

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 9, 2022
Carnegie Training Room
8:30 AM

Present:

Commissioner Bill Collins

Commissioner Randy Quick

Commissioner Craig McDaniel

Doug Walker- City- Public Information and Marketing- Public Information Officer

Aundi Lesley- City- Downtown Development Authority- Director

James Martin- Rome-Floyd County Building Inspection- Chief Building Official

Kraig Ingalsbe- City- Finance- Assistant Finance Director

Meredith Ulmer- City Manager's Office- Assistant City Manager

Bekki Fox- City- Community Development- Director

Molly Majestic- City- Community Development- CDBG Coordinator

Amanda Carter- City- Community Development- Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority Manager

Logan Drake- City- Community Development- Administrative Program Assistant

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 AM. Commissioner Craig McDaniel asked for any corrections to the minutes from the February 2022 meeting. Not hearing any, the minutes were approved by common consent.

BUILDING INSPECTION/CODE ENFORCEMENT

James Martin

- Martin presented a Building Inspection report dated February 2022. He discussed data involving the following amongst the City and County: Single family dwellings, mobile homes, multifamily dwellings, commercial/industrial, commercial/industrial, signs, business licenses, other permits, and inspections.
- Martin discussed the following code enforcement data among the City and County: Citations, court, notices of violation, demo, and finals.
- Martin stated that the previously mentioned new hire being bilingual will be an asset when communicating with Spanish speaking residents.
- Martin stated that the department urgently needs additional tools, to help keep up with completing the necessary tasks that make the community safe and aesthetically pleasing. This includes increased funding for demolition and more Code Enforcement Officers. Those in attendance understood Martin's concerns. Commissioner Bill Collins requested that Martin collect documentation detailing what his department needs to address these issues. At the following monthly meeting, Martin will present his findings and make a recommendation for a solution.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Bekki Fox:

- Fox provided copies of the department's progress report. She introduced the two newest staff members of the Community Development Department. Amanda Carter will serve as Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority Manager. Molly Majestic will serve as CDBG Coordinator. They were welcomed.
- **Action Item:** Fox brought up the Rebecca Blaylock Child Development Center, 608 Graham Street, rehabilitation project (roof and bathroom replacement) bid that came in at \$195,758 from Litchey Commercial Construction. The bid came in \$70,758 over the projected amount of \$125,000. In order to move forward with the project, the 2021 CDBG budget needs to be amended as follows:

Projects	Original Budget	Amended Budget Request
Housing Rehab (Paint/Roof)	\$80,000	\$30,000
Rehab Project Delivery/Admin	\$10,000	\$9,000
General Administration	\$84,000	\$60,000
Sidewalk Improvements (Maple Ave)	\$174,259	\$174,259
Rebecca Blaylock	\$125,000	\$200,000
TOTAL	\$473,259	\$473,259

After discussion, the Committee acted as follows:

- Commissioner Quick made a motion to approve the changes made thus amending the CDBG 2021 budget, which was seconded by Commissioner McDaniel. Motion carried.
- Fox informed everyone that staff is still carrying out the Exterior Paint Program but will be adding the Roof Replacement Program. Staff is working on the following: reaching out to contractors, trying to get the word out to potential applicants and collaborating with Kristy Kent on a social media campaign. Particular demographics that are likely to apply, such as minority groups and the elderly, need to be reached through mediums they are likely to use. Various options were offered, such as staff appearing on Tony MacIntosh’s radio program. Commissioner Collins suggested that a representative from Tallatoona Community Action Partnership could attend an upcoming monthly meeting. They can discuss the programs they have, and ideas can be exchanged. Fox and Majestic said they would reach out to contacts they have.
- Fox stated that the Maple Ave Phase 3 sidewalk project from Maple at E. 12th and south to E. 14th was bid in late 2021 and was awarded to Springs Paving. While construction was scheduled to be completed by March 1, 2022, it has not yet started. Staff is considering options for moving the project forward, but it may have to be rebid.
- The HOME Trust Build 2022 is currently out to bid on behalf of the South Rome Alliance. If prices come in reasonably, the plan is to construct three additional single-family homes. The bid opening is scheduled for March 22nd.
- Fox gave updates involving the Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority (LBA). The LBA will be moving forward with utilizing the ARPA funds, awarded by the City, for affordable housing development and neighborhood improvements. A request to amend the City/County Intergovernmental Agreement that forms the LBA is forthcoming with a request to increase the board size from 5 members to 7 members and stagger their terms as well. Term limits provide a challenge to new board members as a considerable amount of time is needed to learn and navigate the complex nature of LBA work. This request will accompany three names to be considered to fill one vacancy, and one additional seat from the RCC and FCC. The LBA believes that the two additional seats should have minority representation to better exemplify the highly minority populated neighborhoods the LBA serves. All were in agreement.
- Fox stated that Community Development staff is working diligently, in partnership with the Downtown Development staff, to organize the new business incubator.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Aundi Leslie:

- Aundi Leslie provided copies of the Downtown Development Authority’s March 2022 progress report. Leslie detailed the following data for January - February 2022: four new businesses, two expansions and seven private rehabilitations.
- Leslie informed every one of the progress regarding the Art Contest Displays for ArtsFest. The contest has been finalized and winners have been selected. At the end of March, around 40 pieces of art will be displayed through

banners, vacant windows, and directories. Leslie believes this will be beneficial as artists' family and friends will visit downtown in order to take pictures and support their work.

- Marketing and Special Events Coordinator Megan Otwell has created a spotlight for International Women's Month where she will highlight Downtown's women-owned businesses.
- Leslie reminded everyone of upcoming events, such as the following: Mobilize Main Street on March 29th, Downtown Loft Tours on April 23rd, and ArtsFest on May 7th. Leslie invited those present to attend the Mobilize Main Street "Welcome and Overview" on the Town Green at 1:30 PM. Around 40 downtown development professionals visiting from across Georgia will be in attendance where the DDA will show and discuss the great progress that has been and will be achieved. Tours will be conducted subsequently. Downtown Loft Tours have been brought back for the first time since COVID and all ticket proceeds will fund Christmas décor for Downtown. The previously mentioned ArtsFest will take place as per annual tradition.
- Leslie brought up the Merchant Mornings 2022 Calendar where she invited those present to those attend upcoming meetings. The meetings have been successful so far.
- Leslie provided updates on the upcoming "Rome's Small Business Incubator": As-built drawings are in progress and being drafted by a local contractor. Once that is completed, the next step will be to put out an RFP for building rehab. A more concrete view of cost will be available then. If possible, Leslie's preference is to use local ARPA funds instead of ARC. ARC funds would trigger an Environmental Review requirement while ARPA would not. This requirement would slow down progress significantly whereas ARPA funding would allow enough momentum to hopefully open the Incubator by early 2023. Staff is collaborating with partners, such as the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), to incite programming development. SBDC seeks to push the following: standard training at first, industry specific programs in phase two, and promoting business development among minorities/women/Spanish speakers. The application process, name and brand reveal will all be unveiled soon. Updates will be given as time goes on.
 - All were pleased with the progress being made. After some discussion, Commissioner Collins' idea was to consider secondary school participation in the Business Incubator. Commissioner McDaniel believed that the Floyd County Schools College and Career Academy already has an Entrepreneurship pathway. He was unsure whether or not the Rome City Schools College and Career Academy did too. He suggested that a visit from an Academy representative be scheduled where options and ideas can be explored.
- Leslie updated everyone on Parking Services:
 - DDA will attend Parking Court the following week as it does two or more times annually. Updates will be given later.
 - The Parking Services Manager position is now open as Patrick Van Der Horn has accepted another opportunity elsewhere. Applications have been received but Leslie is open to suggestions for a qualified candidate.
- Leslie stated that the Broad Street Painting Project will kick off on Monday. Due to signage needing to come down, a press release will help to better explain the situation to residents. Public Works and the Street Department will work diligently to replace signage once painting is finished.

OTHER

- Ben Winkelman and Hannah Bagley from ECO/Keep Rome-Floyd Beautiful have conflicts through May and will likely not be able to attend the monthly CDSC meetings until June. They, however, provided written reports to review and will be glad to provide any additional information needed.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 10:04 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Logan Drake
Recording Secretary