

**CITY OF PINE LAKE  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 25, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

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**NOTE: All attendees are reminded to silence cellular phones and other devices that may cause interruption of the session proceedings.**

**Call to Order** Mayor Melanie Hammet called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Present: Mayor Melanie Hammet, Mayor pro tem Jean Bordeaux and Council members Brandy Hall, Augusta Woods, Tracey Brantley and Nivea Castro. City Manager ChaQuias Miller-Thornton, Chief of Police Sarai Y’Hudah-Green, and Administrative Coordinator Missye Varner were also present. City Attorney Susan Moore was not present.

**Announcements/Communication**

Mayor Hammet:

- Welcomed everyone to the meeting and commented on the new seating configuration at the dais and welcomed City Manager Miller-Thornton to the new seating arrangement.
- Congratulated City Manager Miller-Thornton for successfully completing the requirements of the Georgia Municipal Association Human Resources Administration Certificate Program on April 5, 2023.
- Attended Commissioner Steve Bradshaw’s Quarterly Breakfast for Central DeKalb County. During the breakfast, Public Safety Chief of Police Mirtha Ramos provided a report advising that traffic fatalities are up 30%. Chief Ramos stated that the fatalities are due to aggressive and reckless driving and recommends taking time while driving and not to totally depend on GPS. Chief Ramos said to think about the officers that have to deliver the bad news to loved ones of fatal accidents.
- Pointed out the new agenda format that was created by City Manager Miller-Thornton. Mayor Hammet stated that while she has been visiting surrounding city council meetings she noticed that other cities have agendas with graphics and similar layouts. The new agenda layout is similar to the layout for the City of Lithonia.

**Adoption of Agenda of the Day**

Council Member Woods motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Council Member Castro, the adoption of the agenda passed unanimously.

**Adoption of the Minutes**

- Regular Meeting – April 11, 2023

Council Member Brantley motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mayor pro tem Bordeaux, the adoption of the agenda passed unanimously.

**Public Comments – 3 minutes each please**

There were not any public comments.

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**Old Business**

There was not any Old Business.

**New Business**

1. Swearing in of Police Department Reserve Officers

Police Chief Y'Hudah-Green introduced three new Public Safety Officers to the Council. Mayor Hammet then administered the oath of office for Reserve Officers Charles Ings, Michael Taylor and Adelle Gaskin.

2. Council's Confirmation of Stephanie Kohler's Appointment to the Municipal Arts Panel  
– Mayor Melanie Hammet

Council Member Brantley motioned to appoint Stephanie Kohler to the Municipal Arts Panel; seconded by Council Member Woods, the appointment passed unanimously.

3. Alcohol Privilege License Application – Mangos Caribbean Restaurant, 4634  
Rockbridge Road, Pine Lake, GA – Matthew Nelson, applicant and owner

Council Member Hall motioned the approval of Alcohol Privilege License Application – Mangos Caribbean Restaurant; seconded by Council Member Castro, the approval of the of Alcohol Privilege License Application – Mangos Caribbean Restaurant passed unanimously.

4. Update and Request for Funding – Juneteenth 2023 – Mayor pro tem Jean Bordeaux  
and Councilmember Augusta Woods, presenters

Council Member Hall motioned to approve for the City to fund \$300.00 towards expenses for the Juneteenth 2023 event; seconded by Council Woods, the approval passed unanimously.

5. Public Finance Leadership Academy – Support for City Manager Thornton's Program  
Application – Program Tuition/Exp - \$3,090

Council Member Hall motioned to approve the Public Finance Leadership Academy – Support for City Manager Thornton's Program Application – Program Tuition/Exp - \$3,090; seconded by Mayor pro tem Bordeaux, the approval for the Public Finance Leadership Academy – Support for City Manager Thornton's Program Application – Program Tuition/Exp - \$3.090 passed unanimously.

6. Resolution R-10-2023 – FY2023 Budget Amendment

Council Member Woods motioned to approve Resolution R-10-2023 – FY2023 Budget Amendment; seconded by Council Member Hall, Resolution R-10-2023 – FY2023 Budget Amendment passed unanimously.

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**REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

**Public Comments – 3 minutes each please**

Thomas Torrent, 4538 Orchid Drive commented about a personal attack incident (verbal) that happened to him at the lake recently. Mr. Torrent also announced his intention to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pride Event of Pine Lake and that additional details will be forthcoming.

Shirley Kinsey, 579 Spruce Drive commented that, in her opinion, balancing the city budget is more complex than balancing the state budget due to limited resources. Ms. Kinsey also stated that the city was very fortunate to have City Manager Miller-Thornton. She commended City Manager Miller-Thornton for being eager to gain additional knowledge and experience. Resident Kinsey said that the tuition for the Public Finance Leadership Academy is an investment into the future of city. Ms. Kinsey also thanked City Manager Miller-Thornton for the work that she has done for the city and hopes that she stays with the city for many years to come.

**Staff Reports**

Administration  
Public Works

City Manager Miller-Thornton reported:

- The City Clerk position has been posted and she has begun the interview process. The position will be posted until May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The city engineers will be drilling for the soil testing at the inner berm on April 26<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 am – 5:00pm.
- The Request for Proposals (RFP) – Project No. Pine Lake PW2023-02- Architectural and Design Services for the renovation of the Court House has been published on the City and the Georgia Procurement websites. There will be a pre-bid meeting at the Court House on May 2<sup>nd</sup> to allow for design firms and architects to view the space and ask questions. RFP's are scheduled to be received until the afternoon of May 18<sup>th</sup> and will be presented to council prior to the May 30<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting.
- Chief Green and City Manager Miller-Thornton are scheduled to meet on Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss scheduling for the Re-dedication Initiative Event which is important to the city, community and Public Safety personnel. Mayor and council input is welcomed.
- Currently working diligently with GNA to access the Federal Treasury portal for submission of the American Rescue Plan report that is due on April 30, 2023.

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- City Manager Miller-Thornton and City Attorney Moore conducted a meeting today (April 25<sup>th</sup>) with LakeFest, Inc. The final draft of the Memorandum of Understanding will be presented to Council as early as the May 9<sup>th</sup> agenda. The meeting with representatives of Pine Lakefest, Inc was very productive.
- The tentative deadline for cities to pass their resolution for the upcoming SPLOST is around Labor Day. City Manager Miller-Thornton encouraged the City Council to consider its language for the referendum for project categories. SPLOST to be used for capital projects and is not used for general operations and maintenance.
- Georgia House Bill 193 passed during the 2023 Legislative Session and raises the general exemption for Public Works contract bidding from 100k to 250K. In February 2023 council voted to increase to 100k, however the State of Georgia has increased to 250K.

Public Safety

Chief Green reported:

- Thanked everyone for their support in the swearing in of new Reserve Officers Charles Ings, Michael Taylor and Aidelle Gaskins.
- Chief Green will be meeting with the City Manager Miller-Thornton regarding the Re-Dedication Event on Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Pine Lake Public Safety will be participating in the forthcoming DeKalb County Cold Case Task Force and Missing Persons Event and DNA Drive.
- In keeping with the honorable tradition of the DeKalb County Fallen Officers Memorial Service on May 11<sup>th</sup>, two officers from Public Safety will represent the City and fallen Officer Francis Ortega.

Copies of the Administration/Public Works and Public Safety reports are on file in City Hall for reviewing. Please email [missyeverner@pinelakega.net](mailto:missyeverner@pinelakega.net) to request a copy or call 404-999-4931 to schedule an appointment to review the copy on file.

**Reports/Comments**

Mayor:

- Thanked Chief Green for moving the officer swearing-in to this current meeting in order to be a part of the council meeting and community involvement.

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- Reported that at Commissioner Steve Bradshaw's Quarterly Breakfast for Central DeKalb County he stated that the county needs police officers of all ages and are currently hiring. The Mayor also stated that she is proud of Public Safety Officers having great skills and talents that bring great value thus making the community a better and safer place.
- Made an insertion in reference to Mr. Torrent's incident at the lake and stated that residents will not be harassed.
- Commented that on April 24<sup>th</sup> she and Chief Green attended the Rockbridge Road Project Meeting and Lloyd Ellison, Superintendent stated that there will be an additional 250 feet of repairs added to the project to tie into DeKalb County's water supply. This will add another month to the completion of the project.
- Has been attending various council meetings to assess how their chambers function for comfort, visibility and audio. She has attended Decatur's City Council Meeting and will attend upcoming meetings at Lithonia, Avondale and Dunwoody. Mayor Hammet invited Council Members to attend as well.
- The Annual Pollination Celebration on April 23<sup>rd</sup> was a great success and thanked Diane Durrett for spearheading the event and Augusta Woods for acquiring the food truck.
- City Manager Miller-Thornton submitted the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application before the deadline on April 21<sup>st</sup>. CDBG grant request was submitted as a request for funding for the inner berm bridges replacement project. Grant award will be announce in June 2023.
- Reported that she, Council Member Hall and City Manager Miller-Thornton met at Poplar Park to begin planning stages to submit to Commissioner Lorraine Cochran-Johnson. Mayor Hammet also thanked Stephanie Kohler for providing rare music at the park that was in harmony with the natural habitat of birds despite the traffic on Rockbridge Road.

City Council

Council Member Castro commented that she has noticed more people going into the beach and recommended more Police Officer presence and that there are alot of things going on whereas people are not being respective of the park area. Ms. Castro also suggested more community policing.

City Manager Miller-Thornton communicated that this week is National Professional Administrators and Assistant's Week and thanked Mayor Hammet, City Council Members, Chief Green and Administrative Coordinator for their support.

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**Information for “The Pine Lake News” eblast:**

**Council Confirms Appointment of Stephanie Kohler to MAP**

Mayor Melanie Hammet selected Stephanie Kohler to be a member of the Municipal Arts Panel (MAP). Stephanie is excited to join MAP and support more accessible art and music in Pine Lake. A lifelong musician, she has an extensive background in event production, including 10 years of producing a festival and 4 years of managing a Burning Man camp.

In accordance with our charter, Stephanie was confirmed by Council with a unanimous vote.

**Three new Reserve Officers Sworn in by Mayor.**

Police Chief Y’Hudah-Green introduced three new public safety officers to the Council. Mayor Hammet then administered the oath of office for reserve officer duty. Please join us in welcoming Officer Charles Ings, Officer Michael Taylor and Officer Adelle Gaskin as community partners in our city’s public safety efforts

**Pollination Celebration Well Attended and Enjoyed**

Thanks and congratulations to The Municipal Arts Panel (MAP), Stewards for Environmental Education and Design (SEED), volunteers, musicians, naturalists and Bees for a tremendously successful Pollination Celebration.

**Soil Survey for the Inner Berm Bridges Rescheduled**

The drilling and soil survey work related to the inner berm bridges has been rescheduled for Wednesday, April 26th, 2023, at 8:00 am.

**City Accepting Applications for Beach Monitor**

Beach Monitor is a seasonal, part-time position. Responsibilities of the position include assuring that the number of visitors does not exceed approved beach capacity; maintenance of daily patron attendance record; reporting any needs for repairs or maintenance; removing trash and debris from the beach; and replenishing paper products in portable toilet facility. Application and full description can be found at: [Beach Monitor Posting](#) on line at [www.pinelakega.net](http://www.pinelakega.net) -city government/employment opportunities.

**City Manager Completes Human Resources Administration Certificate Program**

Congratulations to City Manager ChaQuias Miller-Thornton for successfully completed the requirements of the Georgia Municipal Association Human Resources Administration Certificate Program on April 5, 2023.

**Food Assistance Available to Pine Lake Neighbors**

PLAIN’s [Neighbor to Neighbor](#) (N2N) program assists Pine Lake neighbors in need. If you or someone you know is food insecure or needs other assistance, please call 404 491-0774 and

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leave a message. A volunteer will call back to discuss needs and help available. All contacts are kept confidential.

**Adjournment** Council Member Brantley motioned to adjourn at 8:08pm, seconded by Mayor pro tem Bordeaux and passed unanimously.