



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

January 14, 2014 10:00 a.m.
Sam King Room – 601 Broad Street

PRESENT: Commissioner Kim Canada, Chairman
Commissioner Milton Slack
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager
Mr. Kirk Milam, Public Services Manager
Mr. Steven Foy, Assistant Public Works Director
Ms. Kathy Shealy, Transit Department Director
Ms. Sheree Shore, Finance Director
Mr. Aaron Carrol, Engineering Department Director
Sgt. Chris Dehart, Rome Police Department
Ms. Amanda Carter, DDA

GUESTS: Ms. Claire Cunningham, Valleybrook Drive Resident
Mr. Devon Michaels, Ledbetter
Ms. Elena Beeman, Ashland Park Apts. Property Manager
The Ward family, Ashland Park Apts. residents

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Canada called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He noted that Commissioner Lee would not be present.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

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

POLICE REPORTS

Lt. Dehart presented the December Accident Report. He noted there were 200 accidents in December which is consistent with December of last year where we had 197. There were no fatalities during the holidays. Injuries were down from 73 last year to 59 this year. Fines and forfeitures are down slightly. The traffic unit is now almost fully staffed and bicycle officers should be back soon after new recruit training is complete.

Commissioner Canada noted that he has seen signs around town about seatbelts. Lt. Dehart replied that a program was begun last year where the police department focuses aggressive enforcement on a specific accident related issue for four days out of each month. This month the focus is on seatbelt violations. Signs are posted and monthly to increase public awareness. Officers are rotating their time at high-incident locations and state corridors around town for two days out of the month, and the other two days are focused on speeding issues. The program will be evaluated after six months. He added that DUI enforcement has recently increased with officer Thacker back from his training.

Mr. Milam noted that East 12th Street at East 2nd Ave has made the highest accident location list, which is unusual. He asked Lt. Dehart if he had any insight into that. Lt. Dehart replied that accidents are primarily related to motorists pulling out onto East 12th in front of moving vehicles. Commissioner Canada noted at the Martha Berry Blvd/Veterans Memorial Hwy intersection there isn't a keep moving sign. Mr. Rich added that he believed there had been a sign there at one time. Mr. Milam stated staff would look into it.

TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Financial Report

Ms. Shore presented the November financial report. She reported that revenues are about the same although the DHR supplement is down. She noted that although Family and Children Services is distributing the passes, the DHR supplement is still not being used. Ms. Shealy added that as a result, they are not ordering as many passes as they once did. Commissioner Canada asked if they can be used with other modes of transportation such as taxis. Ms. Shealy replied they can only be used on the Main Line transit service.

Ms. Shore reported that Tripper Service and Main Line service are both up slightly. Paratransit is on target with last year. Advertising revenue has been down most of the year. Under *Cash Grants and Reimbursements*, she noted a large amount was operating capital to purchase some buses. On the expense side, she noted that Labor and Fringe Benefits are \$88,000 above where we were last year. Materials and Supplies appear down but there is a large quantity of fuel that is shown under special projects because there was a one-time grant for fuel. Overall expenses are down from last year while the cash balance continues to build at \$837,853 up from \$319,706 at this period last year.

Commissioner Canada asked if we have received any benefits from fuel reduction costs yet. Ms. Shealy said yes but we will see more through January. Commissioner Slack asked the status of staffing. Ms. Shealy replied the department is down by 2 drivers, 1 mechanic position and a shop supervisor. She noted there has been a lot of family medical leave which has increased cost.

2015 Local and State Road-E-O

Ms. Shealy said it has been 8 years or longer since we have participated in a Road-E-O for bus drivers. She noted that it is excellent training. Hopefully another will be held

locally in May. The State competition will be held in Athens in June. The two top winners of local go to a state competition and the two top state winners go to national.

Pilot Service to Ashland Park Apartments

Ms. Shealy reported the 90-day pilot service for Ashland Park Apartments started the first week of October through December. The ridership is still low but those that have used it are very grateful for the service. The service will be continued for the time being. Mr. Milam said he wants to put information from this service into the route study to help us evaluate its effectiveness.

Service Request to Oak Ridge Apartments

Ms. Shealy reported a service request has been received from the Oak Ridge Apartments off Chateau Drive. They have requested service several times but the turn-around space has been an issue as well as the time it would take to accommodate a route. She noted she is continuing to look for a solution and is considering a route deviation with the complex calling for rides as needed. She added that many of the residents may qualify for Paratransit so and eight Paratransit applications were submitted from the complex in December. Mr. Milam noted there are no sidewalks in the area or enough room to build a pad for a bus stop. Staff will work with the property owners to address these issues.

OLD BUSINESS

Crescent Ave. Bridge Construction Update

Mr. Milam gave an updated the committee on the Crescent Avenue Bridge construction project. He reported the super structure has been set. The bridge deck has been poured and they are now working on the tie-in to the neighborhood on Crescent Avenue and to Cave Spring Rd. Weather has been a factor but hopefully the project will be completed in about 6 weeks.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed Sidewalk and ADA Access to Bridgepoint Plaza Restaurant

Mr. Milam reported on a request from Ledbetter Properties. He introduced Devon Michaels from Ledbetter who is asking for approval for improvements to the West 1st St. section of the Cotton Block where they are developing the Gibson Restaurant. He presented a drawing of the proposed improvements which includes a handicap ramp. The plan will require the elimination of two parking spaces at the entrance and the construction of sidewalk at their expense.

Mr. Rich noted that the plan that was previously approved was never executed. From the staff perspective, this is a much better plan. Mr. Milam added that lighting will be reviewed, but there is no requirement for lighting with regards to a pouring license in this area.

Commissioner Slack moved to approve the improvement plan for the cotton block plan as presented for the Bridgepoint Plaza restaurant. Commissioner Canada seconded. The motion carried. Commissioner Canada invited Mr. Michaels to attend the caucus for the next City Commission to discuss the project.

Proposed Garage Access to 225 Broad Street Property

Mr. Milam presented request from Mark Cockran on behalf of his client, J.C. Abdou, who is renovating the old Darling Pet building in the 300 block of Broad St. The project will include the construction of apartments upstairs and commercial space downstairs. The rear of the building will be reconfigured with a single car garage inside. The proposed garage doors will require curb cuts and a drive apron the width of the sidewalk. He added there are no restrictions on curb cuts in the downtown blocks. He has no objection as long as they are parking all the way in the garage and not on the sidewalk. This request has been taken to the Historic Preservation Board and was referred back to this committee for approval on the curb cut.

Commissioner Canada moved to approve the request. Commissioner Slack seconded. The motion carried.

N. Second Ave. Pedestrian Crossing Safety

Mr. Foy reported that the crosswalk at N. Second Ave. has a green signal at the same time as traffic. There is a right turn lane going east bound where motorists don't tend to expect pedestrians and are not as likely to yield at this location as they would at others. Steven said so and so has an idea for making a modification. Mr. Milam added this is a case where those that are turning right are supposed to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk but because there is a skew to the alignment, they are not inclined to yield. Mr. Foy added that he has met with the DOT traffic engineer, who has a plan for modifications to improve this problem. He will update the committee after meeting to discuss the modifications.

DDA Request Downtown Street Closures in 2015

Mr. Foy presented the DDA request for closures for the First Friday Concerts and Block Party. Amanda Carter stated this is the exact same request as last year.

Commissioner Canada moved to approve the request as presented. Commissioner Canada seconded. The motion carried.

OTHER

Commissioner Canada recognized the guests and invited them to introduce themselves. Ms. Elena Beeman, property manager at Ashland Park Apartments, introduced the Ward family, who are veterans that recently relocated to Rome and live at Ashland Park. She thanked the

Commission for the bus service at the apartments and noted that the residents are very appreciative and hoping the service continues. Commissioner Canada noted that the service was discussed earlier in the meeting, and there are plans to continue the service. He thanked them for attending.

Mr. Milam reported that he received a request just this morning from Ms. Claire Cunningham to re-install a multi-way Stop on Valley Brook Drive. Ms. Cunningham introduced herself stating she lives on Shadowood Drive. She runs regularly on Valleybrook Drive where speeding is a great concern. She added that she polled several of her neighbors who also want the stop sign back. Mr. Milam reviewed the history of the Stop sign for the Commission. He noted that this is the most contested multi-way Stop intersection that he has ever been involved with. The Stop sign was first installed when Maplewood East was being developed in 2002 the residents of Maplewood Park petitioned to place the multi-way stop at Shadowood Drive and Lurchris Drive because of all the construction traffic. After Maplewood East was completely built out in 2010, their homeowners association petitioned to remove the multi-way Stops. At that time we removed the Stop at Shadwood Drive. Lt. Dehart stated that the street is not approved for radar but they can place the speed monitor at that location to help deter speeding. Commissioner Canada noted that staff will continue to study the problem and endeavor to find ways to improve the situation with resident input. Ms. Cunningham thanked Commissioner Canada adding that the speed limit sign on Valley Brook Drive is not placed in a very visible location. She requested it be relocated. Commissioner Canada said that staff can relocate the sign placement. Ms. Cunningham thanked the Committee for their time and attention to her concerns.

Kirk said last year the city entered into an agreement with DIGGS, which is a program for mentally challenged adults, allowing them to use a city building which is adjacent to the swim center in North Rome near Eastview Cemetery. He noted they have been holding arts and crafts classes in this building and they sent a very nice Christmas card to City staff containing a collage of photos of their members working on crafts in appreciation for the space.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Departmental Reports

The Departmental reports were distributed for review.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Hollingsworth

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary