



Chris Jenkins, *Director*
Justin Messer, *Assistant Director*
PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION

Cemetery Department

Jody Gonzales, *Superintendent*

Engineering Services

Aaron Carroll, *Director*

Public Works Vehicle Maintenance Department

Joe Krinke, *Superintendent*

Solid Waste Collections Department

Tim Garrett, *Director*

Solid Waste Processing & Disposal Department

Lee Stone, *Director*

Streets & Drainage Department

Chad Hampton, *Director*

PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSIT COMMITTEE
AND
TRAFFIC COMMISSION

February 8, 2023 10:00 AM.
Sam King Room - 601 Broad Street

PRESENT: Commissioner Beeman, Chair
Commissioner Collins
Commissioner Bojo
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager
Ms. Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Ms. Kelly Parker, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Mr. Chris Jenkins, Public Works Director
Ms. Toni Rhinehart, Finance Director
Ms. Kathy Shealy, Transit Director
Ms. Courtney Williams, Transit Assistant Director
Mr. Artegas Newell, Planning Director
Ms. Hannah Bagley, Keep Rome Floyd Beautiful Program Coordinator
Maj. Chris Dehart, Rome Police Department
Mr. Doug Walker, Public Information Officer
Ms. Julie Smith, Parking Service Manager

GUESTS: Mr. Harry Brock
Ms. Kelli Duncan, Revive Cycleworks, 301 N 5th Avenue

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Beeman called the meeting to order.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Collins moved to approve the minutes of the January meeting. Commissioner Bojo seconded. The motion carried.

POLICE REPORTS

Capt. Dehart presented the January Accident/DUI report. There was a total of 165 vehicle crashes down from 195 at this time last year. Private lot accidents were up 1 from last year at 65. Injuries were up from 53 last year to 67. There were 2 fatalities during the month, up from none at this time last year. DUI arrests were up from 18 last year to 29. Total traffic cases were down slightly from 789 last year to 751. There were no notable changes in trends. Following too closely remains the top cause of accidents. The time of accidents remains to and from work and lunch time.

The highest accident intersection as Veteran's Memorial Hwy @ New Calhoun Hwy with seven accidents, while the second highest was Martha Berry Hwy at/Veterans Memorial Hwy.

The total crashes for 2022 were 2,292 down slightly from 2021 at 2305 Total injuries for 2022 was 482 up from 477 in 2021. The total injuries were 738 in 2022 up from 700 in 2021. Accidents with fatalities were 7 in 2021 and 8 in 2022.

Mr. Carroll noted there was a recent crash on Riverbend Drive in the curve that we have been looking at recently. Maj. DeHart said the crash is still under investigation, but they believe alcohol was a factor. Commissioner Bojo asked if they have increased police presence in that area. Major. Dehart replied they have but driver behavior tends to improve when they are in the area. He added the grade of the curve is a greater factor than speed on Riverbend Dr. Mr. Carroll added that we are adding a high friction application to that curve next year that should help. Commissioner Bojo asked how much that application costs. Mr. Carroll replied that it will be \$40,000 for that area along with a stretch of Walnut Ave. that has a similar problem.

TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Transit Updates

Ms. Shealy reported there was a dedication for the new buses on January 31st. She noted that everyone is proud of them and the public seem to be very happy with them.

Ms. Griffin reported the advertising package will go out for bid this week and will run through February 28th. We will offer local advertisement on the bus but we are also working on digital advertisements. There will also be a display for the Transit transfer station.

Commissioner Beeman asked advertising will be affordable. Ms. Griffin replied there will be affordable advertising available both on the back of the bus as well as the interior.

Ms. Griffin reported that free rides were 100% funded with the Covid funding which we passed along to our riders, but this year that source is no longer available. She added that ridership increased 80% since 2021 after COVID and we are now a 20% ridership increase over previous years.

Ms. Shealy noted that the public have really appreciated the passenger appreciation day which usually occurs in May or October. We hope to be able to that again but can't confirm it at this time.

Financial Report

Ms. Rhinehart reported the year end financial statement has not been closed out as yet and will be presented at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

River District Update

Mr. Carroll reported there will be an onsite plan review in mid-March. Our goal is to have the plans completed by mid to late April. He noted that GDOT will rebid their North 2nd Avenue project in mid-April as well. They had estimated the project at \$10 million but the last bid came in a \$20 million. The project is estimated to take 2 ½ years.

Ms. Duncan asked if the walk through would include business owners. Mr. Carroll reported this is for the designers to visually check their plans on paper against what is actually on the ground. He added there is a realignment to Avenue A that will not be part of the roundabout. Staff will share those plans with business owners as they become available. Ms. Duncan noted that pedestrian safety is a concern in that area and she would like a conversation about how to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists as well as to slow down traffic. Mr. Rich said part of our goal is to create a more walkable area which a streetscape will provide. The roundabout will provide traffic calming. She asked if the speed tables used on Broad Street could be used on 5th Avenue as a temporary measure. Mr. Brock reported that we have requested rezoning in that area to promote convenient pedestrian access.

Mr. Carroll said there is a current plan for a crosswalk at the end of the bridge where the road will be reduced to two lanes.

Lavender Drive Sidewalk

Mr. Carroll reported the sidewalk from in front of West Central Elementary up to Redmond Circle are in place. The grassing is still to be completed. He added there are two connections from the new sidewalk to the GE trails. WE have processed and received

a special encroachment permit that will allow us to continue sidewalk construction westerly and southerly along Redmond Circle to West Butler Street.

NEW BUSINESS

Mitchell Plaza Tree Removal

Mr. Jenkins reported the roots of the trees alongside the fountain at Mitchell Plaza have been breaking up the sidewalk and wall for some time now and need to be removed. The Mitchell family is aware of this and are in agreement.

Public Works Division Updates

Mr. Jenkins updated the Committee on Public Works projects. He noted the Dodd Blvd pipe project is a high priority. There are several places where there are holes where dirt is falling in giving the appearance of sink holes. Insight Engineering has estimated 1.4 million to dig the pipe up, and replace it, or we could go with another option, to repair the pipe for \$965,000 which is a process of coating the inside of the metal pipe with concrete to seal any holes.

Mr. Jenkins reported we just received approval for our Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) funding for \$484,000. This will pave 4.25 miles. We select a mile from each quadrant of the City. He noted that although the cost of paving has increased \$100/ton while our grant money has not increased. We are hoping that GDOT will raise the grant funding in 2024.

Trails – Mr. Jenkins reported we are doing some work on the trails and the Street Department will be doing some work at lake Conasauga this year.

The Mausoleum will be pressure washed this year to clear up some mold and mildew. There are also some walls in Myrtle Hill that have fallen and need repair. We are also looking into an automated gate for closing at night. This should help with some security issues as well.

The landfill financial assurance report to EPD is due soon. This report shows that we have the finances for post closure as well as new cells. Currently we have about \$10 million.

Commissioner Bojo asked if GDOT will pave 2nd Avenue this year. Mr. Carroll replied they will, and the bid has been awarded.

We have signed a contract with Northwest Georgia Paving to pave Redmond road for just over \$900,000. Mr. Carroll noted that an old lighting system for crossing Redmond Rd haven't been working for several years so they will be removed during this project.

OTHER

Committee Procedures

Ms. Hollingsworth noted that in recent years this meeting has become less formal and very popular attracting many attendees. Often attendees have discussed issues that weren't on the agenda, were not prepared for or didn't belong with this Committee. This resulted in discussions getting on tangents that carried on as long as two hours.

After reviewing procedures over the years, the main thing that could help increase our efficiency would be for all potential agenda items, regardless of where they originate, be referred to the Public Works office first. Most residents' issues can either be handled as a routine work order, or will require further investigation or study. If visitors are referred to our offices first, we can determine whether the issue should become an agenda item and if I should, we can begin investigating the issue and/or preparing a study if needed. If we do not have time to complete an investigation or study before the meeting, we may then choose to postpone that item until the next meeting. In this way, we can come to the meeting ready with pertinent information or recommendations.

Mr. Rich added that we don't want to exclude anyone from attending a meeting, but we need to know when we are going to have a room full of people that may want to speak as we had at a recent meeting. Ms. Hollingsworth added that those unexpected guests were speaking about an issue that didn't belong in this Committee. Mr. Jenkins agreed, noting that it is a matter of courtesy for all concerned to be prepared in advance.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Hollingsworth

Margaret W. Hollingsworth, Secretary.