

ROME CITY COMMISSION

Monday, November 22, 2021

The Rome City Commission met at 6:30 p.m. this date in the City Commission Chambers of City Hall, 601 Broad Street. Mayor McDaniel presided with Mayor Pro Tem Stevenson and Commissioners Bojo, Davis, Doss, Quick, Askew, and Collins present. Commissioner Cochran was out of town and excused. Commissioner Davis called on Reverend Gregoria DeTances to open the meeting with prayer, and Commissioner Davis led in the salute to the flag.

Mayor McDaniel called for a moment of silence regarding the death of Roman Harold Storey. Mr. Storey was honored previously this year with a proclamation on his 99th birthday. Commissioner Davis also recognized longtime Rome Chamber of Commerce employee Scotty Clark who recently died.

Minutes – November 8, 2021 and November 12, 2021

The minutes of the November 8, 2021 meeting and the November 12, 2021 Special Called Meeting, as submitted in writing by the Secretary, were approved by an unanimous consent.

Salvation Army Day

Commissioner Davis presented a proclamation recognizing November 22, 2021 as Salvation Army Day in Rome. This proclamation was presented to Captains Tim and Paula Blevins of the Rome Salvation Army. The Blevins thanked the City Commission for this recognition and stated that the Salvation Army has had a presence in Rome for over 100 years. They also announced that the annual Christmas Kettle Kickoff has begun.

A21-11-01 Annex 9 Simpson Drive

Commissioner Quick introduced annexation file A21-11-01, the request to annex 9 Simpson Drive, which is identified by Floyd County Tax Map # H12Y-436. The request is to annex this property with no change in the current Suburban Residential zoning. The Planning Commission has unanimously recommended approval of the annexation request.

Rome/Floyd Planner Artagus Newall reviewed this file, displaying maps and photographs of the subject and surrounding properties. Mr. Newall stated this property contains a single-family residence.

Mayor McDaniel called a Public Hearing to order concerning the annexation request. There was no one to speak in favor or opposition, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Commissioner Quick moved to annex 9 Simpson Drive with Suburban Residential zoning as requested. Commissioner Stevenson seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

Thanksgiving Holiday

City Manager Rich announced that City of Rome offices will be closed on Thursday, November 25th and Friday, November 26th in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday. Thursday's garbage routes will be collected on Wednesday, November 24th. The Monday, Tuesday, and Friday

routes will run as normal. The Walker Mountain Landfill will be closed on Thursday, November 25th, but will reopen on Friday, November 26th.

American Recovery Plan Act Expenditures

City Manager Rich stated that City Staff has developed an expenditure list of Rome’s American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) Funds. This list was discussed at the November 12, 2021 Special Called City Commission meeting. Mr. Rich stated that, in addition to the 14 items on the list included with the agenda, he would like to add one additional item. This additional item is funding in the amount of \$750,000 for sewer extension in the Chulio Hills Subdivision. This addition will bring the total proposed expenditures to \$10,443,241.

Mr. Rich emphasized that there has also been a request made by the City of Rome for funding for certain projects from the State of Georgia’s Recovery Funds. If money is received from the State of Georgia, it could reduce the amount of local funds spent on items included on our list. Mr. Rich also explained that this list was devised after careful consideration and consultation with other City Staff.

There were comments and questions by some Commissioners regarding the list. Some questions were asking for clarification and more details on some of the items on the list. Commissioner Doss emphasized that careful consideration be given before a final decision is made regarding a \$1M allocated for housing incentives. Other comments were particularly directed towards funding allocated for water meter replacement. Commissioner Davis questioned the \$250,000 allocated for the “project manager”. Mr. Rich stated this would be used for somebody to help with the details for Federal Reporting guidelines and requirements regarding the expenditures of the ARPA Funds, and that allocation was expected to cover a 4 – 5-year period. Commissioner Davis also stated she was not able to receive this list prior to the Commission meeting. Commissioner Davis was out of town and absent for the November 12th Special Called Meeting. At the Special Called Meeting, there were presentations made regarding items on this list from the Parks and Recreation Authority, the Downtown Development Authority, City of Rome Community Development Department, and the United Way. Commissioner Davis also stated that both the National League of Cities and the Georgia Municipal Association are encouraging cities to receive public input before making determinations for ARPA expenditures. Commissioner Davis would like to see more local input given before this list is finalized.

Commissioner Bojo moved to accept this list as presented with the inclusion of the Chulio Hills sewer extension expenditures item, bringing the total to \$10,443,241. Commissioner Quick seconded, and the motion was approved by the following vote:

- YES:** Stevenson, Bojo, Doss, Quick, Askew, and Collins
- NO:** Davis

AMERICAN RECOVERY PLAN ACT (ARPA)	
PROPOSED PROJECT	PROPOSED COST
METER REPLACEMENT (State Ask)	2,780,000
LANDBANK DEVELOPMENT/REHAB	1,000,000
HOUSING INCENTIVE	1,000,000
CAMERA SYSTEM DOWNTOWN AND PARKS	300,000
EMPLOYEE COVID VACCINE INCENTIVE PROGRAM	187,241
PROJECT MANAGER	250,000
OTS	250,000
NORTH ROME - N BROAD PROPERTY (2)	400,000
PARKS & RECREATION PROJECTS	1,713,000
BUSINESS INCUBATOR PROGRAM - DDA	525,000
ESSENTIAL/PREMIUM EMPLOYEE PAY	650,000
COVINGTON PARK (South Rome)	300,000
HOUSING COUNSELING (HOUSING AUTHORITY	38,000
BUILDING ACROSS FROM FIRE HALL/CHAMBER RENOVATION	300,000
	9,693,241
CHULIO HILLS SEWER EXTENSION	750,000
TOTAL	10,443,241

Executive Session

Mayor McDaniel announced that an Executive Session was held prior to the beginning of tonight’s meeting on the motion of Commissioner Bojo, second of Commissioner Doss, and an unanimous vote. Real estate acquisition matters were discussed, and no votes were taken. The meeting was adjourned on the motion of Commissioner Quick, second of Commissioner Stevenson, and an unanimous vote.

Joint Services Committee

Mayor McDaniel announced that the Joint Services Committee will meet on Tuesday, December 7th at 8:15 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

Rome/Floyd Development Authority

Mayor McDaniel announced that there will be a Special Called meeting of the Rome/Floyd Development Authority on Tuesday, November 30th at 10 a.m. in the Manis Business Center.

Finance Committee

Commissioner Stevenson announced that the Finance Committee will have a Special Called Meeting on Wednesday, December 1st at 3 p.m. in the Sam King Room.

Thanksgiving Love Feast

Commissioner Stevenson announced that the annual Thanksgiving Love Feast will take place at the Rome Civic Center on Thanksgiving beginning at 11 a.m. In addition to “to-go” meals, winter clothing will also be offered for those in need.

Water and Sewer Committee

Commissioner Bojo announced that the Water and Sewer Committee will meet on Thursday, December 2nd at 9 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

Health Board

Mayor McDaniel announced that the Health Board will meet on Thursday, December 9th at 12 p.m.

Public Works, Traffic, and Transit

Mayor McDaniel announced that the Public Works, Traffic, and Transit Committee will meet on Wednesday, December 9th at 10 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

Solid Waste Commission

Mayor McDaniel announced that the Solid Waste Commission, scheduled for Tuesday, November 23rd, has been rescheduled to Tuesday, December 7th at 9 a.m. in the Carnegie Training Room.

COVID Update

Commissioner Davis announced that Northwest Georgia Health Director Dr. Gary Voccio was present in Caucus and gave an update to the Commissioners regarding the local status of COVID-19. Dr. Voccio reported that our numbers are lower than they have been at other times this year; however, these numbers have increased recently. Dr. Voccio encourages everyone to get vaccinated to protect themselves from COVID-19. Over 90% of those requiring hospitalization are unvaccinated.

Local Sports Teams

The City Commission congratulated Rome High School, Darlington High School, and Unity Christian School for their successful football seasons. While all three schools went to the playoffs, only Darlington remains “in the hunt” for a state championship. Commissioner Stevenson added that the Rome Middle School had a very successful season and reached the championship game before falling to their opponent.

Historic Neighborhood Requirements

Commissioner Doss reminded the public that, those who live in historic designated neighborhoods, need to inquire with the Historic Preservation Office prior to performing alterations on their property since special regulations often apply in historic zones.

Downtown Development Authority

Commissioner Doss announced that the Downtown Development Authority will meet on Thursday, December 9th at 8:30 a.m. in the Carnegie Training Room.

Planning Commission

Commissioner Quick announced that the Rome/Floyd County Planning Commission will meet on Thursday, December 2nd at 2:30 p.m. in the Sam King Room.

Christmas Parade

Commissioner Quick announced that the 2021 Edition of the Rome Christmas Parade will return to the traditional format after a drive-through parade that was held in 2020. The parade will take place on Broad Street on Tuesday, November 30th beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Adult Entertainment Regulations

Commissioner Collins requested an update on Rome's Adult Entertainment Ordinance.

Secretary Smith summarized Rome's Adult Entertainment Ordinances. The City of Rome has a specific ordinance that prohibits adult entertainment (as defined) at any establishment that sells or serves alcohol. Rome also has a more extensive adult entertainment ordinance regarding adult entertainment that is offered at establishments that do not sell alcohol. Smith stated that this ordinance does not prohibit adult entertainment; however, it does restrict and significantly regulates adult entertainment. While these ordinances have been in place for several years, the City of Rome took action in 2019 to further strengthen our adult entertainment ordinance. In 2019, two additional ordinances were adopted which amended the ULDC Table of Permitted Uses to include sexually oriented businesses and offered additional protective buffers from sexually oriented businesses.

COVID Vaccination Incentive Program

Commissioner Collins announced that there will be a COVID Vaccination Incentive Program at Lovejoy Baptist Church on December 4th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The first 60 persons receiving a vaccination at this event will receive \$25, and everyone receiving a vaccination will be included in a drawing for \$1,000. This clinic includes booster vaccinations and vaccinations for youths. More clinics will likely be planned in the future.

Guests

Mayor McDaniel recognized Mr. David Mitchell and Ms. Elaina Beeman in attendance at tonight's meeting.

Rome International Film Festival

Mayor McDaniel commented on the recently concluded Rome International Film Festival. This is the 18th annual RIFF event in Rome, and Mayor McDaniel commented on the positive impact it has for our city. This year, among others, Mr. Billy Bob Thornton, Mr. Mario Van Peebles, and Ms. Jasmine Guy were in our city. Mayor McDaniel emphasized that many positive comments were made about downtown Rome and our city in general.

Adjourn

With there being no further business, Mayor McDaniel adjourned the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Joseph F. Smith
City Clerk