



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

December 9, 2015 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. Patrick Eidson, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Kirk Milam, P.E., Public Services Manager
Mr. Steven Foy, P.E., Assistant Public Works Director
Ms. Sheree Shore, Finance Director
Mr. Aaron Carroll, Engineering Director
Major Debbie Burnett, Rome Police Department

STAFF: Ms. Sue Hiller, Planning Department Director
Ms. Janice Gibson, Transit Route Supervisor
Mr. Elander Graham, Transit Route Supervisor

GUESTS: Mr. Danny Alexander, President North Hills Neighborhood Association
Mrs. Annie Ruth Sikes, Member North Hills Neighborhood Association

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Canada called the meeting to order.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

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

POLICE REPORTS

November Traffic Accident /DUI Report

Major Debbie Burnett presented the November Traffic Accident/DUI Report. She noted that accidents were down by 1 from this time last year. The two alcohol-related fatalities involved a motorist and pedestrian. Both pedestrians were suspected of being under the

influence of alcohol. DUI arrests are staying consistent. *Following too Closely* remains the primary citation. Martha Berry Hwy at GA Loop 1 was the highest accident location.

TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Financial Report

Ms. Shore presented the October financial report. She noted that Main Fare Box receipts are down by 11%. Tripper service is expected to be over last year because of the additional routes added. On Paratransit, she noted the DHR contract reimbursement gets behind periodically and is currently about two months behind. Under Federal Cash Grants and Reimbursements, there is a lot of activity for the month with some operating and capital reimbursement that has come through.

On the expense side, she noted there are some negative numbers that are due to quarterly allocations. All the labor and across all services total about 9% above last year, which are due to some pay increases and having all positions filled. She added the RouteMatch software implemented in 2014 comes with a fairly substantial service contract that wasn't previously budgeted. Total Expenses are a little up over last year.

Commissioner Wachsteter noted that the study sent out by Ms. Hiller was excellent, noting that it showed some of our stops were not being used. This is indicative that we are not providing what the consumer wants. Mr. Milam agreed the study provided some excellent information noting that part of the analysis shows we are hitting good areas demographically while headway makes a big difference on ridership. If we can reduce some of our stops he noted we may be able to reduce that headway to improve ridership.

Commissioner Wachsteter added that down the road we may want to consider whether or not the citizens would want this service as part of their tax base. Mr. Milam noted there is a substantial part of what we do that allows us to operate the tripper service. If we take it out of the Transit arena with federal dollars, it would have a big impact on the Board of Education. Ms. Hiller noted that Rome is the smallest City in Georgia that has a transit system. She added that it is not so much how many people use the system but that those that do use it have no other option for transportation. Mr. Milam added that we have established some new Stops to accommodate new development, which is a policy that will continue.

RouteMatch Demonstration

Mr. Milam introduced route supervisors, Janice Gibson and Elander Graham, and invited them to demonstrate the RouteMatch software. They demonstrated live examples of buses in operation showing how their location and schedule could be viewed. Ms. Gibson noted that riders with smart phones will be able to scan a QR code at a STOP to receive information on the location of their bus and its estimated time of arrival. The software can facilitate Paratransit scheduling, GPS tracking, and reminder calls to paratransit riders. In the case of emergencies such as school closings due to severe weather, notification can be instantly sent out to all drivers to know when they need to

come in to report to the schools for early dismissal. She demonstrated how she can track regular riders' schedules as well as unscheduled trips in the scheduling module.

Mr. Graham also presented a video taken on a bus to demonstrate the automated audio stop announcements along with a lighted marquee showing upcoming stops. Ms. Gibson added that the riders waiting at the transfer station will be able to see where their bus is located and whether or not it is expected to arrive on time.

Commissioner Wachsteter asked how people qualify for Paratransit. Ms. Gibson stated they have to fill out a detailed application and produce medical verification from their doctor of their disability. The system is capable of issuing an invoice Commissioner Wachsteter asked the cost of a Paratransit ride. Ms. Gibson said that it is \$2.25 each way. Main Line is 60 cents each way with free transfers.

Commissioner Canada asked if this software was specifically for Transit systems. Mr. Milam added that it is designed specifically for Transit systems and is required by the DOT. Grant funding is available for the initial purchase but the recurring costs for annual license fees do not fall under grant funding.

Commissioner Wachsteter asked how many calls are received each day from riders outside our jurisdiction. Ms. Gibson responded that we get about five calls a week from county residents and neighboring town.

Commissioner Lee asked if every City has a transit system. Mr. Milam replied they do not. Rome is one of the smaller cities Georgia that has one. He added that industries contact us from time to time to request a bus stop at a particular location, which we try to accommodate as much as possible.

Commissioner Canada thanked Ms. Gibson and Mr. Graham for their presentation.

OLD BUSINESS

East Rome Baptist Church/Cedar Ave

Mr. Foy reported that since the last meeting the new pole is being set on Cedar Avenue today. The materials have been ordered and the signs should be installed before our next meeting.

GDOT Approval for Radar Enforcement

Mr. Foy reported that our recent request for updates to the radar enforcement list has been approved. The revised list includes Braves Blvd., part of the Armuchee Connector, as well as a school zone established at the new Anna K. Davie's school. There was also a section of South Broad Street that was annexed into the City some time ago but not updated on the radar list.

Commissioner Wachsteter moved to recommend approval of the revised list to the City Commission. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

Truck Parking in Residential Areas

Mr. Milam reported that in the October meeting we introduced the idea that we had some complaints about tractor trailer trucks being parked in residential areas. He presented a section of the code that was adopted in 1981 and readopted 1991 that prohibited large vehicles in residential areas. This was in the zoning section of the code.

When the ULDC was adopted in 2001 this entire section of the code along with some adjacent code were repealed. Some provisions of the zoning code were rewritten into the ULDC but that particular provision was not. He noted the intent was not to remove that provision entirely. After reviewing this with Mr. Eidson and Ms. Hiller it was agreed that this issue needs to be added back into the City code. He produced a draft of the code section to be added back which generally prohibits parking in the right of way in areas with any residential zoning.

Mr. Danny Alexander, President of the North Hills Neighborhood Association requested permission to address the Committee. Mr. Alexander noted that North Hills is an older established neighborhood with a mix of elderly residents who are still driving and young skateboarders. He noted that with this type of vehicle parked on the street along with any other kind of service vehicle, such as landscapers, in the vicinity. It is very difficult for a car to pass. He expressed concern for the safety of residents as well as the damage to property values. He added there has already been an instance where a home buyer has rejected a prospective home based on the tractor trailer parked on the street.

Commissioner Wachsteter asked if this code was implemented, what would stop residents from just putting the vehicle in their driveway or on their property. Ms. Hiller interjected that the ULDC has provisions that prohibit commercial vehicles on the property. Major Burnett asked if vehicles performing services at a residence would be in violation. Mr. Milam added that any vehicle that is the process of providing services such as a landscaper would not be prohibited.

Commissioner Wachsteter moved to recommend this change to the City Code be forwarded to the City Commission for approval with review of the City attorney. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Norfolk Southern Lease for Existing Trails

Mr. Milam reported there have been ongoing discussions with Norfolk Southern Railroad regarding the presence of our trails over the top of the levy, which is their property. This encompasses the E. 12th Street section of the trail which encompasses the Bob Moore Bridge to East 12th Street. The agreement we have with them is for the use of the property as a levy, but they have pointed out to us this past year that we need to have a lease

agreement even though we are moving towards them conveying it to us. They have given us two lease agreements for two different properties, the one that goes up to the Robert Redden Bridge and the section going to the Bob Moore Bridge. The lease agreement is necessary and it has been reviewed by the City Attorney. He recommended we accept these agreements in order for to move forward.

Commissioner Lee moved to recommend the agreements to the City Commission for approval. Commissioner Wachsteter seconded. The motion carried.

Eastview Cemetery Site Improvements

Mr. Foy reported that since the former Cemetery office building has been demolished in Eastview Cemetery, and we have prepared the site for cemetery plots. He presented photos of the site for the Committee. Additional trees have been installed along the back side to define the area. The Engineering Services Department has prepared a layout of the area where approximately 1000 grave spaces will be created.

Revisions to ULDC for Stormwater Management

Engineering Services Director, Aaron Carroll presented proposed revisions to the ULDC for stormwater management. He noted that being included as an NPDES Phase II community requires both the City and the County to modify the ULDC to comply with State mandates. The County will be approving these same changes at their next Public Works meeting. Most of the changes apply to water quality. This is related mostly to pollution and suspended solids. In the design phase we have to address this in all of our sites.

In the past a detention pond on private property would have been covered by an easement, which can make maintenance tricky. The county has a provision where retention ponds are created on county lots by themselves which is what the City will be doing going forward. Detention ponds must have an all-weather access road that is approved by the Public Works Director.

Under maintenance responsibilities he noted that some ambiguities will be cleared up with regards to residential areas. He noted that "single family residential" excludes other types of residential areas that should be included.

In the past we have had trouble with Commercial zones where the property owner was responsible for detention ponds. Commercial property owners must sign a maintenance agreement showing their intent to maintain it properly or to reimburse the City if they have to step in to do it for them.

Mr. Milam said we need a recommendation to send these changes to the Planning Commission for review. Ms. Hiller noted that from the Planning Commission to both the City and County Commission for approval.

Commissioner Wachsteter moved to forward the recommendation to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

Commissioner Wachsteter noted that cyclists are concerned about the deep stormwater drains on 1st Avenue.

Request to Close Alley Off Superba Avenue

Mr. Milam presented a letter requesting the closure of an alley between two properties off Holston Gas. He noted that one leg of the alley abuts other property owners who have not been contacted for approval. In light of that, he recommended approval to close the leg of the alley that is bounded on both sides by Holston Gas.

Commissioner Lee moved to approve the request to close the alley off Superba Avenue between the two parcels owned by Holston Gas. Commissioner Wachsteter seconded. The motion carried.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Departmental Reports

The monthly reports were distributed for review.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Canada noted that this is his last meeting of this Committee and he thanked the staff for their professionalism and hard work over all years he has worked with them. He added that it has been an honor to work with everyone. Commissioner Wachsteter echoed his sentiments in appreciating staff for their devotion and the great job they do. Mr. Milam thanked the Commissioners for their leadership over the years.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Hollingsworth

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary