



## City of Rome Tree Board

### Minutes

January 17, 2022, 2:00 p.m.

Rome-Floyd ECO Center

Present: Hannah Bagley, Program Coordinator

John Hendrickson, Tree Board Chairman

Ernest Watson, City of Rome Arborist

Chad Hampton, City of Rome Street Department Director

Seth Hawkins, Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator

Dave Long, Community Forester

Michael Skeen, Floyd County Public Works Director

Mary Hardin Thornton, City of Rome Special Projects Manager

Keith Mickler, University of Georgia Extension Coordinator

Pam Roberts, Tree Board Member

Georgia Burns, Tree Board Member

#### **Call to Order:**

This meeting was called to order by John Hendrickson. The minutes from the November 14th meeting were approved by common consent.

#### **Reports:**

##### **City of Rome**

Chad Hampton reported that in the month of December, 16 trees were removed, 0 trees were installed, and 272 hours were devoted to tree maintenance. 2022 concluded with 230 trees removed, 40 trees installed, and 4716.6 hours of tree maintenance total. A 2023 year-to-date report will be provided at the March 21st meeting.

##### **Floyd County**

Michael Skeen stated that reports from December and YTD have been delayed due to storms and the holidays.

### **Georgia Power**

Josh Athen reported through email that Georgia Power is currently doing no trimming, and reports for trimming will come later. Georgia Power is also executing easements, meaning they are giving twenty thousand dollars for planting trees at the park. Jamie McCord, County Manager wants to put tree funds into any trails or other open areas in need of trees. Michael Skeen will be getting quotes this week, and trees will be ordered by the first week of February. Possible species include oaks and willow oaks. However, with utility lines going underground, thus making old tree removals more difficult, not all of the sites have been approved.

### **Educational Committee**

Keith Mickler has proposed a new committee to plan educational programs, involving any interested Tree Board members. More information will follow.

### **Georgia Forestry**

Seth Hawkins introduced our new Community Forester, Dave Long. Together, they will cover both Floyd County and the City of Rome. They did not have any fire report to give, because they have been preparing for fire breaks.

The Georgia Forestry Council will be sending a representative to the City of Rome and Floyd County's Arbor Days. There will also be a state-wide conference in Cumming, Georgia. Attendance for all Georgia Tree Board members is strongly encouraged. Thirty dollars will cover three City Board representatives.

There are two small scale tree planting grants that are available for our use. The first will be Making the Shade for elementary schools, and the second grant is ReLeaf. ReLeaf is responsible for developing programs to come alongside communities to grow your own trees and nurseries.

The Georgia Forestry Council also offers storm mitigation planning resources to both city and counties across the state. Tree Board members are encouraged to ask for pamphlets and education materials for the public.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Mitchell Plaza**

Mary Hardin Thornton and Chad Hampton reported that the Mitchell Plaza trees have been deemed a project that the City of Rome will have to address as a larger problem than previously anticipated. The Magnolia trees in question cannot be removed and transplanted due to their extensive root system, which runs under several buildings on Broad Street. Removal would lead to compromise of the Magnolias. One potential remedy is Green Grid Systems, which allow

roots to expand under sidewalks. The other idea is Silva Cell Systems, despite typically being used for pre-planning. This is now an Engineering and Public Works project. City Finance will be drawn from for the budget.

### **Arbor Day**

The G.E. Trails are our official Arbor Day location for 2023. Chad Hampton met with Julie Smith, and decided that 8 trees will be planted along the trailhead. There will be plenty of room in this area to facilitate. The celebration will involve Rome High School's marching band, JROTC, and FFA program.

### **Between The Rivers**

Ernest Watson is looking into multiple areas along 3rd Avenue, such as 300, 302, or 304 East 4th Street for future tree planting. Linda Jennings has stated that the Homeowners Association will pay \$1850 for the initial planting. Homeowners will also have opportunities to assist with future costs of tree care.

### **New Business:**

#### **Bring One for the Chipper Update**

The event totalled 121 trees recycled and 28 seedlings dispersed, including 14 White Oaks, 11 Yellow Poplars, and 3 Loblollies. Remaining seedlings will be planted at the City of Rome's nursery to be planted in the community later. 16 volunteers participated from Georgia Forestry Commission, Pepperell High School FFA program, City of Rome Tree Board, L & M Tree Service, and Keep Rome-Floyd Beautiful Board. In following years, we are considering having an actual chipper at the event. However, this may not be possible due to safety concerns.

Mary Hardin-Thornton announced that Tree Board members are invited to attend the ribbon cutting at Parks Hoke Park at 1:00 pm. This is important to us, as it was our Arbor Day location in 2020.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Sophia G. Swann*

Sophia G. Swann, Secretary