



JOINT SERVICES COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2021
8:00 A.M.
SAM KING ROOM

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Wright Bagby, Chair, Floyd County Board of Commissioners
Allison Watters, Vice-Chair, Floyd County Board of Commissioners
Craig McDaniel, Mayor, Rome City Commission
Sundai Stevenson, Mayor Pro-Tem, Rome City Commission
Jamie McCord, County Manager
Sammy Rich, City Manager
Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Erin Elrod, County Clerk
Johnny Bunch, Technology Services Director, City of Rome
Aundi Lesley, Director of Downtown Development, City of Rome
Susie Glass, Director of Finance, Floyd County
Tom Ewing, Assistant Chief, Floyd County Police

GUESTS:

Doug Walker, Rome News Tribune
Hugh Tyner

WELCOME:

Mayor Craig McDaniel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The minutes of the June 1, 2021, meeting were approved by common consent.

SPLOST UPDATE:

City Manager Sammy Rich provided the group with a handout of updated 2013 and 2017 SPLOSTs. Regarding the 2013 SPLOST, he mentioned that all city projects were complete except for Unity Point, but that RFPs would be issued soon. Regarding the 2017 SPLOST, he stated that Parks Hoke Park would have bids for the covered pavilion and basketball courts soon. Construction for the secondary access road to East Central, awarded to Wilson Boys Enterprises, should begin soon. Completion of this new access road will significantly improve traffic flow on Dean Street. Public Works paving and sidewalk projects are still underway, and the North Broad Youth Center would be completed in 2023. Engineering services bids will be opened on August 12 for the 5th Avenue River District/Arts District. See handout for more updates.



McDaniel asked for more clarification of what was being done at Unity Point. Rich stated that streambank stabilization and cleaning up is under contract with CTI Engineers, as is a new canoe launch. The City will also clean up as much of the vegetation as possible and will confer with Brian Roberts to see what can be done outside of the protected 25-foot buffer.

County Manager Jamie McCord stated that the county has 4 ongoing projects from the 2013 SPLOST and gave the following updates:

- Case management software, cloud-based system, went live in 2020 – very positive feedback has been received.
- Firing range should be completed in next 30-60 days; last step is paving; slightly over budget.
- The airport runway extension project's first phase, grading, is underway, and is approximately 75% complete. The project will also include phase 2, Instrument Landing System and electrical work and phase 3, base and paving.
- Jail - the medical wing renovations at the county jail are funded by 2013 and 2017 SPLOSTs and are currently about 95% complete with a total completion date projection of September 2021.
- Industrial property - \$4.4 million remaining from 2013 SPLOST and \$3.1 million from 2017 SPLOST.
- Prison security upgrades – infrastructure improvements, LED lights, doors replaced
- Historic Courthouse Renovation - Preliminary engineering has been completed
- Paving, Infrastructure and Bridges - 2 bridges complete, several in progress
- Texas Valley Infrastructure Expansion – in house – in progress
- Silver Creek Trail (joint project) – trail head has been completed in Lindale; 6 parcels are owned privately – a title search is being completed to find the owners.
- State Mutual Stadium – 98% complete, has slowed due to material price increases, store expansion is complete, HP entry gate, terrace expansion almost complete. Gate 6 will be done internally.
- Public Safety technology upgrades
- Recreation – project is halfway completed - installed 26 new HVACS, Blacks Bluff boat dock and paving complete
- Ag Center – preliminary engineering has been completed
- E911 – delayed due to department director request – considering new phone system

County Finance Director Susie Gass updated the committee regarding the 2017 SPLOST. She reminded everyone that April 2024 would be the last month of collections and that collections have been good thus far. \$10.7 million have been collected through July 2021 and collections in July 2021 were 16% higher than July 2020 collections. Total collections at the end of July 2021 were \$63.8 million which is approximately \$9.5 million of excess collections.



FORUM UPDATE:

McCord stated that considering the rising number of COVID cases, Judge Niedrach has decided that the Forum will again be needed to hold court cases. There is one event to be held at the Forum the first week of September, which is the 2021 Georgia Fire Service Conference. McCord stated that he will be meeting with Sherriff Dave Roberson and Judge Niedrach this week to further discuss how much space would be needed as well as security needs. Any considerations to hold other events at the Forum would then be made. McCord also discussed the impacts to the number of inmates being housed in the Floyd County jail and the impact on facility maintenance to both the City and the County, the Recycling Center, etc.

PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN:

The group discussed the need for a new master plan for the Parks & Rec Department. It was included in the 2020 budget but hasn't moved forward largely due to the impact of Covid-19. Bagby agreed that the plan is out of sync and there has been a need for a new plan since the Forum management was shifted to the County. McCord mentioned that the process was similar to the ULDC update process and would take 6-12 months to compile and evaluate community input.

TRAILS UPDATE:

McCord stated that Lewallen Construction, out of Marietta, were the low bidders chosen to proceed with bridge construction spanning Little Dry Creek on the Redmond Trail. Lewallen gave a completion date of late spring 2022. Rich also updated the group saying that official easements to get across Berry family property at Big Dry Creek were coming quickly. McCord mentioned that TRED was working on branding the trails systems and that he and Rich would be meeting with administrators at RRM/Advent in the next few weeks to discuss the connection of the trails through the hospital campus.

WEBSITE:

Rich told the group that the City had chosen Civic Plus for the new city website and that the new site would go live on August 10th. Director of Technology Services, Johnny Bunch, stated that the RomeFloyd.com landing page would eventually fade out but would still be showing on search engines for a while and that the cost to keep it up is minimum. It was also mentioned that even though the City and County would have their own separate sites, each will have a link to the other entity on their sites. County Manager, Erin Elrod mentioned that the County's new Municode site would be live soon after the City's go live date of August 10th. The city website will be accessed at Romega.us and the county will have its own website address. The name of the county website was not available at the time of the discussion.



OTHER BUSINESS:

McDaniel discussed the rising number of COVID cases and stated that if numbers continue to increase, both commissions will be faced with discussing face masks mandates again. Elrod stated that the County has already placed signs in county buildings encouraging wearing masks while inside.

Commissioner Sundai Stevenson mentioned that it is going to take door to door encouragement and more incentives to get more people vaccinated. County Chair Wright Bagby stated that he thinks the new vaccination requirements of Floyd Medical Center employees will make a very positive impact in our community. Elrod added that the county has developed 4 different videos featuring community leaders encouraging vaccination and McDaniel added that he had spoken with local radio stations and newspapers who have agreed to run ads encouraging vaccination.

Bagby asked for an update on the timeline to have the pump station upgraded on Burnett Ferry Road. Rich stated that he did not know the exact date but would get the information to him.

Vice Chair Allison Watters asked for an update on the library amphitheater project. McCord mentioned that the project is still being planned but that other projects had slowed down progress.

McCord stated that the committee would need to meet before the end of 2022 to negotiate the Local Option Sales Tax.

McDaniel asked what seats were up for election in addition to Ward 2 City Commissioners. Rich stated that all 7 Rome City Schools Board seats were up for reelection in the Fall. McCord stated that they will be moving the elections office to the health department soon.

ADJOURNED:

With their being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley Parker
Executive Assistant,
City Manager's Office

