

SEPTEMBER 26, 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, September 26, 2024, at 4:30pm with Mayor Zeb Smathers, and Aldermen/women Mull, Hamlett Shepard and Proctor the following proceedings were held.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Smathers called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Mayor Smathers stated that Interim Town Manager Stinnett and Finance Officer Walker were present as well as Attorney Morgan.

C. Pledge/Invocation

Chief Sluder gave the invocation. Alderwoman Mull 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 of the September 12, 2024, meeting. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the minutes and Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

E. Mayor Comments

Mayor Smathers stated that the forecast is like déjà vu again. The prediction for flooding could be a catastrophic event. He mentioned that the town started planning early and we are prepared the best we can be. Mayor Smathers talked to Governor Cooper and he wanted citizens to be aware of possible landslides. He also informed Mayor Smathers that the National Guard would be in Canton today. Mayor Smathers also talked with Mayor Manheimer from Asheville. Mayor Smathers reiterated that everyone needs to stay alert and be aware of the water. He also thanked the business owners and everyone who helped the community.

F. Aldermen/women Comments

Alderwoman Mull thanked the town employees for their flood preparedness and stated unfortunately we have dealt with flooding before.

Alderman Hamlett thanked Interim Town Manager Stinnett for all of her proactive efforts and for sending timely notifications

to the board. He stated that she had led the department heads in meetings. He said we are in a bad place, but a good place with leadership. Alderman Hamlett said to give his sentiments to the staff. Interim Manager Stinnett thanked Alderman Hamlett and stated that we have the best department heads in the state and that crews are on standby.

Alderwoman Proctor reminded citizens of the Haywood Alerts systems as well as Instagram pages that post timely updates. Alderman Shepard thanked town employees for their flood prep. He advised everyone to pay attention to alerts and mentioned the emergency shelter at the Clyde Armory.

G. Public Comments:

Becky Johnson from the Mountaineer asked if we had a new river crest level? Interim Manager Stinnett responded that 19.2ft was the last report we had received.

Cory Vallaincourt from the Smoky Mountain News reported that his team attended the Press Conference Awards ceremony last week in Raleigh. They were awarded the General Excellence Award and the Public Service Award. They had previously won the Public Service award for the coverage of Tropical Storm Fred and the Evergreen Mill Closure.

Carl Cortwright mentioned that Western Carolina University had cancelled classes so that further reiterated the seriousness of the impending storm. He inquired if contact had been made for the wastewater treatment plant preparations and if Lake Logan Dam had been drained a little. Mayor Smathers stated that the town had reached out to Evergreen.

H. Managers Reports

Interim Manager Stinnett presented the Tax Report. Finance Officer Walker presented the Cash Report.

Interim Manager Stinnett made the board aware that she had reached out to the local businesses to start the line of communication and open the conversation quicker if they need assistance.

Interim Manager Stinnett stated the citizens of Haywood County should be proud to live in the area because everyone cares so deeply. She mentioned how it was a collaborative effort to be prepared and everyone was working so hard for all areas of the county.

I. Old Business

N/A

J. New Business

1. Ordinance: Amending Part 8 ("Offenses") Chapter 6 ("Other General Nuisances") Section 8-6015 ("Accumulation of Weeds and Refuse") of The Town of Canton Code of Ordinances
 - Attorney Morgan explained that the change to the ordinance was to allow the town more power for code violations. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the ordinance update and Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.
2. Ordinance: Amending a New Part 5 (Municipal Utilities) Chapter 1 (Water and Distribution) Article C (Backflow and Cross Connection Control)
 - Interim Manager Stinnett stated the ordinance change was a recommendation from the state and approved by the ORC, Jeff Stines. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the ordinance update and Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.
3. Trackless Train Policy
 - Interim Manager Stinnett asked the board to review the proposed policy and email her any changes. The policy will be added to the October 10 meeting.
4. Ordinance: Amending Part 8 ("Offenses") Chapter 6 ("Other General Nuisances") Section 8-6014 ("Trespass on Watershed, Reservoirs, Filtering Plants Etc.") of the Town of Canton Code of Ordinances
 - Chief Sluder explained the proposed change was due to numerous trespassers at Chestnut Mountain. The park is closed when weather does not allow activity, and the change will allow the police department to cite civil penalties. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to approve the ordinance update and Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.
5. Request: Chief Sluder recommendation for a 3-way Stop at Smathers and Williams Street intersection.
 - The change is requested due to the uptick of traffic on the roads. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the 3-way intersection and Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.
6. Request: Chief Sluder recommendation for a 4-way stop

on the Pharr and Poplar Street intersection

- Chief Sluder explained more families are in the area with small children. They had reduced the speed limit already, but need to force people to pay more attention. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve the 4-way intersection and Alderman Shepard seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

7. Interim Manager Stinnett presented a budget amendment for flood expenses in the recreation fund. Finance Officer Walker stated the amendment was from general fund as a budget appropriation from fund balance and then a transfer to the recreation fund. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the budget amendment and Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

8. Approval for Notice to Proceed with Flood Debris Monitoring and Removal if necessary.

- Interim Manager Stinnett presented a notice to proceed for flood debris removal and flood debris monitoring. This is to give her permission to enter into a contract immediately if a flood occurs during this storm.

L. Closed Session: Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) (4) (5)

At 5:06 p.m. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) Preserving attorney-client privilege, (5) Attorney/Client. Alderman Shepard seconded the motion, and all were in favor and the motion carried.

At 5:51 p.m. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to enter open session and Alderman Shepard seconded the motion with all in favor the motion passed.

M. Adjournment

The next Regular Called meeting will be held on Thursday, October 10, 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 5:54 p.m.

Natalie Walker, Deputy Town Clerk