



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

Keep Rome-Floyd Beautiful Minutes

January 25, 2024, 4:00 p.m.
Floyd County Administration Building

Present: Commissioner Jim Bojo, City of Rome Commission
Hannah Bagley, Program Coordinator
Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Chris Jenkins, City of Rome Public Works Director
Julie Smith, Transportation and Trails Planner
Ginger Rowston, KRFB Board Member
Pam Roberts, KRFB Board Member
Joy Puckett, KRFB Board Member
Lucy Burnes, KRFB Board Member
Amy Dawkins, KRFB Board Member
Georgia Burns, KRFB Board Member

Call to Order:

This meeting was called to order by Mrs. Bagley. The minutes from the September 28, 2023 meeting were approved by common consent.

Final 2023 YTD Report:

When comparing 2023 to previous years, one may note that there was a decrease in the percentage of time dedicated to litter prevention. As Mrs. Bagley strengthens the education portion of the program, the program overall will become more successful. Education in schools,

field trips, and other student-involving activities accounted for nearly 30% of KRFB's efforts which is double from 2022 events and programs.

Old Business:

The 4-H partnership for the Candy Wrapper Challenge was a huge success. There were nearly 60 participants from the City of Rome and Floyd County Schools as well as surrounding private schools. Students could choose between three different templates of local animals; the woodpecker, sturgeon (endangered) and the green tree frog (Georgia's state amphibian). Mrs. Bagley discussed doing the same concept next year, but potentially giving students more creative freedom by allowing them to do sculptures or use a wider variety of materials. The templates will still be available to younger grade levels, making the project more accessible and fun to students of all ages.

We also incorporated the ECO Center through this challenge to educate participants about natural habitats, animals, litter prevention, and proper disposal and recycling efforts for candy wrappers. For example, candy wrappers may be sent to Terracycle to be melted down and used again. This is so important because over 6 million tonnes of candy wrappers end up in landfills in the U.S. from November to February. We would also like to thank Mrs. Rowston and Mrs. Smith for their generous contributions for the prizes. These prizes encouraged sustainability and problem solving activities.

Additionally, Mrs. Bagley spoke on our new sustainability curriculum to be incorporated in the coming months. GreenFest at Johnson Elementary taught us that kids like to be active and get their hands dirty when they learn, as exemplified by the enthusiasm towards seed bombs. This has inspired KRFB to switch to an art-based approach to learning. This will be a hands-on curriculum to make learning about conservation and sustainability more meaningful and memorable. Mrs. Bagley will be reaching out to PR teams for local schools, as well as individual science and art teachers in the area. These suggestions can be done independently in the classroom, or Mrs. Bagley and intern Ms. Swann can come into their classroom to work with the class. We may partner with the ECO Center for some of these trips to bring in live animals as well, especially while the center is undergoing construction. Mrs. Rowston wanted to know if KRFB Board members would be able to volunteer to help for these excursions. Mrs. Burnes explained that they should be able to, as long as they received approval from the school and ran a background check.

New Business:

Mrs. Bagley reviewed the currently scheduled events for the 2024 calendar, excluding field trips. The first quarterly TRED/KRFB Cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 20th at 8:30 am. All KRFB Board members are strongly encouraged to attend. There are also several river cleanup kayaking trips coming up.

On Friday, April 19th, we will be hosting another Garden Party at the Envision Center. The garden was planted in the summer of 2023 for the parents staying at the housing authority to use. Through this project, they were able to learn the skill of gardening, and begin something that they could later reap the benefits of. Many community partners are involved in this ongoing project, including Amerigroup, Medicaid, Georgia Power, Berry College, and the Darlington Eco Club. These partners have a wealth of information that the families can pull from. This year, Advent Health will be added as an additional community partner. Also, we will be planting fruit trees along with vegetables.

The annual Arbor Day celebration will take place on February 16th at 1:00 pm at the Mount Berry Trail, meeting behind the post office on Coligni Way. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Bagley met with Mr. Watson earlier this week, and decided that eight sugar maples would be planted at the trailhead. We are very grateful to International Paper, who has donated \$1500 for Arbor Day.

Rome Middle School will be having a STEM Field Trip day on February 9th at the Walker Mountain Landfill and the Rome Recycling Center. Throughout the day 70 students will be sent to each site to learn about water quality, erosion, and waste management.

Details for another GreenFest at Johnson Elementary this May are still in the works. Last year it was run like a field day with all activities tying back to environmental themes. Mrs. Bagley expressed a desire to run the event more like a career fair this year, with different community partners having their own stations with individual environmental and sustainable education components. She has already reached out to International Paper, Georgia Power, and others.

Mrs. Rowston asked about how to maintain accountability for Adopt-A-Mile participants. Mrs. Bagley explained that Keep Georgia Beautiful's Adopt-A-Highway program was also experiencing issues with accountability, and as a response began to remove signs of noncompliant participants. This caused an uproar because these business owners were benefiting from the advertising. This is a complex issue, and we are still working on finding an appropriate solution or incentive to prevent further noncompliance in the Adopt-A-Mile program.

We are excited to announce that KRFB was one of 49 affiliates in Georgia to receive the Governor's Circle Award. This award is for affiliates who go above and beyond in each area of Keep America Beautiful's mission; Litter Reduction, Beautification, and Education. Mrs. Bagley will be traveling to the State Capitol to accept the award on February 8th.

Adjourn:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sophia G. Swann

Sophia Swann, Secretary

