



GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 24, 2026
Minutes

The City of Rome General Administration Committee met at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, in the Carnegie Training Room.

Members present:

Commissioner Craig McDaniel, Chairperson
Commissioner Wayne Robinson
Meredith Ulmer, Asst. City Manager
Joe Smith, City Clerk
Kristy Shepard, HR/RM Director
David Hoyt, Stonebridge
Chris Boden, Rome City Schools

Commissioner Bill Collins
Sammy Rich, City Manager
Andy Davis, City Attorney
Toni Rhinehart, Finance Director
Johnny Bunch, OTS Director
Lisa Smith, Tourism
Mark Green, Recording Secretary

Members absent:

Colt Gaston, RTC

Guests Present:

Mayor Jim Bojo
Commissioner Jill Fisher
Ann Hortman, Tourism
Brice Wood, Planning Director
Chris Jenkins, Public Works Director

Commissioner Elaina Beeman
Kelley Ledford, Director of Strategic Initiatives
Kristi Kent, Tourism
Amanda Carter, Landbank Authority

Chairperson Craig McDaniel called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM.

I. Minutes

The minutes from August 26, 2025, meeting were approved by common consent.

II. New Business

Rome City Commission Guest Protocol – Kelley Ledford

Kelley Ledford presented a recommendation to change the order of public comments during City Commission meetings to improve efficiency and maintain focus on agenda priorities. If approved as recommended, members of the public, who are present to speak on agenda related items, will speak following any ceremonial items and approval of minutes. Members of the public, who would like to comment on topics unrelated to items on the agenda, will be scheduled to speak after all agenda items have been addressed. Ledford emphasized the Floyd County Commission follows a similar protocol. In addition, she mentioned that the City of Carrollton limits public comments to city residents or city business owners.

Chairperson McDaniel asked for feedback from the commissioners in the room. Joe Smith asked the City Attorney if someone could register as a guest and speak on an item that was scheduled for a public hearing. The attorney responded by confirming that all comments pertaining to an item where a public hearing is to be held should be made during the public hearing and not the public comment section of the meeting. After additional discussion, a motion was made.

Motion: Commissioner Robinson made a motion to approve the proposed guest protocol change and send it to the City Commission for further review.

2nd motion: Commissioner Collins seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously approved.

Historical Signs – Lisa Smith

Lisa Smith presented a project regarding the relocation of two historical markers, which are currently located on Jackson Hill. The two historical markers being considered for relocation are titled "Davis' March to Rome" and "Federal Occupation

of Rome.” Smith commented, “We have been asked to follow the Georgia Historical Markings Guidelines.” Smith’s proposal would move the “Davis’ March to Rome” to a location on Coligni Way and “Federal Occupation of Rome” to the corner of West 3rd Street and North 2nd Avenue. Joe Smith clarified, “Once the City approves the relocation, the move will be approved by the Georgia Historical Society.”

Commissioner Collins asked if the City could clean and restore other markers in the City of Rome, such as the Minority Business Association sign at Five Points. Rich responded, “The problem is that the City doesn’t own all the signs... There are probably signs out there that we don’t know who owns them.” Rich clarified the City could consider an action if the owner requested it.

Motion: Commissioner Robinson made a motion to recommend to the Georgia Historical Society that the “Davis’ March to Rome” historical sign be relocated to Coligni Way, and the “Federal Occupation of Rome” historical sign be relocated the corner of West 3rd Street and North 2nd Avenue.

2nd motion: Commissioner Collins seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously approved.

Tourism Tour – Lisa Smith

Lisa Smith introduced Ann Hortman, who presented an idea for a new tour in Rome. Hortman began, “Stranger Things is a cultural phenomenon. There have been over 1.2 billion views of this show worldwide, and Rome is very prominent in seasons four and five.” Hortman informed the Committee that over 5,000 people have taken a picture in front of the Creel House, formerly known as the Claremont House.

Hortman notified the committee that Netflix gifted the City of Rome a prop from the show. The prop that was donated is a large iron sign that reads “Penhurst Mental Hospital,” which is a prominent location in the show. To bring people downtown, Hortman proposed placing the sign near the Town Green and creating a tour related to the show.

Motion: Commissioner Robinson made a motion to place the sign near the Town Green and approve the creation of the tour.

2nd motion: Commissioner Collins seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously approved.

II. Old Business- None

III. Reports

Stonebridge Golf

Joe Smith and David Hoyt presented the reports for Stonebridge Golf. Hoyt commented, “2025 was a good year. We had a near record number of rounds, and we set the record for total revenue.” The reports provided to the committee indicate the actual revenue for 2025 was \$1,915,020. Hoyt continued by informing the committee that Stonebridge is slightly ahead on rounds and revenue for 2026.

Hoyt informed the committee that the irrigation project is in progress with 80% of the main line completed and 55% of the lateral lines completed on the golf course. Hoyt said that there has been limited interruption of play from activities related to the project.

City Clerk Joe Smith presented the financial reports for Stonebridge. Smith noted that Stonebridge experienced the 2nd most rounds in history in 2025. The report indicates 40,847 rounds of golf were played at Stonebridge in 2025. Additionally, Smith noted the 2025 net operating income was \$77,043.

Rome Tennis Center

In the absence of Colt Gaston, Lisa Smith presented the reports for the Rome Tennis Center (RTC). Smith started by notifying the committee that the Rome Tennis Center was recently featured by Channel 11 news for the Center’s overall economic impact of 12 million dollars. Smith then talked about the various capital projects being completed in 2025 such as adding clear plexiglass to several courts and a metal canopy to various locations. Smith also notified the committee of RTC’s plans to add additional parking.

Smith concluded her report by reviewing several financial statistics and upcoming events.

Barron Stadium

Chris Boden presented the reports for Barron Stadium. Boden began by recapping the recent use of Barron Stadium. After a busy football season, Barron Stadium is now being utilized for soccer matches and track meets. Boden then presented the financial report for Barron Stadium, which included revenues and expenditures.

After presenting the financial report, Boden outlined a 5-year budget plan for Barron Stadium. Updating the existing jumbotron, upgrading the stadium lights to LED, and replacing the playing surface were some of the items included in the plan.

Chairperson McDaniel asked how the new development surrounding the stadium will impact parking. Boden responded, "It makes it more challenging. Fortunately, the hospital lets us use their parking after hours." Additional discussion was held regarding parking and traffic near the stadium.

OTS Report

Johnny Bunch presented the reports for the Office of Technology Services (OTS). Bunch began by reporting on several recently completed and ongoing projects such as refreshing mobile devices inside Police Vehicles and new software for Building Inspection and Planning.

Help desk tickets: Opened: 1,523 Closed: 1,415 Pending/Open: 108

Human Resources Reports

Kristy Shepard presented a verbal report for the Human Resources department. Shepard noted the City has 631 full-time positions. Shepard noted there are 13 vacancies at the Police Department. Additionally, Shepard informed the committee that there were 17 retirements in 2025.

McDaniel asked, "Are we still losing police officers to other agencies?" Shepard responded, "No." Rich commented, "It's hard to want to be a police officer. That's just the reality of it."

A discussion ensued regarding diversity in the fire department. Commissioner Collins asked Shepard to prepare a diversity report to be presented at the next meeting.

Risk Management Reports

Kristy Shepard notified the committee that risk management claims are up compared to 2025. Shepard commented, "We had several high claims at the end of 2025, and this year is not off to a great start." McDaniel asked about the employer clinic. Shepard responded, "We are still at Atrium, and there are four other partners who also utilize it. We are probably one of the biggest drivers." Rich reminded the committee of a recent insurance premium increase, which was absorbed by the City and the employees.

Committee on Committees

Joe Smith presented "two broad topics" for the committee to consider. The first topic is the four nominations, which were made at the February 9, 2026, City Commission meeting and tabled at the February 23, 2026, City Commission meeting. Smith also drew the committee's attention to a memorandum he provided to all commissioners and included a comprehensive list of volunteer applicants and the committees they expressed interest in.

Chairperson McDaniel asked to begin with the committee appointments tabled at the previous City Commission meeting. Smith reminded the committee of the appointment of Melinda Brown to the Landbank Authority. The Landbank Authority vacancy is unique due to it being a joint appointment of the City and the County. The Joint Services committee recommended Brown be appointed to the Landbank Authority, and the County has voted to approve the appointment. Smith continued by reminding the committee that Callette Hollingsworth's appointment to the Downtown Development Authority and Taylor McMichael's and Doug Phipps re-appointment to the Alcohol Control Commission was tabled as well. There seemed to be a consensus that the tabled appointments and reappointments should be taken off the table at the next City Commission meeting.

After discussing the tabled nominations, the committee turned their attention to addressing the appointments to fill the vacancies on the Rome Housing Authority, Rome-Floyd Planning Commission, and Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority. Commissioner Robinson asked if there was a legal issue with appointing an elected constitutional officer, such as the Clerk of Superior Court, Mary Hardin Thornton, to serve on the Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority. McDaniel noted that one of the volunteer applicants, Keruin Ruiz, had spoken with him about her desire to serve on the Rome Housing Authority. Commissioner Robinson alluded to the desire to have someone with an accounting background be placed on the Rome Housing Authority. Commissioner Collins commented that Pasha Burge is a candidate for the Rome Housing Authority.

Commissioner Beeman made comments regarding the application process for volunteers. A small discussion took place regarding the legality of a Rome City School Board Member or an elected Constitutional Officer being appointed to serve

as a committee volunteer. The committee asked the City Attorney to review the matter. After additional discussion, the following motion was made.

*** Motion: Commissioner Collins made a motion to nominate Pasha Burge to the Rome Housing Authority, Brianna Hightower to the Landbank Authority, and Mary Hardin Thornton to the Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority.**

2nd motion: Commissioner Robinson seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously approved.

** After the meeting, the City Attorney Andy Davis determined that OCGA 8-3-50(d) and OCGA 21-4-3 would prohibit Pasha Burge from being appointed to the Rome Housing Authority. The attorney for Rome City Schools, Chris Twyman, concurred with Davis's conclusion.*

** As of March 4, 2026, the City Attorney and County Attorney are reviewing whether the City Commission could appoint Mary Hardin Thornton to the Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority due to her position as Clerk of Superior Court. The draft minutes will be updated once their review is complete.*

The meeting adjourned at 12:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Green

Mark Green, Recording Secretary