



Sammy Rich, *City Manager*  
Patrick Eidson, *Assistant City Manager*  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES**  
W. Kirk Milam, P.E., *Manager*  
**Public Works Division**  
Steven Foy, P.E., *Asst. Public Works Director*  
**Water and Sewer Division**  
Leigh Ross, *Director*  
**Engineering Services Department**  
Aaron Carroll, R.L.S., P.E., *Director*  
**Rome Transit Department**  
Kathy Shealy, *Director*

PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSIT COMMITTEE  
AND  
TRAFFIC COMMISSION

May 13, 2014 10:00 a.m.  
Sam King Room – 601 Broad Street

PRESENT: Commissioner Kim Canada, Chairman  
Commissioner Buzz Wachsteter  
Commissioner Sue Lee  
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager  
Mr. Kirk Milam, P.E., Public Services Manager  
Mr. Steven Foy, Assistant Public Works Director  
Mr. Joe Minter, Public Works Garage Director  
Ms. Sheree Shore, Finance Director  
Sgt. Joe Costolnick, Rome Police Department

GUESTS: Ms. Marti Walstad,  
Ms. Sharon Steele-Smith, United Daughters of the Confederacy

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Canada called the meeting to order.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

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

POLICE REPORTS

Sgt. Joe Costolnick gave the police report. He noted that in April there were 218 accidents up from 174 at this time last year. There was one fatality in April resulting from injuries sustained in an accident that occurred in March. It was a DUI-related motorcycle accident. DUI's and traffic cases are up. The main cause of accidents is following-too-close. The top accident intersections with six accidents each were N. 2<sup>nd</sup> /Martha Berry, Martha Berry/ Veterans Memorial Blvd, and Shorter Avenue/Horseleg Creek Rd.

## TRANSIT OPERATIONS

### Financial Report

Ms. Shore presented the March financial report. She noted that on the Main Line Service we are continuing to see a reduction in fare box receipts and bus pass card sales are up for the month but down for the year. Tripper Service is pretty much in line with this period last year. Ms. Shealy has been in touch with the school board regarding their balance due, but they should catch that up in June. Paratransit is down slightly from last year.

On the Expense side, payroll is up slightly due to additional staff. Materials and supplies are down slightly due to reduced fuel costs. There is a little more depreciation because we are working with a newer fleet. The net loss through three months is slightly more than last year, however the cash balance at \$995,549 is still good.

### GDOT Triennial Audit

Ms. Shealy reported that on May 20-21 GDOT will perform the triennial audit at the Transit Department. This is the first time they have come on site in several years. Approximately 13 areas of compliance will be reviewed including financial, Title VI and ADA, maintenance, fare structures, EEO, drug and alcohol policies. A pre-review has been performed already. In August, FTA will be reviewing the State agencies. Commissioner Canada asked if this is primarily a paper review. Ms. Shealy noted that it is for the most part. Mr. Milam added that it is a rigorous analysis of our operations that will include staff interviews. Ms. Shealy said that they will spot check procedures to make sure that employees are performing in accordance with policies and procedures.

### Oak Ridge Apartments Service Update

Ms. Shealy updated the committee on the new service to Oak Ridge Apartments. A 'route deviation' service plan was implemented on May 4<sup>th</sup> that includes four trips per day at 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM, 4:00 PM and 2:00 PM. Ridership has been sporadic with from 2 to 6 passengers per day. Nonetheless, the residents have been very grateful since they were previously having to walk down a hill and approximately ¼ mile to reach the bus stop. To accommodate the deviation, Ms. Shealy was able to work with Heatherwood Apartments, also located on Chateau Dr., to reduce their pick-ups from every trip to four times per day as well.

Commissioner Wachsteter asked about the Route Study and enquired about alternatives to standard bus service, noting that many Georgia Highlands College students don't have transportation to school. Mr. Milam stated that we can reach out to the school's administration to see if there might be a partnering opportunity where they could connect to our service at a transfer point. Ms. Shealy added that current federal regulations for small urban systems like Rome's prohibit buses from going further than 0.75 miles outside of their fixed routes which limits the potential for direct service to the college.

### Proposed Tripper Contract for FY2016

Mr. Milam reported the Rome Board of Education is planning their budget for FY2016 which necessitates reviewing our contract with them. He presented a history of the contract amounts from 2005 to 2015 for the Committee to review that compared the City's cost to provide service with the contract amounts. Mr. Milam noted that depreciation and labor are big factors in the City's cost. Currently we are funding 28% of the cost of Tripper services out of the General Fund. Increases have been irregular with no increase at all in some years. The General Fund share of the cost has ranged during this recent time frame from 11% to 28%, and he stated that it is appropriate to increase the contract at this time.

Mr. Milam explained that \$1.6 million budgeted this year is for the Tripper services alone. We get federal funding for our total program which is applied to all services - Tripper, Main Line and Paratransit. Our local share can come from both the General Fund and the BOE contract. Commissioner Wachsteter noted that he thought the intention was to eventually have 100% of the cost of the service borne by the Board of Education. Mr. Milam replied that although we have wanted the Board to bear the cost, we also didn't want to force them to increase the school tax when the economy was bad. Mr. Milam recommended a 3% increase in FY2016 to the Board of Education for Tripper service.

Commissioner Lee moved to increase the contract amount by 3% for FY2016. Commissioner Canada seconded. The motion carried.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### Star Spangled Banner Flag (May 22 – July 6)

Mr. Foy reported there is an approved schedule for flying the Star Spangled Banner flag. Until recently the large 50-star American flag has been displayed. Since it has been aloft continuously from September 2014 it has sustained some damage that is being assessed for possible repair. The City has purchased a smaller flag to be flown in the interim which will be raised today. The large Star Spangled Banner flag will be flown next on May 22 and through Memorial Day and again for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Request to Install Bench in Veteran's Plaza

Mr. Foy reported that Cemetery Director Stan Rogers received a request by Ms. Sharon Steele-Smith of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) to install and dedicate a bench in Myrtle Hill Cemetery. Mr. Rogers introduced Ms. Steele-Smith who is the First District Director of the Georgia Division of the UDC. Mr. Rogers also noted that along with Mr. Foy and Mr. Milam a good location for the bench near the Veterans Plaza has

been identified. Mr. Foy noted there is a similar bench on the opposite side from the chosen site which will give a symmetrical appearance.

Ms. Steele-Smith noted that this is a project of the Georgia Division in which benches have been placed in each of the five UDC districts in Georgia in commemoration of the Sesquicentennial of the War Between the States. Benches have already been placed at the Jefferson Davis capture site, the Confederate Cemetery in Forsyth, and most recently at the City Center in Swainsboro, Georgia. There are plans to place one in Athens as well. The cost of the bench and the installation will be borne by the Georgia UDC. The work will be performed by Southeast Vault and Monument in Swainsboro who will coordinate with Mr. Rogers. There will be a dedication on May 30th if approved by the Committee. Mr. Milam displayed an example of the bench for the Committee to review. He noted that the decision rests with this Committee. Commissioner Wachsteter asked what flags are in the design. Ms. Steele-Smith replied the design incorporates the American flag and the first flag of the Confederacy which is similar to the current Georgia State flag.

Commissioner Wachsteter moved to approve the request. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. Steele-Smith requested written confirmation of the approval. Mr. Rich replied that staff will provide her with a letter.

#### On-Street Parking on Portion of E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street

Mr. Milam reported it was brought to his attention a month ago that there has been on-street parking on a portion of E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Several departments have been involved in the issue including the Building Inspection Department and the Police Department. We currently do not have a 'no-parking' zone established along the right-of-way at this location so we are unable to enforce it currently. There has been parking on the right of way creating issues with shoulder damage and roadway obstruction. We don't normally establish 'no parking' zones in neighborhoods. Since this is a traffic issue, he asked Mr. Foy to review it from a traffic standpoint.

Commissioner Canada asked what has occurred recently to create a problem at this location. Mr. Milam said it was a combination of factors possibly relating to rental property and construction activity at properties on the street. It was noted that while the property at 408 E. 8<sup>th</sup> St. is owner occupied and going up for sale there are some rental properties on the street.

Mr. Foy reported that the traffic counter was set out at this location for seven days. His study concluded that there were over 4500 east bound vehicles during the week. The lanes are fairly narrow at only 10 feet wide, and there is an incline entering the street from Turner McCall Blvd. He added there is no curb and gutter. The posted speed limit is 25mph while the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile of the traffic travels at speeds up to 36mph. The Engineering Services Department provided a profile of the geometry of the hill from which Mr. Foy could apply design standards for sight distance on a hill. The required stopping sight distance at 35mph is 250 feet. Therefore, based on this study, he

recommended placing 'no parking signs' on either side of the road from the crest of the hill for a distance of 250 feet to the east.

Commissioner Wachsteter moved to approve the recommendation. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. Walstad complimented the Public Works Division for their thorough job and responsiveness to citizen concerns.

#### Request to Close Portion of Poinsettia Dr. in Atteiram Heights June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2-6 pm

Mr. Milam presented a request for a block party in Atteiram Heights on June 27<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 PM until 6 PM. He indicated this event was also done last year. Only a small portion of the street, approximately the width of one lot on Poinsettia Drive, will be blocked.

Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request. Commissioner Wachsteter seconded. The motion carried.

#### Memorial Day Celebration at Veteran's Plaza

Mr. Rogers reported that he was contacted by a Veterans group who want to hold a celebration on Memorial Day in Veteran's Plaza at Myrtle Hill. Mr. Milam added that there will be another celebration at Ridge Ferry Park. Mr. Rogers added that May is Historic Preservation Month. The staff of the tourism office will have an historic preservation booth in the park near the Myrtle Hill Mausoleum.

Commissioner Wachsteter noted that anyone wishing to honor a veteran with a commemorative brick can still purchase one from Tourism Director, Lisa Smith.

#### Traffic Congestion on Turner McCall Blvd.

Mr. Milam reported that since the congestion on Turner McCall Blvd. and Shorter Avenue has increased, he has asked Mr. Foy to review the timing of the signals in order to improve traffic flow. The last time the timing was adjusted was by a DOT contractor, but we are seeing the need to make some changes on our own. Mr. Foy added that he has been in contact with the DOT who will be releasing the task orders for retiming the traffic signals soon, so there will be another opportunity to work with the DOT contractors again. In the meantime, his crews are reviewing the timing and making repairs to pedestrian signals as needed

## MONTHLY REPORTS

### Departmental Reports

The Departmental reports were distributed for review.

### Joe Minter Appointed as Public Works Garage Director

Mr. Milam introduced Joe Minter who has recently been promoted to Public Works Garage Director. He has been employed in the Public Works Garage for over 17 years beginning as a heavy equipment mechanic and is well qualified to take on this position. He has already changed the department from two shifts to one making operations more efficient. This department supports all City departments.

## OTHER

Commissioner Wachsteter stated there is still a problem with people making a left turn into Riverbend Drive at the entrance from Turner McCall Blvd into the Kroger parking lot. He asked if the driveway island could be extended on the entrance with bollards to further discourage the illegal left turns. Mr. Milam stated that since the outside Turner McCall lane is a through-lane and not a turning lane, it would not be possible to place bollards.

Commissioner Wachsteter also asked if there could be “No Dumping” signs placed in the cul-de-sac on Jefferson Drive. Mr. Milam said that he would refer it first to Glen Rubin with the Code Enforcement Department for investigation of illegal dumping and an action assessment.

## ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Margaret Hollingsworth*

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary