



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*
Transit Department
Kathy Shealy, *Director*

PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSIT COMMITTEE
AND
TRAFFIC COMMISSION

August 10, 2022 10:00 AM.
Sam King Room - 601 Broad Street

PRESENT: Commissioner Mark Cochran
Commissioner Bonny Askew
Commissioner Jim Bojo
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager
Ms. Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Ms. Toni Rhinehart, Finance Director
Mr. Chris Jenkins, Public Works Director
Mr. Justin Messer, Assistant Public Works Director
Maj. Paul Webber, Rome Police Department
Mr. Aaron Carroll, Engineering Services Director
Mr. Filipe Arevalo, Engineering Design Engineer
Ms. Kathy Shealy, Transit Director
Ms. Courtney Griffin, Assistant Transit Director
Ms. Becky Fox, Community Development Director
Ms. Aundi Lesley, DDA Director
Ms. Julie Harris, Parking Services Manager
Mr. Artégus Newell, Planning Director
Ms. Kayla Schaff, Associate Transportation Planner
Mr. Doug Walker, Public Information Officer
Ms. Hannah Bagley, Keep Rome Floyd Beautiful

GUEST: Julie Smith, TRED Executive Director

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Cochran called the meeting to order.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

POLICE REPORTS

Major Weber presented the July Accident/DUI report. He noted there were 180 accidents for the month of July with a total of 545 traffic cases. There were 19 DUI arrests, two of which were under 21 years old. There were 53 accidents with injuries and two fatalities. The leading cause of accidents remains *following too closely* and we continue to work on distracted driver violations. The highest accident patrol sector was sector five, which is the East Rome area including Turner McCall Blvd. up to East 12th Street. He noted this sector has a lot of business traffic and contains the highest speeds. The highest accident time of day continues to be morning, lunch hour, and afternoon. The highest accident intersection was Turner McCall/Martha Berry Hwy/Riverbend Dr. with five accidents with the second highest being tied between Turner McCall/E 8th, Turner McCall/E9th and Turner McCall/Broad Street with four accidents each. Overall, 186 courtesy warnings were given for hands free violations.

Mr. Jenkins asked when the cameras are going up in front of Main. Maj. Webber said that the Chief is working on that personally. Mr. Rich said that approval was needed by GDOT and the School Board and that has been received. Mr. Carroll said the cameras are already installed but they are not live yet. Mr. Rich added that any revenue from citations from the cameras must be used for traffic safety purposes.

TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Transit Updates

Ms. Shealy reported ridership from January 1st through June 20th, while we have offered free rides, ridership has increased about 58%. She added the new buses are on schedule for delivery in late October. Commissioner Bojo reported that he has heard reports that the new paratransit driver, Ms. Agan, is fabulous.

Financial report

Ms. Rhinehart gave the financial report. She noted Main Line revenues are down since we've had free ridership and there is a little more in the Paratransit revenue section because there is a higher ridership and higher rate being paid through contract services. We received a one-time distribution from DHS that gave us an extraordinarily high month. January through March capital has been submitted for reimbursement for \$110,281. They are currently working on the operating grants but due to a new system they are working on, this is taking more time than usual.

Under expenses, she noted Main Line is in line. Paratransit is up slightly due to the increased ridership requiring more drivers. The cash balance is down to \$430,000 because operating reimbursement has not been received, but that should resolve in a couple of months. The 100% reimbursement will last a couple of months and then we will go down to 50/50 again.

OLD BUSINESS

Parks Hoke Park

Mr. Carroll reported the Parks Hoke Park project continues to progress. The roofs are on the shelter and pavilion. There was a slight delay with materials on the storm drainage, but we expect that later this month. The work should be complete by the end of October.

Mt. Berry Trail Phase 2- Bridge Installation over Big Dry Creek

Mr. Carroll reported the bridge over Big Dry Creek is on schedule. The end caps are poured, and wing walls are poured for the bridge to be set. The bridge will be delivered on the 16th and will be set on the 17th

Maple Street East Sidewalk Improvements from E 12th to E 14th

Mr. Carroll reported the Maple Street sidewalk project is a Community Development project. The work is located on the east side of Maple Street between 12th and 14th streets. He presented photographs showing the brick band that is being installed along the sidewalk noting that working with the Postmaster they are orienting the mailboxes parallel to the road to maximize the space for pedestrians while enabling residents to get their mail without stepping out into the street.

River Arts District Engineering Design

Mr. Carroll reported they are continuing working with Pond and Company on the River Arts District project providing additional survey information to them.

Turner Chapel Road Speed Sign

Mr. Jenkins reported that last year we installed a speed radar device to monitor Turner Chapel Rd traffic. He noted one property owner is not happy with the location of the speed detection device in the middle of two properties and has requested it be moved. The other property owner would like it entirely moved from the area. The monitor tracks speed weekly, and Mr. Carroll has retrieved data since October 2021. He noted there is an average speed increase over that time from 2% to 2.5%. Motorists driving the speed limit (35 mph) or less make up 50 to 55% of the motorists. So there hasn't been a significant change in driver behavior since the installation of the sign.

Mr. Carroll noted we can operate the monitor in stealth mode where it will gather data without any indicators showing it is in operation. He suggested we use it in another location in that mode to see if we can establish a pattern. Mr. Rich noted that it appears we do not have a speeding problem at this location so we could probably make better use of the device. Mr. Jenkins asked the Commission if staff could move the sign. Commissioner Bojo asked how much trouble it would be to move it. Mr. Jenkins noted it is on a concrete base. Mr. Carroll added that it is heavy and a little complicated to move.

The Commissioners agreed that staff can move the pole and sign as needed.

South Side Bridge Design of N5th

Commissioner Cochran reported that he noted that Pond and Company neglected to design anything on the Broad Street side of the bridge. He had the understanding that we were going to have them engineer something on that side of the bridge in advance of coming to an agreement on the bridge. There was talk of art installations on that side of the bridge.

Mr. Carroll noted that we didn't ask them to design anything there since the bridge came out of the plan. Commissioner Cochran noted he wanted to take it possibly from four lanes to three lanes to make it a pedestrian friendly slow traffic area. He noted that since we are reducing the opposite side of the bridge to two lanes, we can, by reducing the Broad Street side of the bridge to three lanes, make the bridge pedestrian friendly regardless of what the County chooses to do with the bridge. Ms. Leslie said the engineering design work for the gateway signs is underway, but the Broad Street sign will be phase one and the River District gateway phase two. She added that we put a pause on the River District side until we knew more about what would happen with the bridge, but the plan is to install the arch on the south side of the bridge. Mr. Carroll said that we would then still need to work with the County on that. Commissioner Cochran noted that we wouldn't need to work with the County as long as we stay off the bridge. Mr. Carroll noted that the County owns some of the property on the South side of the bridge as well. Mr. Rich agreed adding the law enforcement property is jointly owned by the City and County, and the County owns the property where the historic courthouse is located.

Round-About Design N 5th Ave

Commissioner Cochran reported he has had inquiries about the roundabout design with three people contacting him who are not happy with it. Thinking is too small. He asked if Pond has any concern about it. Mr. Carroll said it is called a "mini roundabout" and should accommodate up to a small delivery truck. He added that it will be mountable. The design was based on the request of this Committee, to come up with a roundabout that would fit in the area. They took detailed turning data into account in their design. Mr. Rich noted that we don't have to have a roundabout at all. Mr. Carroll said that he can tell them to stop working on it if that is what we decide to do.

Lavender Drive Sidewalks

Mr. Carroll said this will be new sidewalk from West Central School to Redmond Road. It is our intent to get that out to bid this month. Mr. Rich added this is a 2017 SPLOST project.

Dodd Blvd.

Mr. Carroll reported we plan to extend the storm drain located 1100 ft down Dodd Blvd from Sunset Dr. toward Callier Springs golf club in the fourth quarter of this year. This project will be completed with capital funding. It is not perfectly straight and there is misalignment at joints inside the pipe which allows dirt and debris in that eventually leads to sink holes. He noted we will be replacing a 72" pipe with a 62" pipe. This project is funded with capital funding, and we hope to get it out to bid in the fourth quarter.

NEW BUSINESS

Choice Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (East Rome)

Ms. Fox reported that she recently updated the Commissioners regarding the Choice Neighborhood Initiative Planning Grant through the Georgia Housing Authority. There is \$50,000 set aside for an early action activity. The action activity has been selected by the process to purchase three covered bus shelters at various bus location in the district as well as street topper signs throughout the district. HUD has asked for the City of Rome to commit in writing to cover the cost of installation, or oversee the installation through a bid process, and to adopt the shelters and signs for future maintenance. Mr. Jenkins said we can pour the pads as we have done in the past, but we could get an estimate just to see what it would cost. Mr. Carroll added that two of the locations selected require easements that are already in the works. The third one is at Maple St. and 14th Street, but Ms. Hudson did not agree with that location and is looking at an alternative. Ms. Shealy reported that in the past, installations cost around \$2500. Ms. Fox noted the shelters are expensive, but they will have solar powered lights with plug in' for cell phone chargers. From the time of purchase, we are looking at a six-month delivery time putting installation in March or April 2023. Ms. Rhinehart added that we are reaching out to GDOT to see if we can use some of their funding for this project. Ms. Griffin said that she has also reached out to her rep to see if Transit can assist with the cost of the pad installation as well.

Commissioner Bojo moved to empower staff to proceed with obtaining funding for the shelter installation. Commissioner Askew seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. Fox confirmed that this means the City agrees to take over the installation and maintenance of the shelters and signs with the details to be worked out later. The Commission agreed.

Mr. Jenkins noted that street sign toppers are not our standard and are usually purchased by homeowner's associations. The issue in this case is that since they will be purchased

with grant money, when they need to be replaced homeowners will look to the City to do that. This could change our standards and cause us some issues, so Ms. Fox will purchase some extra ones up front.

Belmont Drive SW Cul-de-Sac Drainage Issue

Commissioner Cochran reported he has been talking with Westminster Presbyterian Church regarding their playground getting flooded. Mr. Carroll said we need to observe the problem to see if we can arrive at a solution.

Riverbend Drive Guardrail Request

Mr. Jenkins reported on a request from Dr. Vick for guardrail at the medical building on Riverbend Drive where there have been accidents involving motorists hitting the building. The main issue in these accidents is speed. He noted this might be a good area to put a speed hump or making it three lanes rather than four. He added that we have already roughed up the pavement with the milling machine to give vehicles better traction in wet weather. He stated we don't have much right of way to place guardrail and there is some concern about vehicles hitting guardrail and even bouncing back into traffic. We could also expect to replace it frequently from people hitting it. He noted that he has considered making a crosswalk for the bus stop which would increase safety for pedestrians at some point in time. We will continue to look at this and consider solutions.

Commissioner Cochran asked Mr. Jenkins if he will tell the doctor that we are looking into this issue.

Residential Speed Hump Policy

Mr. Jenkins reported that historically our policy has been to not install speed humps in residential areas because there are so many neighborhoods concerned about speeding would have a great number of requests if we were to allow it. Commissioner Askew has been approached by his homeowner's association about a speed hump in their neighborhood. Commissioner Askew said the homeowner's association is concerned about some autistic children in the neighborhood and the dangerous curve with a motorcyclist in the neighborhood coming through there frequently. Commissioner Cochran asked if he would be comfortable with Mr. Jenkins reaching out to other areas to review their speed hump policies. Mr. Jenkins agreed.

One Community United Event

Mr. Jenkins reported the One Community United event is planned for September 18th from 6:30 until 9 pm on the City/County jointly owned pedestrian bridge. He noted that when it first began, it was approved through the City Public Works Committee and the County. The event has been held in the past with no issues.

Commissioner Askew moved to approve the event. Commissioner Cochran seconded. The motion carried.

OTHER

Mr. Artegius Newell asked for some broken sidewalk to be repaired between the Highland Apts. On E 11th St. to E 12th and on up to the school. Mr. Jenkins noted that he need only to reach out to the Public Works office by phone or through the MyRome app anytime he has a work request of this type.

MONTHLY REPORTS

The monthly department reports were distributed for review.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Hollingsworth

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary.