



GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE
Tuesday, April 26, 2022
Minutes

The City of Rome General Administration Committee met at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, April 26, 2022, in the Carnegie Training Room.

Members present:

Commissioner Bill Collins, Chairperson
Commissioner Jamie Doss
Meredith Ulmer, Asst. City Manager
Toni Rhinehart, Finance Director
Johnny Bunch, IT Director
Colt Gaston, RTC
Chris Boden, Rome City Schools

Commissioner Elaina Beeman
Sammy Rich, City Manager
Joe Smith, City Clerk
Kristy Shepard, HR/RM Director
Lief Smith, Stonebridge
Lisa Smith, Tourism / RTC
Mark Green, Recording Secretary

Members absent:

Andy Davis

Chairman Bill Collins called the meeting to order at 11:09 AM.

I. Minutes

The minutes from the October 26, 2021, meeting were approved by common consent.

II. New Business

2022 Rome City Schools Board of Education Election – Joe Smith

Joe Smith began, "As you all probably know, this is not a City election year. But we do have an unusual case. We have a vacancy on the Rome City Schools Board of Education. The vacant seat has been temporarily filled, but we will need to have a permanent replacement that will be decided during this year's election. What we need from you all today is approval of the resolution setting the qualifying fee." Smith explained to the committee that the qualifying fee would be 3% (of the annual salary).

Commissioner Collins commented, "You guys have probably not been up under a rock. Our election process in the City of Rome has changed a great deal... There was quite a bit of discussion at our Retreat about how our elections are being set up and ran." Collins notified the committee that the commission has asked the City Manager to explore what it would look like for the City to conduct its own elections.

MOTION: Commissioner Doss motioned to approve the resolution setting the qualifying fee to move forward and be read at the next City Commission meeting.

2nd motion: Commissioner Beeman seconded the motion.

Youth Council Discussion

Commissioner Elaina Beeman presented an idea for a Youth Council. Beeman began, "At GMA (Georgia Municipal Association Conference), I sat through a discussion on starting a Youth Council." Beeman described that a Youth Council would provide the youth in our community to have a voice. Beeman provided a document outlining Youth Councils from GMA and a Youth Council from Florida. Beeman provided a general composition of the Youth Council and continued to explain the various outlets for the proposed council to get involved.

Jamie Doss commented, "I say we give it a try." Sammy Rich commented, "... these are good models (referencing the two documents provided by Beeman outlining the formation of a Youth Council), and I don't think we could go wrong following a combination of both (models). We will take it from here, and we will have a report when we come back to General Administration.

**MOTION: Commissioner Doss motioned to move forward with the plan to start a Youth Council.
2nd motion: Commissioner Beeman seconded the motion.**

III. Old Business

City Commission Compensation – Kristy Shepard

Kristy Shepard presented a discussion regarding the compensation of City Commissioners. Shepard began, “In your packet, you will see information that I was able to obtain regarding the Mayor and Commissioner salaries... You can see, there are some (salaries) that are more than us and some that are less than us... You all would have to put forth a recommendation and a vote.”

Commission Collins commented, “I want to hear from Mr. Clerk. What does the (City) Charter say about the changes?” Joe Smith responded, “It would require a Charter amendment. I believe you can do that under the “Home Rule” provisions – meaning that does not take action under the Georgia General Assembly... if you all were to change it (Commissioner salaries) it would go into effect after the next election... if you were to make the change, it would be in effect as of January 2024.”

Collins commented, “This has been a conversation that has come up time and time again. It has been more than 10 years since this commission has had a change of compensation... We want to look at increasing the compensation for the commissioners. The commissioners’ work has more than tripled from twelve years ago.” Collins continued to outline additional reasons as to why he believes City Commissioner Compensation should be increased. Collins asked, “If there was a recommendation to go to \$12,000 - \$14,000, are we prepared for such endeavor?” Sammy Rich responded, “If you all were to increase to \$12,000, that would be net increase of \$32,760 to the budget for the salary portion... the total spent on Commission salaries would be \$109,200 per year.” Rich continued to provide the numbers on various increases to commissioner compensation and reminded the committee that any change to commissioner compensation would be effective no earlier than January 2024.

Beeman commented, “I know we are here for the service, and it is good to know that people appreciate your work. If it has been that long (since the commissioner compensation was adjusted), I say it is time for a change.”

Doss commented, “I would like to talk about this a minute. I see, right now, that we have two commissioner members, when you add up total pay and city contributions, we have two commissioners over \$20,000 right now. I think we must look at the total package... Deep inside, I feel like we don’t need commissioners to seek re-election because of some sort of compensation benefit. Community service needs to be the highest priority.” Doss commented, “The fact that I personally will have to vote on this, that is where I am having a problem.”

Collins commented, “It will be up to all the commissioners to vote this up or down. I would love to have it (a recommendation to increase City Commissioner compensation) leave this committee united. Doss commented, “That may not be the case.” Collins responded, “Alright. I will entertain a motion.”

**MOTION: Commissioner Beeman motioned to recommend that the Commissioner Compensation be increased to \$12,000 for each Commissioner and \$13,200 for the Mayor (subject to 10% premium of Commissioner salary)
2nd motion: Commissioner Collins seconded the motion.
Opposed: Commissioner Doss**

IV. Reports

Stonebridge Golf

Joe Smith introduced Lief Smith, the new manager for Stonebridge Golf, to the Committee. Lief Smith presented the reports for Stonebridge Golf. Smith began by giving a brief synopsis of his career. Smith commented, “I am happy to be back in the south. I am originally from Natchez Mississippi... I have a degree in political science and a master’s in administration.” Collins commented, “Welcome to Rome.”

According to the reports submitted, revenues are ahead of budget by \$27,000. Smith commented, “We are trying to stay ahead of budget... but it is all contingent on the weather.” Smith notified the committee of a few projects, which are underway at the course and pro shop. Joe Smith commented, “There is always something going on at the golf course.”

Joe Smith commented, “We finished the year in a good position for the last two years. We hope we will again this year.”

Rome Tennis Center

Gaston introduced himself as the new Manager for the Rome Tennis Center and presented the reports for the Rome Tennis Center. Colt provided the committee with a brief synopsis of his career path. Gaston notified the committee, due to merging software systems, the financial reports for RTC are currently unavailable.

Gaston continued, "My biggest goal is to build community with the Tennis Center." In addition to outlining changes that are taken place at RTC, Gaston notified the committee of several tournaments that are considering RTC to host their events.

Beeman questioned, "... I think about some of the summer camps like the Boys & Girls Club and YMCA. How are they able to take advantage of the tennis courts?" Gaston responded, "I think it will be through sit-down conversations. My door is always open, and we will find a way for those type of things. They are community builders."

Barron Stadium

Chris Boden provided a report for Barron Stadium to the Committee. Boden began, "I am Chris Boden, and I am the Athletic Director at Barron Stadium. Part of my responsibility is to manage Barron Stadium." Boden notified the committee of several past events that took place at Barron Stadium. In addition, Boden provided a financial report to the Committee.

Collins questioned, "Is there still talk of a professional soccer league coming to Rome?" Lisa Smith responded, "They are still very much interested...The games are typically on Saturday and Sunday."

OTS Report

Johnny Bunch commented, "Cameras are being installed at each intersection on Broad Street and on the building at Banty Jones Park, and this project should be completed by May 6th. Bunch continued to review the network security report.

Help desk tickets: Opened: 1,695 Closed: 1,541 Pending/Open: 154

The Granicus report indicates that 47 total views occurred. The viewership was led by Rome, Ashburn, Atlanta, Cartersville, and a host of other locations.

The MyRome Application had 22 work orders completed, and 2 are still in progress.

Human Resources Reports

Kristy Shepard presented reports for the Human Resources department. Shepard began, "We have a total of 662 positions filled... We currently have 32 open positions, and twelve of them are in Police." Shepard continued to give a brief overview of each of the reports she submitted.

Doss questioned, "Do we still have run-off claims?" Shepard responded, "Yes. We still have three."

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Green, Recording Secretary