



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

PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSIT COMMITTEE
AND
TRAFFIC COMMISSION

May 10, 2023 10:00 AM.
Sam King Room - 601 Broad Street

PRESENT: Commissioner Beeman, Chair
Commissioner Bojo
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager
Ms. Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Ms. Kelly Parker, Assistant to the City Manager
Mr. Chris Jenkins, Public Works Director
Ms. Toni Rhinehart, Finance Director
Mr. Aaron Carroll, Engineering Department Director
Mr. Felipe Arevalo, Design Engineer
Ms. Courtney Williams, Transit Assistant Director
Capt. Danny Story, Rome Police Department
Mr. Doug Walker, Public Information Officer
Ms. Julie Smith, Transportation Planner
Ms. Aundi Leslie, DDA Director
Ms. Lisa Smith, Greater Rome Convention and Visitor's Bureau Director

GUESTS: Mr. Melvin Jones, Peachtree Street resident
Ms. Norma Reboredo, City resident

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Beeman called the meeting to order.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were approved by common consent.

POLICE REPORTS

Capt. Danny Story presented the April Accident report. He noted for the total number of accident year-to-date was 734, which is down from 773 at this point last year. DUI arrests are up from 63 at this time last year to 113. There were four fatalities so far this year, where we had only one by this time last year.

The highest accident intersection for the month was the Turner McCall Blvd/Hicks Dr/Riverbend Dr intersection with 8 total. He noted that this included accidents near that intersection as well as in it. Commissioner Beeman asked how long the speed sign will remain on Riverbend Dr. Mr. Carroll replied that is a permanent sign. He added that the contract for the high friction surface treatment for Riverbend has been awarded and will be going down in June.

TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Transit Updates

Ms. Griffin reported Transit is in the thick of reporting season and is working to get all reporting caught up. She added they have applied for additional grant funding for a route study to go along with our exploration into Micro Transit. Our reviews have shown that with the increase in traffic and construction, it is apparent that on-time performance is probably not obtainable based on current routes. The route study will be looking at ways to make our fixed routes more effective and see how Microtransit will fit into our community. We received about \$86,000 for the study. We do not have a formal quote for the study yet but expect the range to be from \$75,000 to \$150,000.

We will visit Gainesville this month to review their Microtransit system to assist us in developing our RFP for that study. Our Ridge Ferry stop will begin again on Memorial Day, May 29th and will run through August 1st. We are also partnering with Tourism for the *We Care Veterans Fair* on the 18th. The bus will deliver veterans to the safe stop at Reservoir Street where Tourism's shuttle will take them to the Civic Center.

Ms. Griffin added that Paratransit buses are going to be included in our rebranded with the new logo starting this week.

Financial Report

Ms. Rhinehart presented the March financial statement. She noted due to the free ridership program there aren't any Main Line revenues but there is some paratransit revenue and some revenue from the contract for services. We are currently at \$25,0000 in revenue. She noted that in March there was no income under Federal Cash Grants and Reimbursements, but Ms. Griffin just finished the December funding request due to issues with their website. Hopefully we will be caught up with revenues by June.

Under expenses she noted we are slightly above last year but underbudget on the Main Line. Paratransit is slightly below last year and under budget. We still have some restricted funds for the sale of the buses and hopefully we will get regular cash coming in soon.

OLD BUSINESS

River District Update

Mr. Carroll reported the water and sewer portions of the project are complete. We got an ARC grant in 2019 that funded a large portion of that process. The next step in the process is the utility conversion from overhead to underground. We put out a bid a month or so ago for an electrician to evaluate all the structures that will be impacted by this development, but no bids were received. Each building must be evaluated for what needs to be done for the utility conversion. Some buildings will require complete rewiring.

That part of the process will be costly and must be done. The consultant has given a June 2nd deadline for completion of the plans, and he provided an estimate this morning for his projected costs of the hardscape at \$2.6 million.

Mr. Carroll noted the GDOT 2nd Ave project only received one bid that was not accepted. They rebid the project and received two bids and have awarded it to the low bidder at \$26 million. This will begin soon and will be 2.5-year project with the main detour for that project is up W3rd Ave to the intersection and down 5th Ave and Ave A back to turner McCall, which will overlap the River District project. He anticipated the project to begin in July.

He added that prior to our next meeting, there will be some temporary traffic adjustments along W 3rd to accommodate a storm sewer project that will probably involve a lane closure. He noted the angled parking along the tennis courts will stay open.

NEW BUSINESS

Myrtle Hill Welcome Angel

Mr. Jenkins reported that in winter we had a tree partially fall and we had to cut it off. To remove the remaining trunk would have been difficult due to all the headstones around it, so a crane would have been required. Mr. Jenkins suggested to the Cemetery Superintendent, Jody Gonzales, that it would be the perfect location for chainsaw art, so Mr. Gonzalez noted this was not uncommon in cemeteries and mentioned it to Ms. Smith who set to work on locating an artist.

Ms. Smith said she was able to locate a nationally known artist from this area. His name is Jeremy Smith, and he has been featured on Fox5 News, The Food Network, V3, Rome News Tribune and more. He created the concept of a 'Welcoming Angel' for this tree

for a cost of \$8,000. The work is anticipated to take from three to five weeks. She unveiled a smaller version of the 12-foot sculpture that Mr. Smith has given to the City. She proposed opening it up to the public for contribution as they have in the past through the non-profit, Myrtle Hill-Oak Hill Association. Mr. Jenkins added that if we did not do this project, we would have to spend from \$6,000 to \$8,000 to have the tree removed.

The 12-foot *Welcoming Angel* sculpture was approved by common consent.

Chamber Street Annual Father's and Kids Block Party June 17th from 4 PM-9 PM

Mr. Jenkins reported on a request by Patricia Cooper for the annual Father's Day Block Party *Chambers Street 4 Kids*. This has been an annual event for several years and has been very successful.

Commissioner Bojo moved to approve the request Commissioner Beeman seconded. The motion carried.

Rock the Block Kids Day Back to School Bash, July 20th from 5 PM -7 PM

Mr. Jenkins reported on a request from Ladonna Collin, Executive Director of The Rome-Floyd Commission on Children and Youth for a back-to-school bash from 5PM until 7 PM on July 20th. They are partnering with Primary Healthcare Center in hosting the event. They expect many vendors and will offer wellness checks. They want East 14th Stret at the intersection of Crane Stret to be blocked from 3 PM until 8 PM for the event.

Commissioner Bojo moved to approve the request. Commissioner Beeman seconded. The motion carried.

Request to Make Peachtree Street One-Way

Mr. Jenkins reported on a request from residents of Peachtree Street to make the street on-way. The residents provided a petition to support the request. Mr. Jenkins noted there is a new construction of an apartment complex that may put more traffic on the road. Mr. Melvin Jones commented the first house on Peachtree off South Broad Street, has a driveway on South Broad St and would not be affected. Mr. Jones noted one of the residents' main concerns is that the street is very narrow, and they are concerned the City will eventually widen the street, taking up some of their yards.

Residents are also concerned with increased traffic and school buses going to the apartment complex causing an increased likelihood of motorists going into a ditch. Mr. Jenkins suggested this request be tabled until the development is done. He would prefer to take traffic counts before and after the development completion to see what the actual traffic situation is prior to making a deciding this request.

Commissioner Bojo moved to table this until traffic studies can be done after the development is open. Commissioner Beeman seconded. The motion carried.

Request to Close Alley off Cherry St

Mr. Carroll reported he received a request from Mr. Kim to close the alley that runs between his two properties at #6 and #8 Cherry Street, from. Mr. Carroll confirmed that there is no storm drainage or water system located in the alley, so he recommended the request be granted.

Commissioner Bojo moved to approve the request. Commissioner Beeman seconded. The motion carried.

OTHER

Mr. Carroll reported the project for painting the light poles in the Ledbetter interchange is complete and looks very good.

Mr. Jenkins reported that May 21- May 27 is National Public Works Appreciation Week.

Ms. Griffin reported that June 9th, from 11:00 AM until 1:00 PM we will celebrate Transit Appreciation Day will be held. This year we will combine customer appreciation with our driver appreciation. Invitations will be sent out soon.

MONTHLY REPORTS

The monthly reports were distributed for review.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Hollingsworth

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary.