



*“To achieve a cleaner and more beautiful community through the education and involvement of its citizens”*

## Keep Rome-Floyd Beautiful

### Minutes

March 28, 2024, 4:00 p.m.

Floyd County Administration Building

Present: Commissioner Jim Bojo, City of Rome Commission  
Hannah Bagley, Program Coordinator  
Ben Winkelman, ECO Center Director  
Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager  
Chris Jenkins, City of Rome Public Works Director  
Julie Smith, Transportation and Trails Planner  
Ginger Rowston, KRFB Board Member  
Lucy Burnes, KRFB Board Member  
Amy Dawkins, KRFB Board Member

#### Call to Order:

This meeting was called together by Mrs. Bagley. The meetings from the January 25, 2024 meeting were approved by common consent.

#### Reports:

Year to date, KRFB has facilitated 3 educational, 4 litter prevention, 5 Adopt-A-Mile, 1 recycling, and 1 beautification event. This totals 14 events and programs, 405 participants, and 541.75 participant hours and 1987 pounds of litter for 2024.

Mr. Jenkins reported a massive cleanup effort at the Central Plaza bridge happening soon. Residents of the Oakdene Community have been complaining about visible trash. Mrs. Bagley requested aid from the Public Works department due to biohazards typically associated with homeless camps. Mrs. Ulmer expressed the gratitude of the community for Mr. Jenkins undertaking that task.

Mrs. Bagley added there have been issues with illegal urban camping on Mount Berry Trail as well. These have led to safety concerns for people trying to enjoy the trails, from being followed or shouted at. Mrs. Bagley and Mrs. Smith would like to address the proper response to safety concerns on the trails. If you see something, such as urban camping, public indecency, or other illegal activity, you should say something by calling or texting 911, not Mrs. Bagley or Mrs. Smith.

Mrs. Ulmer introduced that we are getting 2 additional Floyd County Enforcement Officers, so we will hopefully have more of a focus on litter prevention and enforcement in the coming months.

#### Old Business:

KRFB is trying to get into more classrooms. We have seen much success in the Rome City Schools, but have only been this heavily involved with a couple of Floyd County Schools, such as Johnson Elementary's GreenFest. KRFB is proud to increase involvement in Rome Middle School STEM classrooms as a permanent part of the STEM curriculum. Here, students must apply and interview in order to be considered for the STEM program. Teachers were very pleased with the experience we gave the students at the landfill, the students were much more interested in learning about local government than expected. They would like to expand and include a portion about law enforcement, to reinforce understanding repercussions about litter and blight.

On Monday, April 1st, we are starting a student led recycling initiative at Rome Middle School. This will be paired with a STEAM art project where students will create a sculpture of a Georgia native animal out of gathered recyclables. They will also be learning about water quality, testing & sampling. Our hope is that this will provide encouragement for them to get through end of year testing.

We will be starting other STEAM art projects at local elementary schools East Central, West Central, and West End, as well as a full STEM day at Maine Elementary. Mrs. Dawkins expressed that she would like to volunteer at the Maine Elementary STEM day to take pictures. Other KRFB Board Members are encouraged to help, if they are willing to go through the background check process required to get into the schools.

Mrs. Bagley had the honor of receiving the Governor's Circle Award at capital with Mr. Winkelman and Commissioner Bojo. KRFB was given this award due to going above and

beyond to fulfill all Keep Georgia Beautiful requirements. She also accepted the President's Circle Award for outstanding fulfillment of Keep America Beautiful requirements in 2023.

Help is requested for Johnson Elementary's second annual GreenFest. We will need seeds for seed bombs, which were donated by Dykes Creek Farm Supply and Walmart last year. Volunteers are needed at the event as well as people helping to gather supplies. Mrs. Bagley and Mrs. Burnes are currently drafting a list of items used last year, which is due to change for different snack and craft ideas. If you want to come out, you will need to fill out a background check form first. We are excited to incorporate more corporate sponsors who will have different educational booths this year instead of focusing solely on KRFB, the Rome-Floyd ECO Center, and Bee City.

#### New Business:

The 2024 Arbor Day celebration was a huge success; many individuals told Mrs. Bagley it was the best one they had attended! It was a great location, easy to see and hear the presentation, and had high attendance. We were able to give out over 150 seedlings donated by Georgia Power. Next year we will try to focus on more native trees. KRFB gives many thanks to Public Works and Ernest Watson for their expertise and help. We also commend Sarah Grimes with Bee City for planting many wildflowers in planters and working on a pollinator garden along the trails.

Mrs. Bagley applied for the Great American Cleanup grant to fund projects, and was awarded \$2,000 of the \$5,000 available. This money will be used for education needs, replenishing supplies, and more grabbers, as all of the grabbers from the last haul have been broken. There will also be a wench going on the front of the KRFB truck. In the past, we have called Public Works and Solid Waste for pulling up heavy trash items out of embankments, however, the slopes pose a safety threat to their equipment and operators. We have already had a chance to use the wench once, and will likely need it again during the Floyd County Employee Cleanup in September off of Big Texas Valley.

Unfortunately, the Adopt-A-Mile Program has been really struggling for participation from its members. Keep America Beautiful experienced the same issues with their Adopt-A-Highway program, and they terminated the program as a whole. Mrs. Bagley reported that she does not want to dissolve the program as a whole just yet, but she has sent out emails to participants to make the expectations more clear. 22 members have already quit, and only 20 remain. They have until the end of April to confirm their membership before Mrs. Bagley will have their signs removed. She has also quit advertising the AAM program and removed it from the official KRFB website.

TRED and KRFB are partnering to have a mural installed by Renee Peterson, owner of Peachy Queen Art on the Advent Health Redmond Eco Greenway. This will be a directional sign, but with many natural floral components. A group of student volunteers are going to pressure wash the surface and put the first coat of paint on it to prepare it for Ms. Peterson. We are hoping to have the concept sketch to share in the next couple of weeks.

There will be another garden party to improve the Community garden for the EnVision Center on April 19th from 5:30-7p.m. This will benefit families of the Northwest Georgia Housing Authority's reach. We will also have a workday on Wednesday, April 3rd to pull weeds, fix beds, and other activities. Plants have gone up in price, so to cut costs we are sprouting plants at the ECO Center from seeds. We will be planting them at the garden party on the 19th. We will be starting a second garden at the other Housing Authority complex, Park Homes on May 6th, although it will be much smaller. These families had been driving out to the EnVision Center to pick from that garden because they enjoyed it so much.

We will have an Earth Day Cleanup at Kingfisher Trail on Saturday, April 20th beginning at 8:30AM - 12:00 PM, KRFB Board Members are strongly encouraged to attend!

Adjourn:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Sophia G. Swann*

Sophia Swann, Secretary