



JOINT SERVICES COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2022, 8:30 AM.
SAM KING ROOM

PRESENT:

Sundai Stevenson, Mayor, Rome City Commission
Mark Cochran, Mayor Pro-Tem, Rome City Commission
Wright Bagby, Chair, Floyd County Board of Commissioners
Allison Watters, Vice Chair, Floyd County Board of Commissioners
Sammy Rich, City Manager
Jamie McCord, County Manager
Susie Glass, Director of Finance, Floyd County
Joe Smith, Clerk, City of Rome
Erin Elrod, County Clerk
Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Rob Ware, Mayor, Cave Spring
Jason West, Mayor Pro Tem, Cave Spring
Elaina Beeman, Commissioner, City of Rome
Virginia Harmon, County Attorney
Doug Walker, City of Rome Information Officer
Bekki Fox, Director of Community Development, City of Rome
John Blalock, Public Safety Division Director
Bruce Ivey, Transportation and Utilities Division Director/ Special Projects Manager
John Bailey, RNT
Doug Crowder, WRGA
Olivia West, WRGA

PRESENT VIA ZOOM:

Toni Rhinehart, Director of Finance, City of Rome
Todd Wofford, Floyd County Parks and Recreation Director

WELCOME:

Mayor Sundai Stevenson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The minutes of the June 7, 2022, meeting were approved by common consent.

BANTY JONES PARK UPDATE:

Bekki Fox began by presenting an overview of the revitalization of the John Graham Homes and East Rome Crossing and explained how Banty Jones Park has become a focus of this area. The City of Rome, in partnership with the Northwest Georgia Housing Authority, was awarded a Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant in 2019 in the amount of \$1.2 million dollars for this revitalization. \$400,000 from the grant along with \$850,000 of City of Rome Community Development Block Grant funds have been earmarked specifically for Banty Jones Park. As part of the park revitalization, a spray ground concept

was put out to bid and only one bid was received in the amount of \$1.3 million. The city has decided to regroup and ask for bids for specific design plans so that the project can then be bid out and constructed in a phased approach. Fox stated that a potential phase one would include demolition of old bathrooms and construction of new bathroom facilities as well as the spray ground. Other phases could be completed as funding became available. Bagby stated that he appreciated being shown how Banty Jones Park fit into the overall redevelopment picture and said the county has never been opposed to improving city parks and wanted to clear up that misconception. Wofford suggested that LOSE Design, the company that had been contracted to develop Parks & Rec's new master plan, look at the Banty Jones Park concept and provide feedback regarding the cost, staffing needs, and other recommendations. Rich agreed with Wofford stating that the city is relying on Parks and Rec to let the County know how the spray ground concept will best work. Commissioner Watters stated that this would give everyone the full picture that was needed. Wofford will discuss with LOSE to see what the added cost would be to evaluate the proposed spray ground project.

LOST UPDATE:

Commissioner Watters reminded the group that they had 24 more days to come to an agreement regarding the LOST negotiation. Commissioner Cochran stated that the city felt strongly about the position that they presented, as well as the data presented by the city's consultant but also stated that there is a willingness to negotiate with the county. Commissioner Watters stated that the county commissioners were firm on their position as well, disagreeing with the city's data assessment. She stated that the county would keep the current split but will seek a larger percentage if pushed. Watters also stated that with over 30 joint agreements both parties must be willing to cooperate and compromise. Mayor Stevenson also stated that she feels that both the city and the county need to give their best effort and compromise to come to an agreement. Mayor Rob Ware stated that although the portion of the sales tax that Cave Spring receives is small, it is essential to provide services to their city. The next LOST Committee meeting will be held Friday, August 5th at 3:30 pm. in the Sam King Room.

SPLOST UPDATE:

Erin Elrod mentioned that she has created a fillable form for citizen applications that would be available on their website in the next few days. She has sent the form to Kristi Kent so that it may also be posted on the city's website. The tentative schedule would allow for applications to be collected for 3 months and due at the end of October/beginning of November. That would allow 5-6 months for staff to vet each of the projects before going to the Citizen Advisory Committee in the spring. The county also plans to have signs added to current completed SPLOST projects in Rome and Floyd County so that community is aware of what SPLOST dollars have been used for. Jamie McCord mentioned that it is time to start thinking about putting together the CAC so that they would be able to meet in late winter/early spring to get introduced to the process before they begin looking at potential projects in late May of 2023. If all goes as planned, this SPLOST would be a referendum in November 2023. Todd Wofford stated that he hopes that the CAC will keep in consideration that Parks & Recreation are currently developing a new 10-year Master Plan. Mayor Ware asked if there would be a bond issuance with the next SPLOST and had anyone had issues with financing projects. Rich replied stating that it is always put in the referendum, but they aren't always issued.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Floyd County Chair Wright Bagby stated that he wanted to clarify some information regarding elections and the election board. He stated that the goals of the Floyd County Commission were to increase the size of the election board from 3 to 5 and improve/change the location and facility of the election's

office and that both of those goals had been accomplished. He stated that all the other changes were made by the Georgia Legislature in the passing of the Senate Bill 202, including drop boxes, and that local boards cannot add drop boxes in the community or create their own guidelines.

With their being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:26 am.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelley Parker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kelley Parker
Assistant to the City Manager