

May 9, 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, May 9, 2024, at 6:00pm with Mayor Zeb Smathers (arrived at 6:04pm), and Aldermen/women Mull, Hamlett, and Shepard present, the following proceedings were held.

A. Call to Order

Alderwomen Mull called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Alderwoman Mull stated that the Manager, Town Attorney and Deputy Clerk Walker were present.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Alderwoman Shepard led those in attendance in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

D. Approval of Minutes:

Alderwoman Mull asked the Board for approval of the minutes for April 25, 2024, meeting. Alderman Shepard made a motion to approve the minutes of that meeting and Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers mentioned that Alderwoman Proctor had a death in the family and would be missing the meeting. Mayor Smathers stated he had attended the Fallen Officer Ceremony prior to the meeting and requested a moment of silence for Mr. Rogers. He stated that we are lucky to have the police officers that we do in our town. Mayor Smathers requested that the debris at Bearwaters be removed. Mayor Smathers stated that there is a difference between living and living well. He explained that Pactiv Evergreen was to operate the waste treatment facility until March 2025 and commented on the obvious odor from the facility. He said this is not acceptable. He stated that we are struggling economically and that they must accept their responsibilities. The citizens deserve better, and Pactiv needs to do what they need to do and respect us. Mayor Smathers went on and stated that this was not an initial problem but had developed recently. He stated that if the public has an issue, contact Pactiv directly.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull thanked everyone for coming. She stated that she is not surprised by Pactiv and that they never intended to be honorable.

Alderman Hamlett thanked everyone for coming. He stated that he has a concern for Canton. Pactiv knows they have a hold on us. He stated he wishes we would trust them to do the right thing, but they are playing a game. Alderman Hamlett stated he is tired of it and that they need to be good stewards.

Alderman Shepard commended the Pisgah High School baseball team on a job well done at their game in Rockingham. He stated that they did not give up. After 16 innings, they lost but did so with dignity and as young men. He stated that Pactiv comes down to a simple thing that gets lost. If you say you are going to do something, then do it to the best of your ability.

H. Public Comments:

Vicki Hyatt with the Mountaineer asked what we can do about Pactiv? Mayor Smathers replied that the state was aware, and they will be looking into the issues. He stated that we are ready to help because this is our town, and we are ready to fight.

Cory Vaillancourt with Smoky Mountain News asked where to direct the comments to Pactiv? Interim Manager Stinnett stated she would send the information once she had it.

Jeannie Forrest inquired where the budget was on the website. Finance Officer Walker stated that the budget was not yet complete and would be uploaded to the Finance page once it was ready.

Caroll Jones asked what the plans were for a waste treatment facility. Mayor Smathers stated it was to be determined.

H. Managers Reports

Finance Officer Walker presented a cash report.

Interim Manager Stinnett stated that the Cruso Endowment would be providing the funds to replace the fence on Mears Ave and to remove the columns in alley in downtown area. She also announced that the Cruso Endowment would be buying the town a trackless road train that would help bridge the gap between recreation areas. The train will also be utilized at the Mill Market and other town events such as the Labor Day Festival. Alderman Hamlett comment on how much the Cruso Endowment has done for the town. He thanked the

endowment. Mayor Smathers mentioned that maybe the town could name the train after former employee Terry Stamey who drove the old train around the recreation park.

Interim Manager Stinnett announced that the Charters of Freedom Ceremony would be May 20, 2024 at 1:30pm.

Interim Manager Stinnett stated the pool and splash pad would open Memorial Day weekend. Interim Manager Stinnett inquired if the board would like to offer a free pool for the town residents again like last year on June 7? The board was in consensus to offer a free pool day.

Interim Manager Stinnett said that Carroll Nelson would be seeking sponsorships for a new floor at Turner Stage. She stated that town crews would install the flooring and waterproof the stage.

Interim Manager Stinnett presented an ad request for supporting law enforcement. With no money being left in the advertising budget, the board agreed to split the cost with their own money on behalf of the town.

I. Reports from the Resiliency Recovery Manager

1. Extension for Filter Plant & Wastewater Project Budgets and 5. Water and Sewer Engineering Assistance Contract Amendments. Nick Scheuer presented two budgets along with amendments in regard to water and sewer. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the two budgets as requested and the amendments. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.
2. NC Commerce/ CDBG Planning Initiative- Mr. Scheuer stated that he and Town Planner Byron Hickox are 95% complete with the plan and hopefully will post next week. He also stated that the grant administration for the project could be administered through the Dogwood Trust because the grant is cumbersome.
3. Flood Recovery Projects- Mr. Scheuer said he was working on a real time tracking document that could be shared with all the board. He then gave the following updates:
 - Town Hall- out to bid for demo
 - Colonial Theatre- Delayed
 - Armory- in contract negotiations
 - Museum- 95% complete
 - Camp Hope- SHPO requiring historical plaque
 - Rhoda Street- 3 bids needed- received 2
 - Chestnut Mountain- bridge being demolished
 - Playground- site grading, bids for fencing

4. Rural Transformation Grant and CDDL Technical Assistance Scope- Mr. Scheuer presented a scope for the continued work at 22 Park Street. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the technical assistance scope of work. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

J. Old Business

1. Co-Sponsor Request: Folkmoot/Canton Merchant Partnership

Interim Manager Stinnett stated the Canton Merchant Partnership brought forward a Folkmoot parade request that was tabled at the last meeting. The partnership did submit the financials. Interim Manager Stinnett presented her staff report in favor of the parade. Jeanne Forrest stated she was excited to partner Folkmoot and they are expecting a big crowd. She stated 50 dance groups will be participating. The parade route will start at Sorrells Street and loop down Adams Street back to Sorrells Street. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the Folkmoot parade as presented. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

K: New Business

1. Museum Recognition

Interim Manager Stinnett introduced Curator Caroline Ponton. Ms. Ponton introduced Liz Harper from WCU and stated they had processed over 2000 photo negatives for the museum. The photos can be observed at Southern Appalachian dot org. Ms. Harper stated that they had hosted a community scan day and gave huge credit to Ms. Ponton and the friends of the museum. She stated they are looking to do a second scan day in the future. Ms. Ponton stated the museum was nominated for the Community Impact Award and that they had won the award out of four nominees. Ms. Ponton thanked Jennifer Stuart, Canton Branch Library Manager, for providing a home away from home for the friends of the museum. Ms. Ponton thanked WCU and the library for their contributions and talents that they offered, from muscles to ideas. She thanked Carroll Jones, Edie Burnette, Phyllis Vance for being great partners. Ms. Ponton also thanks the town for their support. Mayor Smathers commented that this was accomplished with mostly volunteers and with some who did more than they got paid. He stated this was accomplished through Covid, the flood, and the mill closure and that this was not easy to stick with. Mayor Smathers commented that this is what we fight for and thanked everyone for not giving up on the museum. Carroll Jones thanked the town and remembered when it used to be a library. He

stated he was glad it was not going to be torn down. Alderman Hamlett thanked everyone for the dedication. Alderman Shepard thanked everyone for holding onto the history and stated that without it we would be lost. Alderwoman Mull stated that Ms. Ponton was tough and a hard worker.

2. Set Public Hearing: Budget Presentation May 23, 2024, at 6pm

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to set the Budget Presentation Public Hearing for May 23, 2024, at 6pm. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Budget Amendments

Finance Officer Walker presented year end budget amendments- see attached. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

At 7:14 p.m. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed pursuant to N. C. G. S. 143-318.11 (a) (4) economic development. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion Carried. After a lengthy discussion, Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 8:13 p.m. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session at 8:13 p.m. pursuant to N. C. G. S. 143-318.11 (a) (6) Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion Carried. After a brief discussion, Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 8:28. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the contract with Nick Scheuer. See attached. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Interim Manager Stinnett made the board aware that they needed three bids for Rhoda Street. She informed the board that the bid had been out three different times. She requested consensus to move forward with the two received bids.

L. Adjournment

The next scheduled meeting will be on Thursday May 23, 2024 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 8:37 p.m.

Natalie Walker, Deputy Town Clerk