

## **ROME CITY COMMISSION**

**Monday, April 10, 2023**

The Rome City Commission met at 6:30 p.m. on this date in the City Commission Chambers of City Hall, 601 Broad Street. Mayor Stevenson presided with Mayor Pro Tem Cochran, and Commissioners Bojo, Beeman, Doss, Quick, Askew, Collins, and McDaniel present. Mayor Stevenson requested that Reverend Pete Smith open the meeting with prayer, and she led in the salute to the flag.

### **Minutes – March 27, 2023**

The Minutes of the March 27, 2023, meeting, as submitted in writing by the Secretary, were approved by unanimous consent.

### **National Community Development Week**

Commissioner Bojo presented a proclamation proclaiming the week of April 10 – 14, 2023, as National Community Development Week in the City of Rome. This proclamation was presented to Suzanne Parris and Logan Drake of the City of Rome’s Community Development Department.

### **National Fair Housing Month**

Commissioner Beeman presented a proclamation proclaiming April 2023 as National Fair Housing Month in the City of Rome. This proclamation was presented to Suzanne Parris and Logan Drake of the City of Rome’s Community Development Department.

### **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

Commissioner Cochran presented a joint City/County proclamation proclaiming April 2023 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Rome and Floyd County. This proclamation was presented to Kimberly King of the Sexual Assault Center and Krista Huckabee and Alan Babcock. Ms. King briefly addressed the Commission speaking of the mission of the Sexual Assault Center and their objective of preventing sexual assault.

### **Certificates of Appointment**

On behalf of the Committee on Committees, Commissioner Collins presented the following Certificates of Appointment:

David Mitchell – Landmarking Committee  
DJ Rickman – Downtown Development Authority  
Jake Hager – Rome/Floyd County Planning Commission  
\*Heath Rogers – Rome/Floyd County Planning Commission  
Sarah Williamson – Transportation Citizens Advisory Committee  
\*Tonia Clayton – Transportation Citizens Advisory Committee  
Ben Harrison - Transportation Citizens Advisory Committee  
Tom Couch - Transportation Citizens Advisory Committee

\*not present to receive certificate

### **Shawnta Johnson**

Ms. Shawnta Johnson, 307 Greenwood Avenue, addressed the City Commission regarding her concerns about the Rome Police Department. Ms. Johnson stated that she has had three incidents with the Rome Police Department, the first leading to her arrest. She stated that she is attempting to “clear her name” and that if she is convicted, in her upcoming Superior Court trial, she will spend many years in jail. She further stated the reports of her arrest were published in the Rome News and have defamed her name. Ms. Johnson also referenced fake police reports about her, an incident where the police department held her at gunpoint at her home but did not arrest her, and other serious allegations regarding the Rome Police Department, including a sexual assault. Ms. Johnson stated that she would like to appear at the Public Safety Committee to further discuss her claims.

### **Chulio Hills Residents**

Commissioner Collins informed the Commission that representatives from the Chulio Hills are present tonight to speak to the City Commission. The Chulio Hills neighborhood would like the City of Rome to extend the sewer system to service their neighborhood. Commissioner Collins stated that the City of Rome expects this sewer extension to cost approximately \$3.2 million and that the City will request that funding be in the 2023 SPLOST referendum. Commissioner Collins also state that the city promised the Chulio Hills residents sewer service in the 1980’s. He also stated that some City Commissioners have property interest in this neighborhood.

Speaking regarding the Chulio Hills sewer subject was Yashika Smith – Pitts, 31 Rushden Way; Rev. Terrell Shields, 101 Luminosa Terrace; Rev. Kevin Brown, 24 Shady Lane; Sandra Hudson, 3 Shirley Lane; and Pete Smith. These five guests each stated that they would like for the City of Rome to undertake the sewer extension project, rather than waiting for the possibility of that project being funded through the 2023 SPLOST referendum. Each speaker reminded the commissioners that they are tax payers. They also stated that many of the residents are having problems with their septic tanks and would greatly benefit from the sewer system. There was a reference made of a promise of sewer service to the property owners who annexed their property in the 1980’s.

### **Penny Evans – Plants**

Ms. Penny Evans – Plants, 511 Charlton Street, addressed the City Commission. Ms. Evans – Plants’ comments were regarding the recent allegations and investigation regarding Commissioner Mark Cochran. Ms. Evans – Plants spoke in support of Commissioner Cochran, expressing her feeling that Commissioner Cochran is a good representative of the citizens and was trying to correct deficiencies with the City operations when he spoke at the January 23<sup>rd</sup> City Commission meeting. Ms. Evans – Plants feels that there is no reason to investigate Commissioner Cochran. She concluded her comments by stating that the delays in the City Administration were delaying housing construction and the City Commission has noted that Rome has a housing shortage.

### **Vincent Mendes**

Mr. Vincent Mendes, 201 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, address the City Commission regarding Commissioner Cochran. Mr. Mendes stated that Commissioner Cochran represents his constituents very well and should be able to ask questions regarding City procedures, as he did at the January 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Mr. Mendes stated he sees nothing offensive about Commissioner Cochran’s past comments and no reason for the City’s investigation. Mr. Mendes also noted that the City of Rome has spent over \$17,000 at this point regarding this investigative matter.

### **Opioid Lawsuit – Publix Settlement**

Commissioner Quick moved to adopt a resolution, which would acknowledge and accept the settlement from Publix Supermarkets, Inc. regarding the National Prescription Opiate Litigation. Commissioner Askew seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

### **Opioid Lawsuit – State of Georgia MOU**

Commissioner Askew moved to adopt a settlement document regarding a memorandum of understanding between the State of Georgia and local governments regarding the opioid lawsuit. Commissioner Quick seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

### **Rezoning and Special Use Permit – First Reading**

Secretary Smith announced that the following rezonings and special use permit request were being placed on first reading:

- a) Z23-04-01 – Request to rezone from High Density Traditional Residential to Community Commercial for the property located at 5 W. Callahan Street; Floyd County Tax Parcel J13I-294. (Planning Commission recommends approval with conditions, 7-0).
- b) Z/SUP23-04-03 – Request to rezone property located at 118 Holder Street; Floyd County Tax Parcel J14N-331 from Community Commercial to High Density Traditional Residential and request a special use permit for a duplex. (Planning Commission recommends approval with conditions, 7-0).
- c) Z23-04-04 – Request to rezone from Light Industrial to Suburban Residential for the property located at 101 Rogers Drive NW and 0 Rogers Drive NW; Floyd County Tax Parcels H122-653 and H122-653B. (Planning Commission recommends approval, 7-0).
- d) Z23-04-06 – Request to rezone from Community Commercial to High Density Traditional Residential for the property located at 2021 Maple Road and 2021 Maple Avenue; Floyd County Tax Parcels I15X-310 and I15X-335. (Planning Commission recommends approval, 7-0).

A public hearing for these matters is scheduled for the April 24<sup>th</sup> City Commission Meeting.

### **Rome/Floyd County Development Authority**

Mayor Stevenson announced that the Rome/Floyd Development Authority will meet on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Manis Business Center.

### **Transportation Policy Committee**

Commissioner Bojo announced that the Transportation Policy Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in the Carnegie Training Room.

### **Historic Preservation Committee**

Commissioner Beeman announced that the Historic Preservation Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Public Works/Traffic/Transit Committee**

Commissioner Beeman announced that the Public Works/Traffic/Transit Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Downtown Development Authority**

Commissioner Quick announced that the Downtown Development Authority will meet on Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Recycling Center Deficit**

Commissioner Askew moved for the City of Rome to pay our share of the recycling deficit for the third quarter of 2022. The City of Rome’s share of this deficit will be \$68,691.10. The City of Rome will also pay their portion of the recycling center deficit that is due from the Solid Waste Commission. That deficit is also \$68,691.10. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

**Finance Committee**

Commissioner Collins announced that the Finance Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**General Administration**

Commissioner Collins announced that the General Administration Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Melvon Ingram – SPLOST Alternative**

Commissioner Collins moved to appoint Mr. Melvon Ingram as the City of Rome’s alternate member on the 2023 Citizens SPLOST Committee. Commissioner Beeman seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor. The City of Rome’s four main members were appointed on March 27, 2023.

**Alcohol Control Commission Nomination**

Commissioner Collins nominated Mr. Doug Phipps to serve on the Alcohol Control Commission. A vote on this nomination is scheduled for the April 24<sup>th</sup> City Commission meeting.

**Alcohol Control Commission**

Commissioner McDaniel announced that the Alcohol Control Commission will meet on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers.

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission**

Commissioner McDaniel announced that the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission will meet on Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. on the Rome Civic Center.

**Rome/Floyd Parks and Recreation**

Commissioner McDaniel announced that the Rome/Floyd Parks and Recreation Board will meet on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m. at the Shannon Center at Shag Williams Park.

**Adjourn**

With there being no further business, Mayor Stevenson adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Joseph F. Smith  
City Clerk