



## City of Rome Tree Board

### Minutes

May 17, 2022, 2:00 p.m.

Rome-Floyd ECO Center

Present: Hannah Bagley, KRFB Program Coordinator  
John Hendrickson, Tree Board Chairman  
Ernest Watson, City of Rome Arborist  
Chad Hampton, City of Rome Street Department Director  
Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager  
Brian Roberts, Environmental Compliance Manager  
Michael Skeen, Floyd County Public Works Director  
Ben Winkelman, ECO Center Director  
Josh Athen, Georgia Power-Rome Distribution Arborist  
Georgia Burns, Tree Board Member  
Pam Roberts, Tree Board Member

Guests: Jordan Allen, GIS Technician Planning and Zoning

#### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by John Hendrickson. He asked the members to review the minutes from the March 15 meeting, and they were accepted.

#### **Reports:**

##### **City of Rome**

Chad Hampton reported that in March and April, 47 trees were removed and 12 trees were installed, and there were 885.5 hours of tree maintenance. The tree removal included the Leyland Cypress trees at Barron Stadium. The City of Rome Street Department has also begun injections of aeration and nutrients at Riverside Parkway to encourage healthier trees. However, one tree was still lost because of bad soil in this area. He noted that the trees planted for Arbor Day on South Broad Street are all developing well with foliage, except for the Red Oak on 3rd

Avenue. John Hendrickson suggested replacing this tree, as it has a one year warranty. The Dogwoods and Hornbeams are also doing well. Chad Hampton also stated that the Deodar Cedar at the Indoor Tennis Center has been replaced.

Ernest Watson expressed that the nutrient injections discussed by Chad Hampton are beneficial, however the company providing them did not include all of the necessary ingredients to give its full potential. John Hendrickson mentioned that Keith Mickler has a fund for soil sampling should anyone need to test soil quality in any area.

Brian Roberts reported that there is a project beginning next week. There are 4 cases of trees in various stages of reestablishment. In addition, the Lock and Dam Soil Stewardship Week is coming up, which should provide some educational opportunities for the community.

### **Floyd County**

Michael Skeen indicated that 17 new trees have been planted in the county, including 14 at the park in Lindale and 3 at Shady Lane Road. The outsourced trees planted at Shady Lane from last year are looking good as well. He also expressed that there will be a pruning class hosted at the Rome-Floyd ECO Center this month taught by Seth Hawkins, and participants will receive certification. He indicated that it is not ideal for the county to spend up to 6 figures on infrastructure while lacking the education for proper upkeep. Skeen also mentioned plans to make this type of class available in all Public Works Departments across the state of Georgia. Lastly, he explained plans to deal with hazardous trees by sidewalks. He said that no trees should be planted in right-of-ways because of safety concerns.

### **Georgia Power**

John Hendrickson introduced a new representative from Georgia Powers, Josh Athen. Athen discussed a project going on in Lindale to clear right-of-ways and main powerlines of any possible tree branches causing outages for safety and uninterrupted services.

### **Updates:**

Planning and Zoning Representative Jordan Allen is requesting about 10 trees to be put in on the upper division of Darlington Way. There is a stump of a tree remaining at Darlington Way that has not been replaced. She brought a map to show the GIS planned placement of each tree. There will be about 50 feet distance in between each tree. Allen explained the reason she is presenting this to the Tree Board is that they are unsure of where the money will come from.

She said that when speaking with Mary Hardin, newly appointed Special Projects Manager, it was suggested that Project 126 could help with funding. Hannah Bagley stated that this fund has already been spent, however obtaining a Historic District Grant may be possible. Planning and Zoning would like to have the trees planted in Fall 2022, but they are content with waiting until Fall 2023 if that is not possible. They also have not decided on a specific tree species yet. Chad Hampton asked if they were planning on doing any sidewalk improvements, and Jordan stated that she was unsure of the full plan so far, but that may be included.

**Upcoming Events:**

John Henderson announced plans for running a class on “Pruning Spring Flowering Plants”, including plants like hydrangeas and dogwoods. This will be located at the closed garden at Sarah Hightower Library on Saturday, June 11th from 10am-12pm.

Ben Winkelman expressed concern with the Tree Board regarding tree-related business from the administration standpoint. He stated that a clear decision needs to be made on what areas Hannah Bagley and Mary Hardin are responsible for, and the designated contact person. As the contact person for the Tree Board, Hannah Bagley does need to be informed of all tree-related business, even if others are consulted in addition to her.

Michael Skeen discussed the groundbreaking ceremony for the new amphitheater by the library. He disclosed that he has been charged with saving the big pecan tree, which is planted in close proximity to their building plans, and will be difficult to keep.

**Adjourn:**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Sophia G. Swann*

Sophia G. Swann, Secretary