

**CITY OF PINE LAKE**  
**CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**June 22, 2021**  
**7:00 PM**  
**VIA ZOOM**

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**Call to Order** at 7:00 pm by Mayor Pro tem Jean Bordeaux. Present – Mayor pro tem Jean Bordeaux, and Council members Tracey Brantley, Brandy Beavers and Augusta Woods. Also present were Acting City Administrator Peggy Merriss, Administrative Coordinator Missye Varner and Chief Sarai Y’Hudah-Green. Mayor Melanie Hammet, Council member Brandy Hall and City Attorney Susan Moore were not in attendance.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

The City Council of the City of Pine Lake, GA has tentatively adopted a millage rate of 19.909 mills for maintenance and operations and debt service which will require an increase in property taxes of 13.29% for fiscal year 2021. This millage rate generates revenue necessary to fund the City of Pine Lake's general operations, capital improvements and debt service budget for fiscal 2021. This is the same millage rate adopted for the previous fiscal year 2020.

Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux opened the public hearing by announcing that Acting City Administrator Merriss would make a presentation regarding the proposed 2021 Millage Rate.

Ms. Merriss stated that the presentation would be an overview introduction for the public hearing and that the process of setting the millage rate begins when the city obtains the tax digest information from the DeKalb Board of Tax Assessors in May of each year. She also pointed out how the formula for how the millage rollback rate is calculated and that said is governed by state law. Ms. Merriss stated that at the June 8<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting the adoption of a tentative millage rate of 19.909 was approved to begin the process of establishing the final millage rate for 2021.

Acting Administrator Merriss explained the 2021 real property tax digest reassessment and stated that the City’s real estate tax base generated the most revenue for the City. Ms. Merriss also discussed changes in the digest and growth. The millage rollback rate and the calculation of the rollback rate was also a topic of the presentation and Ms. Merriss explained in depth how it determined.

The next topic of discussion was the Five-Year History advertisement. Ms.

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Merriss explained how it is calculated and that it must be published with The Champion along with separate advertisement for three public hearings. Next Ms. Merriss concluded the presentation by presenting the list of considerations for Council, including using fund balance this year to balance the budget; unbudgeted costs for the opening of the beach; increased costs for property and liability insurance cost; reimbursable unemployment unbudgeted costs; the increased cost of gasoline; funding for repairs and maintenance to the dam and the wetlands; unbudgeted capital cost for stabilizing and renovating the gazabo and for maintenance and repair of the tennis court and also the consideration of potential staff compensation increases.

Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux opened the hearing to the public and Council for comments and questions.

Council member Brantley asked about the range of choices the city has for setting the millage rate and Ms. Merriss stated that the millage can be set at any rate at or below 19.909 but if the millage rate was increased higher than 19.909 the process for setting the millage rate would have to start over.

Resident Holley Mitchell inquired about the process for getting the millage rate set at the roll-back level. Ms. Merriss replied that at the next public hearings will be via Zoom on July 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:00AM and at 7:00 PM and that the decision for setting the 2021 millage rate will be made at the meeting and that a link for the meetings was posted on the city website.

Council member Beavers asked if the rollback rate had negative consequences. Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux advised Council member Beavers that representative items for consideration were included in the PowerPoint presentation and Council would have to take into account the impact associated with collection of less tax revenues and that some of the larger projects such as the repairs to the dam and the wetlands were not budgeted items.

Resident Mitchell asked how what the City would be doing in the future to prevent the dam and wetland maintenance issues such as allowing trees to grow into the dam, from occurring again in the future.

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Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux advised her that much of the situation was from the growth of big trees and an erosion problem at the berm and that repairs and maintenance will happen. Ms. Merriss said that part of the erosion problem comes from heavy volume and intense rainstorms.

Council member Beavers commented that upstream construction outside the Pine Lake city limits caused issues with water running down stream that caused volume, erosion and environmental problems. Acting City Administrator Merriss commented that every ten to fifteen years the city will have to stabilize the banks.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux commented that some citizens objected to cutting down trees and maintenance and that there is a lot of water going through the berm and that climate and environmental change must be taken into consideration. She also suggested establishing a dam and wetland maintenance fund.

Resident Mitchell stated that previously, engineers that worked on the dam and wetlands had indicated that the City needed to remove trees that were growing on the dam and also not allow new trees to be added. Mayor pro tem Bordeaux commented that the city needed to put aside funding for future issues.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux stated that the power point presentation would be available on the City's website at [www.pinelakega.net](http://www.pinelakega.net). Scroll to the Home Page/Front Page News/Tax Hearings and click on the link.

**Adjournment** - On a motion by Council member Beavers, second by Council member Brantley and all Council members present voting "aye," the public hearing was adjourned at 7:35pm.