



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

April 13, 2016 10:00 a.m.
Sam King Room – 601 Broad Street

PRESENT: Commissioner Sundai Stevenson, Chairwoman
Commissioner Sue Lee
Commissioner Milton Slack
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager
Mr. Kirk Milam, P.E., Public Services Manager
Mr. Chris Jenkins, Public Works Director
Mr. Steven Foy, P.E., Assistant Public Works Director
Ms. Sheree Shore, Finance Director
Ms. Kathy Shealy, Transit Department Assistant Director
Officer Mike Simmons, Rome Police Department

GUESTS: Ms. Esther Vaughn, 32 Gibbons St.
Ms. Julia Russell, 15 Birch Place, Adairsville, GA
Ms. Iris Kinnebrew, 216 Kingston Ave.
Ms. Henrice Berrien, 37 Gibbons St.
Ms. Danette Shropshire, 102 Gibbons St.
Commissioner Bill Collins, Rome City Commission

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Stevenson called the meeting to order.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

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

POLICE REPORTS

March Traffic Accident /DUI Report

Mr. Simmons gave the police report. He noted there were 218 accidents for the month of March up from 211 at this time last year. There were 14 DUI arrests, down from 31 last year. Total traffic cases for month were 1,077, up from 944 last year. Total general cases and parking violations were down slightly.

The highest accident intersection was Turner McCall Blvd/Riverside Parkway with 10 accidents. Veteran's Memorial Hwy/Martha Berry Blvd had 9 accidents and the Shorter Avenue/Redmond Circle/Coosawattee Avenue intersection had 8. Following Too Close and Failure to Yield remain the main citations issued. Mr. Milam noted Mr. Foy has advised DOT to give some consideration to improvements to the signal timing at Callier Springs Road and US411 since guests discussed it at a recent City Commission meeting.

TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Financial Report for February 2016

Ms. Shore presented the February Financial report. She noted that Main Line and Paratransit Service fares were up for the month and year. Tripper Service was up due to increased routes. Advertising revenue is in line. There weren't any unusual expenses this month. Total expenses are down from last year mainly in depreciation. The cash balance is a little over \$1.1 million versus \$924,000 at this time last year.

Funding for NTD Reporting and Route Match Product Support

Ms. Shealy reported that to qualify for Federal or State funding she is required to submit an NTD (National Transit Database) report annually. The report includes certified audit figures, information about the buses, routes and ridership. A specified number of passenger surveys must be performed each year as well. State DOT has always had dedicated contract personnel to provide the analysis needed to complete the surveys, but changes in contractors last year resulted in Transit systems having to pay the \$25,168 consulting fee for preparing their surveys.

DOT is allowing this cost to be listed as a capital expense this year and eligible for grant reimbursement, so Rome will only have to pay 10% of the total cost, but we don't know how it will be next year. We are only required to complete the survey every three years. Ms. Shealy added that the State continues to work with us and other systems to resolve this going forward but this year, our drivers are collecting the survey data. Mr. Milam noted that in the past the DOT consultant has prepared the data we provide from our surveys for submittal in their report format. In the future, we may consider doing this reporting in-house to avoid the consultant fee.

Ms. Shealy reported the period of product support that was included with the initial purchase of the RouteMatch software and hardware has expired. Ongoing support will cost about \$5,000 per year going forward. This expense isn't eligible for Capital funding yet but she is talking with the State about changing that. Mr. Milam noted that the software has many beneficial features including automatic call-in's to paratransit customers to schedule pick up times and we are able to provide information to riders about where buses are located and when they will arrive at rider locations.

OLD BUSINESS

Request to Rename Gibbons St

Mr. Milam recalled that in February we received a petition to rename Gibbons Street in honor of Reverend Nim Russell. He recapped the proceedings thus far and presented a map for the Committee with property owners in favor and opposed indicated. Commissioner Stevens reported that she received a letter from the North Georgia Missionary Baptist Association last Sunday in opposition to the change. Mr. Milam noted that although some non-residents have expressed an opinion about the proposed change, the documentation focuses on the property owners and residents.

Commissioner Stevenson invited those guests who so desired to address the Committee. Initially and through the course of the meeting comments were made by Ms. Kinnebrew (opposed), Ms. Shropshire (opposed), Ms. Vaughn (in favor), Commissioner Collins (in-favor), Ms. Berrien (opposed), Ms. Ford (opposed), and Ms. Russell (in-favor).

Commissioner Slack, who attended as the proxy for Commissioner Bill Irmischer, read a letter from Commissioner Irmischer in which he stated his full support for honoring Rev. Russell. Commissioner Irmischer's letter also noted that he felt a community center, a statue or bust near the church would be a more appropriate lasting memorial.

Commissioner Slack suggested the option of renaming the portion of Spider Webb Drive next to the church and continuing east as *Nim Russell Drive*, and to rename the section of Gibbons Street south of MLK Jr. Blvd next to the church *Nim Russell Circle*.

Commissioner Lee noted that she grew up in North Rome and believes that since residents care about the history of Gibbons Street, we shouldn't change the name. She also believes Rev. Russell needs to be honored but noted there are many deserving citizens who merit streets being named after them. If a precedent is set it could present difficulties for residents going forward.

Mr. Milam said the reason these types of requests come to this Committee is because platting and naming streets is a Public Works issue. The purpose of the petition process is to try to develop a consensus. The final decision will always fall to the City Commission. Because it is ultimately a decision that will be made by the City Commission and in the absence of reaching such a consensus in the Committee Mr. Milam recommended forwarding the matter to the City Manager and Mayor for further deliberation and possible referral directly to the City Commission.

Commissioner Slack made a motion for Mr. Milam to take this request to staff to consider all options for honoring Rev. Russell. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

Request to Close Alley Between Nixon/Hardy Avenues

Mr. Milam presented a request to close a portion of an alley between Nixon and Hardy Avenues. This is an unopened alley owned by the Laurel Street Group. Action was not taken last month because the last parcel owner could not be reached. The City has since sent a certified letter to them and has received no response. Since the alley is not being used by this parcel owner, staff is recommending the request be approved, which would begin the process of taking it to the City Commission as a Resolution. When the process has

concluded part of the alley will still be quit-claimed to the non-responsive adjoining parcel owner.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Redmond Road Crosswalk

Mr. Foy reported there have been requests by staff at both Redmond Regional Medical Center and the Harbin facilities across the street for a protected crosswalk between their facilities. We noted we recently added a protected turn arrow on that signal to improve safety. There is an existing sidewalk on the Redmond side but there is no sidewalk on the Harbin side although there is a grass island. He presented a new hybrid cross walk system that will be installed at the intersection of John Maddox Drive and Redmond Road. The crosswalk has lights embedded within the pavement that will light up when the ADA compliant button is pressed, otherwise pedestrians will disrupt a beam emitting from bollards at either end of the crosswalk as they walk through it.

Mr. Foy reported that he has applied for a 70/30 LMIG Grant from GDOT in the amount of \$36,000 with \$2000 of that reserved for the construction of a sidewalk on the Harbin side. With this grant, GDOT will cover 70% of the cost and the City will be responsible for 20%, although after meeting with the staff of Harbin and Redmond, they have agreed to share the cost of what is constructed in the right-of-way equally with the City.

Commissioner Lee noted her endorsement of the plan and was similarly expressed by common consent of the Committee.

DDA Traffic Requests for Broad Street

Mr. Milam presented a crosswalk design proposal originating with the Downtown Development Authority for Broad Street. He noted that this is for information only and does not require any action. The changes have already been presented to the Parking Committee for approval and have also been referred to the Public Arts Committee. The intent is to draw attention to the crosswalks on Broad Street for safety while also enhancing the appearance of the downtown area. He presented drawings of a new pavement graphic for the

crosswalks which will depict dancing feet, multi-colored bare feet and a hopscotch pattern.

Mr. Foy reported crosswalk lane delineators will also be installed on the dash line between the two lanes at the approaches to the mid-block crosswalks. These are standard signs that meet MUTCD requirements. He has applied for the same LMIG grant that is being used for the Redmond Rd. crosswalk to cover 70% of the cost of the delineators.

Mr. Foy presented a request from Commissioner McNiece to reduce the speed limit from 25 mph to 15 mph from the South Broad Street Bridge to Turner McCall. Mr. Foy and Mr. Milam reviewed the request and he recommends the speed be reduced instead to 20 mph between 2nd Ave and 6th Ave., leaving the 25 mph limit beyond that section.

Commissioner Slack moved to approve reducing the speed limit between 2nd Ave and 6th Ave to 20 mph. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

Truck Traffic on Huffaker Road

Mr. Foy reported resident Ronnie Abrams has periodically expressed concern about truck traffic on Huffaker Rd. He noted there is a fair amount of truck traffic with two signalized intersections at Shorter Ave. and Garden Lakes Blvd. He performed a classification count to determine the level of truck traffic. The average daily truck traffic counts near Technology Pkwy resulted in 14% of the total traffic being smaller trucks, and only 4% were larger tractor trailer-type trucks. There was no indication that any changes need to be made. This is for information only and no action is needed.

Signage for Mausoleum at Branham/S. Broad

Mr. Rogers reported the Mausoleum has been advertised in several different ways since it opened in 2013, but due to numerous questions about space availability, a sign will be installed next week at the South Broad St. and Branham Ave. intersection that contains the contact number and availability of both crypt and niche spaces. A photo of the sign was presented.

Flower Display Policy for Mausoleum

Mr. Rogers reported staff originally we did not want to allow flowers at the mausoleum, but over time families have been requesting this option. In order to maintain uniformity, he has created a flower policy that requires purchasing a vase that attaches to the crypt front from the Cemetery Department for \$400. The department will perform the installations. He noted the niche fronts are too small for flowers. He has prepared a letter to send to current owners of Mausoleum space notifying them of this policy and the availability of the vases.

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

Concert and Picnic on the Lawn at Myrtle Hill

Mr. Rogers reported there will be a concert and picnic on the lawn at Myrtle Hill on May 14th 2016 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. The event was initiated by the South Rome Redevelopment Committee and will be co-sponsored by the City, the South Rome Redevelopment Committee and several of the local funeral homes. The event will feature inspirational and patriotic music. The special needs choir, Just As I Am, and the Anna K. Davie Elementary Chorus, Lovejoy Baptist church blended choir and others will be performing.

Commissioner Stevens said this was announced at the Commission meeting on Monday night. Mr. Rogers said it should be approved at this committee first.

Commissioner Lee moved to approve the event. Commissioner Slack seconded. The motion carried.

Commissioner Slack asked how the rock garden is coming. Mr. Rogers said it is coming along. Several walls coming up the main drive are being repaired. The garden designed by Mr. John Shultz is progressing.

Request to Close a Portion of Crain St.

Mr. Jenkins presented a request to closes a portion of Crane Street. near 18th Street. He noted the new Davie's shelter is being constructed there. Because the ULDC requires curb and gutter, they would have to apply for a variance to avoid that expense. In order to help them as well as the City, staff came up with the alternative option of closing that portion of Crane Street between 18th Street and

19th Street. Removable bollards would be installed to prevent vehicle traffic while emergency vehicles could still be admitted by removing them if needed. There has been an ongoing problem about illegal dumping in the middle of this section where the shelter is being constructed. Closing the street off will eliminate this issue while the pedestrians and bicycles will still have access. The only house bordering the street has access on Hull Street.

Commissioner Slack moved to approve the recommendation as presented. Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

Request to Close a Portion of the Alley off Reservation Street

Mr. Jenkins reported that a resident of Reservation Street has requested to close a portion of the alley between Reservation Street and Stevens Street for a birthday party on April 16th from 12:00 noon until 7:00 pm. Mr. Milam added this closure has been done administratively for the past two years for block parties when the request came in after the Public Works meeting. The closure will not restrict access to any of the neighboring properties.

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

MONTHLY REPORTS

Departmental Reports

The monthly reports were distributed for review.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Hollingsworth

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary

Ms. Iris Kinnebrew stated that although she supports honoring Rev. Russell, she feels that after all the residents went through during Urban Renewal they shouldn't have to fight for their street again. She added that although she is not a current resident, her home place and history is still there. She also still owns property on the street and her brother lives there. She noted that she has had to move several times on Gibbons Street as well as others and some of her mail has continued to be miss-delivered to previous addresses.

Ms. Danette Shropshire stated that she grew up at 16 Gibbons Street and her mother still lives there. During the Urban Renewal project, her family had to temporarily move into the housing project. Her mother worked at Magic Touch Car Wash for 48 years to pay for this house and wants the address to remain the same.

Ms. Esther Vaughn stated that she and her family lost more than anyone during Urban Renewal because they also suffered the loss of businesses, yet she supports this change because the history of the street has long been disrupted. She added that Thankful Baptist Church originally faced Gibbons Street prior to the construction of the Life Center and changes brought on by Urban Renewal. She added that the tragedy that befell Rev. Russell made him uniquely deserving of this honor over past pastors.

Commissioner Collins stated that he is the originator of the proposed name change to ensure that Rev. Russell was honored for his ministry, the great work he did in the community, and for the great respect the community has for him. He noted that address change procedures are very common and not difficult to follow.

Ms. Henrice Berrien stated that her concern is not for general mail delivery but for important legal documents that would have to be changed that can have associated expenses. The people living on the street are the only ones who will be affected by a name change, so they should be the only ones involved in making the decision. She stated would like other options be considered to honor Rev. Russell, adding there already is a Russell Life Center at the church.

Ms. Burdell Ford noted there is a Russell Street already so this change would make a nearly double street name.

Ms. Vaughn added that Spider Webb Drive was named after Gene Webb who ran the café at Five Points so it would be unfair to change that street name. She added that Gibbons Street was originally named for a confederate soldier.

Ms. Russell stated that she was made aware that another effort had been made to rename this street for a different individual. Although this effort was dropped, she wants to be sure that if it should be rekindled, any other name change request that might come before this committee should be treated similarly.