



Chris Jenkins, Director  
Justin Messer, Assistant Director  
**PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION**  
**Cemetery Department**  
Jody Gonzolas, Superintendent  
**Engineering Services**  
Aaron Carroll, Director  
**Solid Waste Collections Department**  
Tim Garrett, *Director*  
**Solid Waste Processing & Disposal Department**  
Lee Stone, *Director*  
**Public Works Garage Department**  
Joe Krinke, *Superintendent*  
**Streets & Drainage Department**  
Chad Hampton, *Director*

PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSIT COMMITTEE  
AND  
TRAFFIC COMMISSION

March 10, 10:00 a.m.  
Sam King Room - 601 Broad Street

PRESENT: Commissioner Mark Cochran  
Commissioner Bill Collins  
Commissioner Bonny Askew  
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager  
Mr. Chris Jenkins, Public Works Director  
Mr. Justin Messer, Assistant Public Works Director  
Ms. Kathy Shealy, Transit Director  
Maj. Rodney Bailey, Rome Police Dept.  
Ms. Toni Rhinehart, Finance Director  
Ms. Aundi Lesley, DDA Director  
Ms. Bekki Fox, Community Development Director  
Ms. Lisa Smith, CRVB Director  
Mr. Joe Smith, City Clerk  
Ms. Brittany Griffin, Associate Planner, Historic Preservation

GUESTS: Ms. Lavada Dillard, resident  
Mr. Brice Wood, Senior Planner

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Cochran called the meeting to order.

## REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February meeting were approved by common consent.

## POLICE REPORTS

### Accident Report

Major Bailey presented the Accident/DUI report for the month. Accidents are about the same as this month last year, but there has been a slight uptick in accidents for this year. There were two fatalities during the month of February, down one from this period last year. DUI arrests and DUI related accidents are up for the month and year. Total traffic cases are up from 621 in February last year to 1,342 this year. The majority of those cases were speeding and distracted driving.

The highest number of accidents were at the intersections of Turner McCall Blvd/ Martha Berry Hwy and Shorter Ave/ Redmond Circle. Following too closely remains the number one cause of accidents.

## TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Ms. Rinehart distributed the unaudited Transit statements. She noted we are still closing out 2020. There is still some grant reimbursements from 2020 that is due in for December operating and capital. Federal operating revenues are double last year because the funding was changed from 50/50 to 100% under the CARES program.

## OLD BUSINESS

### River Arts District Project (5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge)

Commissioner Cochran noted that at the last meeting, Commissioner Collins had suggested having traffic personnel cone off a lane or two on the bridge for a design charette with DDA, the Re-development Committee and Public Works. He asked what schedule has been set for this. Mr. Jenkins replied that he was told plans were to do it this weekend, but he preferred having staff present to handle traffic control, which would need to take place on a workday. He added that we also need time to notify the public of our plans.

Mr. Jenkins asked whether the current design should be laid out or if we should wait for revisions to the design as was discussed in our meeting last week. Commissioner Collins stated that since the current design was laid out with the expectation that it would work, we should like this design out first and leave it for 30 minutes to an hour to observe the behavior of traffic and pedestrians. He agreed with having staff managing traffic and flagging. Mr. Jenkins added that we could also place speed detector loops to monitor speed

and traffic volumes. Commissioner Cochran noted he is most interested to see how pedestrians react to these changes. Commissioner Collins added we could also park City vehicles on the bridge to see the effect of parking on the bridge.

The Commissioners agreed to have the areas as shown in the GMC drawing blocked off on a weekday and have staff and committee members walk through it. Commissioner Cochran asked Mr. Rich if we could go ahead and schedule this. Mr. Rich agreed and suggested Friday March 19<sup>th</sup> to give us enough time to let people know about it. The Commissioners agreed.

#### Protected Left Turn Signal at Callier Springs Rd and Hwy 411

Mr. Jenkins reported that some time ago there was a meeting with residents of the Chulio Hills subdivision regarding the dangerous situation at the intersection of Chulio Rd and Hwy 411. The intersection does not meet up evenly and presents a danger to residents when they attempt a left turn on to Hwy 411. We made an agreement with GDOT that the City would provide the labor to install the signal to alleviate this problem, which we recently been completed. Commissioner Collins said he has received a lot of residents of that community who are extremely happy with the signal. Mr. Jenkins commended Mr. Carroll for his work on this project.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Request for Good Friday Event at Myrtle Hill Cemetery

Commissioner Cochran invited Ms. Dillard to address the Committee. Ms. Dillard stated she would like the City to erect and stabilize a 10 ft. cross in Myrtle Hill Cemetery for a Good Friday event. Commissioner Collins noted that if we erect a cross for her event we may be opening ourselves up to other organizations who might not want something as tasteful as what she is proposing. The City could be in a position to assist the organization if they want to erect a cross by making sure it is done in a safe manner and acceptable location.

Mr. Rich asked if this cross is to be temporary or permanent. Ms. Dillard replied that she wanted it to last until the final plan to turn the graves into a garden is in place. Commissioner Collins noted that he and Mr. Rich recently had a conversation about the 901 African American unmarked graves that are said to be buried in the Myrtle Hill cemetery. He stated that before commemorating the graves, it is important they are documented and proven. He asked Ms. Dillard if there is any documentation of these graves, which is needed before the City can move forward. She stated that she has worked with the City Cemetery Director to document the graves and he has some information on it.

Commissioner Cochran noted her group should forward their request to the recently created Memorial Committee because the City can't erect the cross for them, but can assist

their efforts. Ms. Dillard said she has addressed this matter four times in the past. Commissioner Collins also said that as far as the grave sites, we want to give everyone an opportunity to research the graves. He asked Ms. Dillard if she is asking for this cross to be erected this year. She affirmed she is asking for this year. She stated that she wants the cross erected by the City because they have the right equipment. She noted the date is significant because there are other important dates to consider that occurred at or near Good Friday including the death of Martin Luther King, Jr on April 4<sup>th</sup> and Vernon Jordan litigating the case of jail demonstrators on April 1, 1963.

Commissioner Collins noted that he appreciates her frustration but feels we could move further on this if the City Manager would appoint someone to sit down with her to document the history she has researched to help get this done. Commissioner Askew added the City can designate an appropriate spot for the cross and have someone work with her to document the history which will move us forward on her requests.

Commissioner Cochran proposed that the cross issue be handled first and the second issue is a memorial garden, which needs to be well researched. We have a vehicle to do this through the Memorial Committee. Ms. Dillard stated this issue was discussed and agreed upon three years ago. The 901 graves have been confirmed, and Jesus has not been honored anywhere in the Cemetery. She noted the freedom garden has been shut down and much of this history is going to be lost.

Commissioner Collins asked if she would mind us taking time out to research what she has told us and we will have someone work with her to get the cross done. Commissioner Cochran stated the City will help with the erection of the cross as far as we are able to. He asked the City Manager and Mr. Rich to work on that issue with Ms. Dillard. The second issue is the memorial garden, which he feels is very appropriate but does need to be researched. Since Ms. Dillard has already done much of the research, he asked Commissioner Collins to help Ms. Dillard in documenting the research as well. He asked Commissioner Collins and Mr. Rich to assist Ms. Dillard to walk that issue through the Memorial Committee as well. The Commissioners agreed. Ms. Dillard also requested an informational kiosk be placed to teach this history to visitors to the cemetery.

### Sidewalk Project

Community Development Director Bekki Fox reported that in partnership with the Northwest Georgia Housing Authority, she is working on a section of the East Rome Redevelopment area. There are a couple of plans approved and put into place as of July 2020 which names infrastructure improvements that need to be done. This includes sidewalks, crosswalks and curb and gutters. The City is a partner in this effort and will take responsibility for some of the infrastructure improvements that will be funded with CBG funding.

To-date she reported \$595,377.50 has been spent constructing sidewalks at East 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Dean Avenue and Maple Street. She added the next section of sidewalk improvements will look more like a streetscape project with brick inlay or concrete stamping from Maple St at 12<sup>th</sup> Street south for a couple of blocks. She noted there is an additional \$500,00 that we will have by the time we complete the 2021 action plan. A huge portion of this funding must be spent prior to the October deadline this year. Ms. Fox is working with the Public Works Division and appreciates all the help from Aaron Carroll with engineering and project management. She noting that we are at a point where we need to determine whether we want stamped concrete or inlaid brick and how far we want to extend this look.

Commissioner Collins complimented Ms. Fox for a great report and said he will look at the area today before giving his opinion. As far as installing benches goes, he suggested we consider how many bus stops we have along that line first. Commissioner Cochran said he would like to see the brick inlay at least at the corners with a nice wide sidewalk without brick, along with upgraded bus shelters as well. Commissioner Collins asked the width of the sidewalks. Mr. Jenkins said they are five feet wide and there would be three rows of brick. He added the cost for brick inlay is not much different from the stamped brick. Commissioner Askew prefers the brick inlay if it is not cost prohibitive. Commissioner Cochran agreed suggesting if we can't afford to brick the full length of the sidewalk, we could focus brick inlay on the corners. Commissioner Collins asked if there would be streetscape with trees. She replied that trees would open up a lot of other maintenance requirements for the City and we don't have any existing tree wells which would have to be considered. Commissioner Cochran suggested we consider adding trees as an accent to the bus shelters. Ms. Fox noted there is one area along maple that does not have a shelter but many people waiting for buses. Mr. Rich noted that Ms. Shealy has been working with engineering to improve shelter placement.

Ms. Fox said once we are ready to bid out the brick work, she will bring that back to this committee. Commissioner Collins asked Ms. Fox if we could do something along the corridor of Maple and East 12<sup>th</sup> Ave if we could recognize the area as we did for South Rome with some of the funding. Ms. Fox said she has worked with the Choice Planning team that has almost \$1 million in their grant that we could use for something like banners on poles but the consultants have suggested the neighborhood takes on a new name to better identify it. All of these things are being discussed right now.

Commissioner Cochran summarized for Ms. Fox the Committees consensus on the extension of the sidewalk, the use of brick inlay at the corners and upgraded bus stops where possible. Ms. Fox thanked the Committee.

## MONTHLY REPORTS

The monthly reports were displayed for review.

## OTHER

Commissioner Cochran asked for an update on the greenspace on Kingfisher trail. Mr. Jenkins said Brian Roberts will mark the 25-foot buffer area this week and the Street Department is ready to mark the clearing. We mentioned in the retreat that we believe the Water Dept. has a grinder head for the Bobcat that we could borrow which would save us some money. We are planning to start next week on that. Commissioner Cochran asked Mr. Jenkins to update the Commissioner's on this Committee when the buffer is marked off so they can view it.

Mr. Jenkins reported that he and Ms. Sheppard went to the Transit Department this week to introduce the new Assistant Director, Courtney Griffin. We toured the building and met with everyone. We are excited about Ms. Griffin starting at Transit.

## ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

*Margaret Hollingsworth*

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary