



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

March 18, 2025

Sam King Room

2:00 PM

Committee Members Present

Commissioner Harry Brock Commissioner Elaina Beeman

Also in Attendance

Sammy Rich, City Manager

Joe Smith, City Clerk

Sergeant Keelan Freeman, PAWS

Deputy Chief Brad Roberson, Fire

Division Chief Jamie Stone, Fire

Assistant Chief Rodney Bailey, Police

Major Rusty Blair, Police

Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager

Director Katy Walters, PAWS

Chief Troy Brock, Fire

Division Chief Clete Bonney, Fire

Chief Denise Downer-McKinney, Police

Major Mark Tison, Police

Doug Walker, Public Information Officer

Absent

Commissioner Bill Collins

Call to Order

Chairman Brock called the meeting to order, and the minutes of the previous meeting were approved by common consent.

Animal Control/PAWS

A written report on activities at Public Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) was distributed to the committee for review.

Director Katy Walters reported the total number of strays picked up in 2024 increased by 394 compared to the 2023 total. There was also an increase in the total number of surrendered-by-owner cases, 124 in 2023 to 176 in 2024. Director Walters introduced Sergeant Keelan Freeman; a mandated officer hired to fill a recently vacant position. Sergeant Freeman made seven state level charges in December 2024 and has made five charges YTD. The department will remain active in picking up strays this year to help with an increase in the number of strays and pet population.

Spay/Neuter Ordinance

Director Walters presented the Spay/Neuter Ordinance which mirrors Floyd County's ordinance but has been formatted to align with city ordinances. This ordinance will require pet owners to spay, neuter and microchip their animals. The purpose of the ordinance is to address the increase in the number of stray animals, but there are some exceptions to the ordinance such as working dogs, police dogs, commercial breeders, etc. To assist owners with the cost of having their pets spayed or neutered, PAWS has agreed to perform these procedures for a fee of \$95 to spay or neuter (includes shots & microchip) and \$15 just to microchip.

Commissioner Elaina Beeman made a motion to present the ordinance to the Rome City Commission for approval. Chairman Brock seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Emergency Management

A written report on activities at Emergency Management was distributed to the committee for review.

E911

A written report on activities at E911 was distributed to the committee for review.

Fire

A written report on activities at the Fire Department was distributed to the committee.

Division Chief Stone reported a total of 6,913 calls for services for the 2024 calendar year. He reported 558 calls for service during the month of January, 268 in the city and 290 in the county. There were 253 inspections conducted and 43 educational classes. In February there was a total of 524 calls for service, 258 in the city and 266 in the county. There were 284 inspections, and 34 educational classes were conducted.

Division Chief Bonney informed the committee the department had gotten off to a busy start this year with a lot of wildfires and storms. The department's new shop is almost complete with equipment being moved in as it becomes available. The department is in the process of purchasing a new brush truck which is one of the most valuable pieces of equipment during spring and fall. He updated members on the status of the refurbish of engine 1 as being about 75% complete and added that the new squad truck had arrived and is being housed at Station 2.

Division Chief Stone stated the department conducted hydrant testing training in January and training on Blood Born Pathogens in February. They also assisted EMA with the CERT Explorer Program

The department promoted two sergeants in January

Deputy Chief Roberson reported the department as currently being two firefighters short. However, the upcoming retirement of 38-year veteran Captain Kirk Rickman will make the department three personnel short.

Chief Brock stated the department attended the Region One EMS Awards and was voted the *Medical First Responder Agency of the Year*.

Hazardous Materials Response Cost Recovery Ordinance

Chief Brock presented a copy of Chapter 9 of the Fire Prevention and Protection Ordinances which includes a proposed new section titled Hazardous Materials Response Cost Recovery. This addition, Section 9-105, would give the Rome-Floyd County Fire Department the authority to recover any cost incurred due to a hazardous materials release and/or leak. He added the change and/or addition to the City of Rome ordinance mirrors that of Floyd County.

Commissioner Elaina Beeman made a motion to present the ordinance with the additional section to the Rome City Commission for approval. Chairman Brock seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Police

A written report on activities at the Police Department was distributed to the committee.

Assistant Chief Rodney Bailey gave an overview of the department's current staffing as having ten vacancies. There are seven officers in the Field Training Officer (FTO) process, four cadets in the police academy and one waiting to go to the academy. There are seven applicants in the background process with the next academy start date being set as July 7th.

Assistant Chief Bailey stated the department's new Downtown Precinct is almost ready to open. This precinct will not be permanently staffed but will be available to officers in the field. It will be located on the upper level of the north side of the Forum directly across from the courthouse.

Major Blair reported a decrease of some 6% in total crimes against people in 2024. There was also a decrease in total crimes against property for 2024 but a slight increase in total crime against society. There was a slight decrease in the total number of calls for service in 2024 as well as the total number of arrests. YTD crimes continue to show a slight decrease.

Major Tison stated the total number of training hours shows an increase of 2,000 hours for 2024 but there was a decrease in the number of community programs. There were 356 people who attended training in 2024 for a total of 4,268 hours of training. The Training Division has conducted numerous community relations programs YTD with 1,534 in attendance.

The Criminal Investigation Division assigned a total of 429 cases in 2024 which is slight decrease compared to the previous year. There was an increase in the number of arrests and the number of counts. There was also an increase in the amount of property recovered.

The Rome Floyd Metro Task Force made a total of 248 arrests in 2024 and executed 87 search warrants. So far this year they have made a total of 38 arrests and executed 13 search warrants.

Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectively submitted,



Kim Stone, Secretary