

## **ROME CITY COMMISSION**

**Monday, August 14, 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. Commissioner McDaniel opened the meeting with prayer and led in the salute to the flag.

### **Minutes – July 24, 2023**

The Minutes of the July 24, 2023 meeting, as submitted in writing by the Secretary, were approved by unanimous consent.

### **Management Development Program Graduates**

City Manager Rich introduced the graduates from the City of Rome's most recent class of the Management Development Program. The MDP is affiliated with and administered by the University of Georgia. The following City employees comprise this graduating class: Felipe Arevalo – Engineering, Lee Carver – Public Works, Michael Davis – Fire, Tyler Fabian – Transit, Tommy Freeman – Water Reclamation, Courtney Griffin – Transit, Sarah Grimes – Eco Center, Mark Green – City Clerk's Office, Chad Hampton – Street Department, Mike Hebert – Building Inspection, Nate Helms – Fire, Jeff Hill – Water Reclamation, Kraig Ingalsbe – Finance, Stacey Kidd – Police, Aundi Lesley – Downtown Development, Justin Messer – Public Works, Bryan Middleton – Water, Dylan Nelson – Finance, Kelley Parker – City Manager's Office, Suzanne Parris – Community Development, Brian Sutton – Police, Curt Vann – Filter Plant, Brian Whiteman – Water and Brice Wood – Planning.

Ms. Kelley Parker, Assistant to the City Manager, spoke and thanked the City Commission and Mr. Rich for sponsoring this very beneficial program for City of Rome employees.

### **Water Rate Protection Fee Resolution**

Commissioner Bojo moved to adopt a resolution which would amend the Water Rate Protection Program monthly fee. This fee will be reduced from \$1.65 per month to \$1.50 per month, effective September 1, 2023.

Commissioner McDaniel seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

This voluntary program is available to all City of Rome water customers.

### **Annexation, Special Use Permit Request and Rezoning**

Secretary Smith announced that the following annexation, special use permit request and rezonings are being placed on first reading.

- a) **A23-08-05** – Request to annex the property at 126 McHenry Drive zoned Suburban Residential with no change in use or zoning; Floyd County Tax Parcel I15W210. (Planning Commission recommends approval, 7-0).

- b) **SUP23-08-04** – Request for a special use permit for duplexes for the property at 510 Harper Avenue zoned High Density Traditional Residential; Floyd County Tax Parcel J14E153. (Planning Commission recommends approval, 7-0).
- c) **Z23-08-06** – Request to rezone from Community Commercial to Light Industrial for the property located at Technology Parkway; Floyd County Tax Parcel H12W018. (Planning Commission recommends approval, 7-0)
- d) **Z23-08-19** – Request to rezone from Office Institutional to Urban Mixed Use for the properties located at 406 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 416 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue; Floyd County Tax Parcels J13Y131 and J13Y132. (Planning Commission recommends approval 7-0).

A public hearing for these four items is scheduled for the August 28<sup>th</sup> City Commission meeting.

**Election Qualifying Period**

Secretary Smith announced that the qualifying period for the 2023 City of Rome election will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup> and will extend through 4:30 p.m. on Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

The 2023 City election will be held for the purpose of electing three City Commissioners from Ward 1 and three City Commissioners from Ward 3. Along with this City election, there will also be a county wide Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Referendum.

**Rome/Floyd Development Authority**

Mayor Stevenson announced that Rome/Floyd Development Authority will meet on Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at 800 Broad Street.

**Gun Violence Awareness Meeting**

Mayor Stevenson announced that the next Gun Violence Awareness meeting will take place at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Rome City Auditorium.

**Library Board**

Commissioner Cochran announced that the Library Board will meet on Thursday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Rome/Floyd Library.

**Community Redevelopment Meeting**

Commissioner Bojo announced that the Community Redevelopment Committee will meet on Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00 p.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Historic Preservation Committee**

Commissioner Beeman announced that the Historic Preservation Committee will meet Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Eco Center Renovation Project**

Commissioner Doss reminded the commissioners that funds were allocated in the 2017 SPLOST referendum for the expansion and renovation project at the Ridge Ferry Park Eco Center. The cost for this project is going to be higher than anticipated. Commissioner Doss moved to allocate up to \$400,000 to supplement the SPLOST funding to complete this project. Commissioner Quick seconded the motion. Commissioner Cochran questioned the source of these funds and Mr. Rich and Finance

Director, Toni Rhinehart, explained that these additional funds would come from the City of Rome capital expenditure funds.

Commissioner Doss' motion was unanimously approved.

**Recycling Center Deficit**

Commissioner Askew stated that it is once again time to approve the expenditures to cover the operating deficit at the Rome/Floyd Recycling Center. For the second quarter of 2023 the deficit is \$37,589.04. That amount is due from the City of Rome and that same amount is due from Floyd County and the Solid Waste Management Fund.

Commissioner Askew moved to approve the City of Rome share of this deficit and the Solid Waste Management Fund share. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cochran questioned if the entire deficit should be paid from the Solid Waste fund. Finance Director, Toni Rhinehart, explained that the Solid Waste fund is accumulating a balance that will be needed when the next phase of the Walker Mountain Landfill expansion is needed. This concept can also be discussed at the next Solid Waste Commission meeting.

Commissioner Askew's motion to approve the deficit payments was unanimously approved.

**Finance Committee**

Commissioner Collins announced that the Finance Committee meeting scheduled for August 16<sup>th</sup> has been rescheduled to Wednesday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Rapid Rehousing Program**

Commissioner Collins stated that the concept of a Rapid Rehousing Program was recently discussed by the General Administration Committee. The Committee unanimously recommended that the City Commission adopt this program, however no monetary amount was recommended.

During the Caucus session prior to tonight's meeting, there was a lengthy discussion regarding the Rapid Rehousing Program and a presentation from local United Way Director, Ally Mitchell. It was explained that 26 units of the former Brookwood Properties administered by the Housing Authority of Northwest Georgia are available for this Rapid Rehousing Program. These units have been taken "offline" by the Housing Authority and are available for this program. The budget for the two-year Rapid Rehousing Program is \$710,000. The Floyd County Commission has decided not to participate in this program, and as a result, the funding would come entirely from the City of Rome.

Commissioner Collins moved to authorize the Rapid Rehousing Program for a 24-month period at a cost of \$710,000. Commissioner Doss seconded the motion.

It was clarified that this funding will come from the City of Rome's ARPA funding and not from the General Fund. It was also noted that six local non-profit organizations are working together on this project to help with Rome's homeless population situation.

Commissioner Collins' motion was approved by the following vote:  
Yes – Cochran, Bojo, Doss, Quick, Collins and McDaniel  
Abstained – Beeman and Askew

**100 Black Men of Rome Health Fair**

Mr. Alvin Jackson, Jr. was present to invite everyone to attend the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual 100 Black Men of Rome Health Fair. This will take place on Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup> between 8:00 a.m. and noon at the Floyd County Health Department. Mr. Jackson explained that this service is free for all participants and the program typically has between 300 and 600 visitors each year.

**SPLOST Comments**

Commissioner Collins asked for time to make comments regarding statements previously made by him regarding the 2023 SPLOST Referendum.

Commissioner Collins explained that his comments made at the July 24, 2023, City Commission meeting were not intended to be against the passage of the SPLOST Referendum. There are some projects that he would have liked to have had placed on the referendum that were not included. He stated that he was not speaking in opposition to the SPLOST Referendum and stated that it's passage will be good for our community. He also expressed his respect for the SPLOST Citizens Committee and their work in developing our referendum.

He stated that he is working to keep Rome moving forward and also wants to see the Commissioner Cochran/Ethics issue concluded.

**Alcohol Control Commission**

Commissioner McDaniel stated that the Alcohol Control Commission will meet on Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers.

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission**

Commissioner McDaniel announced that the next meeting of the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission will take place on Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at the Civic Center.

**Rome/Floyd Parks and Recreation**

Commissioner McDaniel announced that the Rome/Floyd Parks and Recreation meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m. at the Anthony Center.

**Tourism**

Commissioner McDaniel announced that the Tourism Committee will meet on Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:45 a.m. at the Rome Area History Center.

**Adjourn**

With there being no further business, Mayor Stevenson adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Joseph F. Smith  
City Clerk