

October 23, 2025

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, October 23, 2025, at 6:00pm with Mayor Zeb Smathers, and Aldermen/women Mull and Proctor and Shepard were present, Alderman Hamlett was absent the following proceedings were held.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Smathers called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated that Manager Stinnett, Assistant Manager Walker, and Clerk Dunbar were present. Attorney Morgan was absent due to traffic.

C. Pledge/Invocation

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

D. Approval of Minutes:

Mayor Smathers then asked the Board for approval of the minutes for the October 9, 2025, meeting. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve

the minutes of the October 9, 2025, meeting and Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers gave Fire Chief Wheeler a Ghostbuster coin from the New York fire station. Mayor Smathers asked Manager Stinnett to give it to Chief Wheeler since he was not attending the meeting.

Mayor Smathers spoke about Ms. Melba Duvall's passing away earlier this week. Mayor Smathers stated that Mrs. Duvall was a great supporter of the Labor Day Festival and Mayor Smathers knows that Ms. Duvall is clogging in heaven. Mayor Smathers continued saying that Ms. Duvall was often very opinionated, but she was helpful at times and that he will miss her.

Mayor Smathers stated he sent a letter to our friends Representative Chuck Edwards, Senator Ted Budd, and Senator Thom Tillis. Mayor Smathers explained that his goal is to continue pushing FEMA until the money Canton is owed is paid. Mayor Smathers stated that we have not received any money from FEMA, and the New Town Hall, Police Department, and Armory projects are still frozen.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Aldерwoman Proctor stated it was great to see Bearwaters Brewery having a soft opening tonight and it is nice to see them back open.

Mayor Smathers added that Bethel Christian Academy has opened and only a few businesses remain closed since the flood.

Alderman Shepard thanked town staff for working hard and taking care of the Town.

G. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

H. Managers Reports

Assistant Manager Walker gave the cash report.

Manager Stinnett gave the tax report.

Manager Stinnett stated that the A&P building construction is continuing to move forward. Manager Stinnett reminded the Board that the project is funded by the Rural Transformation Grant, and Manager Stinnett added that she has a meeting with Harper construction on Tuesday to go over drawings and pricing before she brings it before the Board.

Manager Stinnett stated that the construction for the emergency bridge at Chestnut Mountain has started and reminded the Board that the Chestnut Chase 10k trail race is November 9th.

Manager Stinnett stated that Temporary town hall and the temporary police department will be funded by FEMA under Tropical Storm Fred. Manager Stinnett said that this is a step forward and we can now proceed with the correct paperwork.

Mayor Smathers asked if the Government shut down has affected this process. Manager Stinnett answered, no, but we have been able to communicate with our representatives from FEMA.

Manager Stinnett stated that the Hominy Creek stream bank restoration project at Chestnut Mountain will begin in the winter. Manager Stinnett stated that this is grant through Haywood County Waterways.

Manager Stinnett stated that Domokur and Associates, the architects for Camp Hope submitted their drawings to a structural engineer, and Manager Stinnett continued saying that once the drawings are reviewed and accepted, she will bring the plans before the Board for approval.

Alderwoman Proctor asked what the drawings consisted of for Camp Hope. Manager Stinnett answered it is for the cabins and the bathhouse that was affected by Tropical Storm Fred.

Manager Stinnett stated that the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy is allowing Class 1 e-bikes for Chestnut Mountain, Manager Stinnett asked the Board for a consensus allowing this change at Chestnut Mountain.

Mayor Smathers asked Clerk Dunbar his thoughts on allowing class 1 e-bikes. Clerk Dunbar answered that allowing class 1 e-bikes will be great for the park and will probably make the park busier.

The Board agreed to a consensus allowing class 1 e-bikes at Chestnut Mountain.

Manager Stinnett stated that she and Assistant Manager Walker met with the new grant administrator through the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

Manager Stinnett reminded the Board that the Adams Family movie will be played at Sorrells Street Park on October 25th. Manager Stinnett also reminded the Board that the Downtown trick or treating event and the Mill Around Town event will be held on October 31st. Manager Stinnett stated that the Trick or Treating event is from 5pm-8pm and the Mill Around Town event is from 5pm-9pm

Manager Stinnett reminded the Board that the Christmas parade is on December 4th, and we will not have the Christmas tree lighting that Thursday as we have done in the past because people are trying to get their spots for the parade.

Manager Stinnett stated that the Santas Workshop event is on Saturday, December 6, at Sorrells Street Park and there will be a movie that evening with the event.

Manager Stinnett stated that the Baptist on a Mission has accepted the grand marshal invitation, and Manager Stinnett said they are grateful and humbled by the Town's invitation.

Manager Stinnett asked the Board if they would nominate two people each for the stake holders' group for the comprehensive plan and zoning update.

Manager Stinnett stated that the International Paper Complex roof was repaired, and the project was under budget.

Manager Stinnett stated that the pool bathrooms and concession stand buildings are under construction and the electricians have been working all week.

Manager Stinnett asked the Board if they would like to open the playground with a temporary fence or wait to open the playground when the permanent fence is installed.

The Board agreed to open the playground with a temporary fence. Alderman Shepard stated that the citizens have waited long enough.

I. Old Business

Wastewater Update

Jeff Goss stated that the Letter of Interest was received by three companies who could potentially run the wastewater facility. Mr. Goss

continued by stating that two companies toured the existing wastewater treatment plant, and both companies could potentially hire the current employees who work at the wastewater treatment facility. Mr. Goss stated that this is encouraging to see three companies interested in partnering with the Town to potentially run the wastewater facility.

Mr. Goss stated that the second update is getting Request for Qualifications so we can submit a scope of work to the Army Corp of Engineers. Mr. Goss stated that the Army Corp of Engineers will pick an engineering firm to design and build for the WRDA projects, but the Army Corp needs a scope of work from an engineer, so they can understand what we want. Mr. Goss stated that seven engineering firms responded to the RFQ, there will be a panel of Town staff and experts who will help decide the best engineering firm to work on the WRDA projects. Mr. Goss stated that there will be a panel meeting next Thursday to discuss the engineering firms and he will bring the panel's recommendation before the Board.

Mr. Goss stated that the Town received two statements of qualification for the owner advisor services for the existing and the new wastewater treatment facility. Mr. Goss continued by saying the same panel will review the statements of qualifications, then bring their recommendations before the Board.

Mr. Goss stated that he had his first discussion about the framework with how this agreement is going to work with the current owner of the wastewater facility. Mr. Goss stated that there will be some new agreements that will need to be made, these agreements will require approval from the Department of Environmental Quality. Mr. Goss gave the Board an example of drafting a new sewer use ordinance with all DEQs model requirements. Mr. Goss stated that we are continuing to make progress with these projects.

Mayor Smathers asked about the timeline, Mr. Goss answered, we are moving things as fast as we can.

New Business

1. Proclamation: Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month and Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day October 15, 2025

Manager Stinnett presented the Board with a proclamation for pregnancy and infant loss awareness. Mayor Smathers stated that we are not aware of how many people in our Town and County has faced this issue, this flies under the radar, and these families go through a lot.

Alderman Shepard made a motion to approve the Proclamation Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month and Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day October 15, 2025. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

2. Little League Request

Clerk Dunbar presented to the Board a request from the president of little league to name the baseball field at Recreation Park after Major Hooper. Mayor Smathers stated that the Board is aware of Majors passing and he has spoken with the family about this tragedy. Mayor Smathers stated that sadly, Major is not the first or the last child to pass away from a tragedy like this, but this can be the first person we can dedicate a field to and then find a way to honor others. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to approve naming the baseball field at recreation park after Major. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

K. Closed Session: Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3)

At 6:32 p.m. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3). Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion, and all were in favor and the motion carried. At 7:21p.m. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter open session and Aldermen Shepard seconded the motion will all in favor the motion passed. No action was taken. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

L. Adjournment

The next Regularly Scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, 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 7:21p.m.

Sam Dunbar, Town Clerk