

**City of Rome**  
**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**May 28, 2025**

**PRESENT:**

Committee Chairman Jim Bojo  
City Commissioner Elaina Beeman  
City Commissioner Randy Quick  
City Manager Sammy Rich  
Assistant City Manager Meredith Ulmer  
Finance Director Toni Rhinehart  
Assistant Finance Director Kraig Ingalsbe  
Recording Secretary Vicki Blair

Guests: Dr. Eric Holland, Rome City Schools Superintendent  
Greg Studdard, Rome City Schools Finance Director  
Alvin Jackson, Rome City School Board  
Dr. Dennis Drummond, Rome City Schools Administration  
Becky Smyth, Purchasing Director  
Kelley Parker, Assistant to City Manager

Absent: City Commissioner Wayne Robinson

Committee Chairman Bojo called the meeting to order. He stated City Commissioner Wayne Robinson had a conflict and would not be attending the meeting. Therefore, City Commissioner Randy Quick was present to fill in for Robinson. The Minutes from the April 30th, 2025 meeting were approved by common consent before the meeting was turned over to Dr. Eric Holland for the presentation of the Rome City Schools 2025-26 Budget.

Dr. Eric Holland began by stating that Rome High School recently graduated 480 seniors, which is the highest number ever. He is very excited about the progress being made in literacy and presented the Rome City Schools Literacy Compass for review by each committee member. He also mentioned the pathway program completion rate is approximately 85% which means the students are not only prepared for college but also have obtained life skills including speaking a second language, learning how to swim and maintaining a checking account. Holland stated one of the items he was charged with by the Rome City School Board was making sure the campuses are safe and for the last two years 0 weapons have been found on school grounds. Coming soon, he believes Open Gate will be added to the elementary schools meaning all the schools will have multi layers of safety. Holland then turned the meeting over to Greg Studdard who began a review of the 2025-26 Budget. Studdard mentioned State revenues increased by approximately \$1.2M but unfortunately it was just enough to cover all the increases in health insurance costs. Within a two-year span, health insurance costs have increased over \$3M. Property tax revenue is scheduled to increase by 5%, which amounts to approximately \$1.4M. The final digest has not been received from the Tax Assessors Office, but this is believed to be a reasonable amount. Expenditures are budgeted to increase approximately \$3.1M overall, which includes the health insurance amount of \$1.7M. General discussion was had regarding amounts listed in the expenditures. Studdard stated the budget reflects an ending fund balance of approximately \$13.5M. It is their goal to maintain a fund balance at 12% of annual expenditures which amounts to approximately \$11M. Studdard reviewed the Budget Comparison from 2025 to 2026, and general discussion was had regarding the breakdown of the estimated expenditures included in the budget document. Holland concluded

with an update on the Rome City Middle School completion. The scheduled move-in date is June 1, 2026, which is two months ahead of schedule. The sixth-grade students will be transitioned to the middle school and will then include grades 6, 7 and 8. He presented a video showing the progress of the building of the school along with the baseball and softball facility.

Committee Chairman Bojo then turned the meeting over to Finance Director Toni Rhinehart for a discussion regarding budget revisions. Rhinehart reiterated the preliminary digest from the Tax Assessor's office has not been received yet due to the required changes being made to the property assessment notices. She then stated to meet State budgetary compliance requirements, it is necessary for there to be a budget revision for General Fund and special revenue funds if any department is over budget for the year in expenditures. Several departments in General Fund were over budget and required budget revisions. Some General Fund revenues were slightly increased which include prior year real and personal property taxes, insurance premium tax and Georgia Power franchise taxes. In General Fund expenses, a slight increase was made in the City Manager's Office, but a slight reduction was made in Human Resources for other services and charges. The Purchasing department was over budget slightly, so a change was made there. The Police Department was below budget mainly due to not being fully staffed but an increase was required for the training department. In the Public Works department, street lighting is now over \$1.2M which consists primarily of Georgia Power expense. An increase was made for the City Auditorium mainly due to a change made in the janitorial service but also for various maintenance and improvement expenses. A few adjustments were made for the Rome Community Center as well as Fort Norton and the Town Green. A revision was required under Community Development due to the DDA consolidation and the downtown parking consolidation required for year-end reporting. A reduction was made for the capital transfer and miscellaneous expenses for Transit, and a standard adjustment was required for OPEB. A significant increase was required for Contingency which includes the recycling deficit amount. Reallocations were made in Transfers Out with the Golf Fund being a bright spot in the budget. No changes were made in BID. The Hotel/Motel Tax Fund required adjustments mainly due to capital improvements made at the Forum. No adjustments were made for the TAD, DDA, Downtown Parking, Forum Parking and Planning Commission Funds. A change was made in the Opiod Fund due to the payment made for Brother's Place. No changes were required in the Community Development Fund. With no other discussion regarding the revisions, Bojo made a motion for the revisions to be presented to the full Board of Commissioners at the next meeting and the motion was approved unanimously.

With no further discussion and no other items to review, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vicki Blair