local sub shop on Asheville Highway stated he is opening a second franchise; he thanked the Board for what they do for this Town. Mr. Knepper stated that he is running an ad in the paper about how great of an investment Chestnut Mountain and Berm Park was and that he loves that the park is in Canton. Mr. Knepper stated that the County can put millions of dollars into a park, but it cannot be like Canton's Chestnut Mountain. Mr. Napier stated that Commissioners couldn't swallow the fact that Berm park was in Canton. Mr. Knepper stated that he is grateful for this Board.

Mayor Smathers stated that the County did help with Chestnut Mountain and Berm Park. Assistant Manager Walker stated that the County maybe contributed \$100,000, but she would check.

H. Manager's Reports

Assistant Manager Walker gave the cash report

Assistant Manager Walker stated Oak Street and Short Street are paved; striping should start soon. Assistant Manager Walker stated that they will start paving on Highland Street next week.

Clerk Dunbar gave the Board updates on the playground and on the pool. Clerk Dunbar stated that Carolina Parks and Play will be onsite in June to begin demolition on the damaged equipment. Clerk Dunbar stated that the new playground equipment will be here on July 9th. Clerk Dunbar said that they are continuing to work on the pump house and the pool. Clerk Dunbar stated that they have run into a lot of issues regarding the pump house, but they hope to have it running soon.

J. New Business

1. Creech and Associates

Michael Supino and Peter Wasmer from Creech and Associates gave a presentation about the new Town Hall and the new Police Department buildings.

Mayor Smathers asked Chief Sluder if the new Police Department was a good location for the projected growth. Chief Sluder stated yes.

Mayor Smathers asked when the Police Department would be able to move into the new building. Mr. Supino stated he estimates 18-24 months from now.

Alderman Hamlett commended the Creech and Associates for their work, working with the State and the historic preservation committee can be a tough task.

Mayor Smathers asked if both buildings are expandable? Mr. Supino stated that both buildings have some room for growth.

Mayor Smathers asked how long before staff can move into their new building? Mr. Supino stated that believes the staff can move in 12-14 months from now. Mayor Smathers asked when would construction start? Mr. Supino stated late fall for construction. Mayor Smathers stated that the public wants to see action on these projects.

Carl Cortwright stated that he would love it if the new Board room could live stream the meetings.

2. Special Event Application: Champion credit union Member

Clerk Dunbar presented to the Board with a special event application for Champion Credit Union. Clerk Dunbar stated that this event will be held at Sorrells Street Park, the event will have music, one food truck, and it is to appreciate Champion Credit Unions members.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the special event application. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

3. Adoption of the proposed Budget 2025-2026

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 proposed budget. Alderwoman mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

4. Adoption of the Schedule of fees

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 schedule of fees. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

5. 2025-2026 Budget Ordinance

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 budget ordinance. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

6. Budget Amendments

Assistant Manager Walker presented the Board with a budget amendment. Assistant Manager Walker stated that this would increase the budget, but most of this is due to the flood.

Assistant Manager Walker stated that the Fire Department bought a new brush truck for this fiscal year. Alderman Shepard asked Chief Wheeler if the new truck had a water pump, Chief Wheeler said yes. Assistant Manager Walker stated that this is a public safety need.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the budget amendments. Alderwoman proctor seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

7. Hurricane Helene Cash Flow Loan Program

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the cash flow loan program. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

8. Public hearing 7:14pm

Alderwoman Proctor made a motion at 7:14pm to enter into a public hearing regarding the Robinson Annexation. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

Zachary Stines asked the Board if there were any risk for annexation? Mayor Smathers answered that the only risk is the increase in our resources. Mayor Smathers stated that he wanted to see progress on this project in the coming months.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to leave the public hearing at 7:19pm. Alderwomen Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the annexation of Robinson Ridge. Alderwoman proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20p.m. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

L. Adjournment

The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, June 26, 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 7:20 p.m.