



Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council
From: ChaQuias Thornton, City Manager
Date: July 25, 2023
Re: City Manager's Report

NOTE: **Bold text** information is new or updated information.

City Manager's Report

Administration/Municipal Court/Public Works/Recreation

Employment Positions:

The City is accepting applications for temporary placement of public works laborer position. The position will provide temporary assistance for the completion of public works tasks in the interim of the assessment of the staffing needs for the public works department.

The City is accepting applications for the position of Beach Monitor for the remainder of the 2023 Beach Season.

Current City Projects:

INNER BERM BRIDGES

- Ongoing: On 03/28/2023 Council approved proposal for Clark Patterson Lee to conduct bid document and construction plan composition and construction administration for rebuild of the inner berm bridges. **Soil test and drilling has been completed and the Administration is awaiting update from CPL regarding next phase.**

COURTHOUSE/PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY RENOVATIONS

- Council approved architectural/design proposal for TSW for the presentation of current condition and design options for renovation of the courthouse facility. Design focus will be accessibility, connectivity, and technological improvements.
 - **The Administration and Public Safety Offices joined TSW during the firm's sight visit on 07/21/2023. The purpose of the visit was to gain project perspective and to conduct inspection of the space to fulfill composition of current condition of the space and to begin shaping design options for the space. The City expects presentation of design options in approximately 30 days.**

DAM PROJECT

Invitation to bid for the Dam Repair Project is set to publish in the City's local news organ (The DeKalb Champion) and on the Georgia Procurement website on June 29th, 2023. Bids are due on July 31st, 2023. Work required under the Contract would include repair & restabilization of approximately 145 lf section of Pine Lake Dam adjacent to Snapfinger Creek. **As of the project update received on 07/24/2023, 9 bids have been submitted.**

INTERIM CONTRACT AND PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES

- Contractors have completed maintenance of the grounds on around the trails along the dam, and eastern and western wetland areas and the lake area adjacent to Lakeshore.
- **Contractors will be engaged to complete grounds maintenance projects around the city to aid in the public works function in the interim shortage of public works staff.**

ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

- Site inspection of the City's eastern wetlands was conducted by the City's Environmental Engineer during the week of June 7. At that time it was noted that flow of waters in the area was at operational level. However, evidence of the emission of the odor of sewage was found to be attributed to improperly sealed sewerage system junction boxes. It was the documented determination of the City Engineer that the swarm of mosquitoes is an effect of the open junction boxes. Noting a public health concern, DeKalb County Watershed and the City's DeKalb County Commission representative (Commissioner Bradshaw) have been contacted regarding the matter.
 - On July 7th, 2023 Director Hayes reported that lids for all 10 junction boxes in the eastern wetlands would be replaced beginning 07/08/2023. There is also maintenance being scheduled for repair/raising of two sewer nodes that are currently at or below grade. City Manager Thornton has contacted the City's environmental engineer regarding the upcoming maintenance project and the Manager's Office will keep Council and the public abreast of the project progress. **An expectation of City monitoring during the project repair phase has been presented to the County. City monitoring will include weekly inspection of the project city with focus on erosion/sedimentation/and method and measure of land disturbance. The City Council will be engaged before the project commences to gain approval for project start. No proposed project dates have been presented to-date.**
- The City Administration is working to collaborate with Georgia Southern University on a practicum project for assessment of the City's environmental infrastructure (lake, dam, and wetlands). The project proposes assessment of the infrastructure, draft of a plan to maintain such infrastructure (including findings related to skills and knowledge necessary to successfully fulfill operations and maintenance of such infrastructure). **Communications are ongoing with University and the professor that will potentially head the proposed project. An expectation of on-site vs. remote work on the project has been presented.**

Rockbridge Road (DeKalb County SPLOST Project):

Update 07/18/2023

DeKalb County and the SPLOST Project Management Team conducted a town hall to give update on the Rockbridge Road Project. The town hall was held on Monday, July 17,

at 6:30pm at the Clubhouse.

Both the 8” and 24” water mains have been installed. The 8” lines have been successfully pressure tested and service line connections are continuing for the businesses along the line.

DeKalb County has added an extended scope of work for the replacement of water utility infrastructure on both the eastern and western ends of the project. Mayor Hammet can offer additional information regarding. Next meeting of the Pine Lake Administration and the DeKalb County SPLOST management team is TBD.

Poplar Park

The City is awaiting response from the DeKalb County’s American Rescue Plan (ARP) Review Committee regarding the proposal submitted to Commissioner Cochran-Johnson’s Office on 04/27/2023. Approval of the proposal is expected to result in approximately \$58,000 for the park.

Community Policing Initiative:

Other operational priorities have warranted a delay in planning, however both Chief Green and I consider the initiative of high importance and look forward to its programming.

Administrative Matters

- **Final adoption of the 2023 millage rate was set at 16.481 mils. All required documents have been rendered to the DeKalb County Tax Commissioners Office, the office of the Superior Court Clerk (as applicable), and the State of Georgia Department of Revenue.**
- **GOVERNMENT 101 SERIES**
The City Manager’s (Administration) Office is gearing up to present the next series of OUR PINE LAKE Government 101 public engagement sessions. The series program is continuing to be formulated but, we ask citizens and stakeholders to be on the look out for information regarding this opportunity to learn more about local government processes such as budgeting, taxation, service provision, etc. **As the City Council and Administration prepares for the budget season (for the purpose of considering adoption of the FY2024 budget), the next session will include the topic of Local Government Budget Process and Getting to Know Your City’s Budget Document. Date TBA.**
- **Financial Software – City Manager Thornton has connected with Tyler Technologies to begin implementation of the conversion from QuickBooks to InCode Financial Software. The new software will allow for the necessary fund accounting that is required for local governments.**

City Committees:

- **Stewards of Environmental Education and Design**
SEED held a listening session on Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at the Beach House. The purpose of the session was to hear resident concerns and values regarding environmental quality and recreation. This community engagement event was intended to create expanded volunteer opportunities to address reported concerns related to fishing and wildlife, water quality, and safe “green space” recreation in Pine Lake.

The next regular meeting of SEED is scheduled for this Thursday, 07/27/2023 at 6pm at the Clubhouse. (470 Clubhouse Drive, Pine Lake).

Elections:

On the 7th day of November 2023, a municipal general election will be held in the CITY OF PINE LAKE, for the purpose of electing a Mayor and two (2) Council Members. Candidates who are elected in said election shall serve for a term of four years. Persons eligible to become candidates for said elections shall have been a resident of the city for the period of 12 continuous months immediately prior to the date of the election and be a qualified elector in the city.

Seats up for election are:

- Mayoral Seat – Currently held by Mayor Melanie Hammet
- Councilmember Seat – Currently held by Tracey Brantley
- Councilmember Seat – Currently held by Nivea Castro

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §21-2-131(a)(1), the qualifying fees for each position were approved by Pine Lake Council consent on January 16th, 2023. The qualifying fee for Mayor is \$108. The qualifying fee for Council member is \$18.

Each candidate will file notice of his or her candidacy and the appropriate affidavit in the office of the Election Superintendent (City Clerk) at City Hall, 425 Allgood Road, Stone Mountain, Georgia. Qualifying shall open at 8:30 a.m. on the 21st day of August 2023 and shall close at 4:30 p.m. on the 23rd day of August 2023.

The last day to register to be eligible to vote in this general election is October 10, 2023.

The special election will be held in the regular polling place, City of Pine Lake Clubhouse, 470 Clubhouse Drive, Pine Lake, Georgia 30072. The polls will open at 7:00 AM and close at 7:00 PM.

Qualifying packets will be available to those interested in running for municipal office on

Financials and Audits:

FY2022 Budget Reconciliation and FY2022 Audit Preparation

The Administration Office has worked to prepare financials and reports for the 2022 audit. The City entered into a letter of engagement with James Whitaker, PC to conduct the 2022 audit and the Administration delivered its financials, documents, and reports to Mr. Whitaker on June 7, 2023. **The Administration Officer (Manager and PT Accountant) met with the auditor on 07/10/2023 to present requested files for the audit.**

Workers Compensation Audit

The workers compensation audit was conducted on Monday July 18th, 2023. The Administration Office will respond to any follow-up and will present results to the Council when received. Thank you to Administrative Coordinator Missye Varner for work completed to comply with audit requests.

Moratorium Preparation/Lake Health and Maintenance:

- **“No Fishing – Temporary Moratorium Enforced” signs were installed around the lake area on Friday, July 14th, 2023.**
- The Administration has begun review of an ordinance draft related to the amendment of the

City's Lake, Parks, and Recreational Facilities Code. The Administration was presented initial draft to Council on 06/27/2023. The Council was asked to begin considering policy amendments. The preliminary draft serves to provide language that revises existing Code provisions about the lake and park areas. **Council will need to consider and present any additional amendments surrounding use, access, process, and operational procedures pertaining to the subject areas. The Administration Office has asked that Council begin considering language regarding exclusive use (beyond normal recreational use) of the lake area's land.**

- Trashcans are set to be delivered on Friday, July 28th, 2023.

Applications/Licenses:

Policy/Procedures Drafts:

Personnel Policy is still being drafted for Council review. As reported during the most recent meeting of Council, the draft policy updates will be presented in sections. **The Administration Office has begun review of the Police Department's Reserve Officer Policy and Attorney Moore is working on policy regarding second jobs for public safety officers.**

Short-term rental (land use policy). The Administration Office and Legal are working on draft language for short-term rentals. Currently there is no language in the City's Code to regulate such use and therefore, such use that is not expressly stated in the Code is considered by the Administration Office to be prohibited.

Required Reporting:

Education and Training:

Asst. City Clerk/Court Clerk Ned Dagenhard completed Security Awareness and Integrity Certification Training during the week of July 17th, 2023. Congratulations.

The City Manager's office has scheduled city employees for a Workplace Harassment and Discrimination webinar in September of 2023. As recommended by Local Government Risk Management Services, this training is to be completed at least every 1.5 years. In addition to reducing risks in the workplace, training credits can often be used to receive discounts/premiums on city insurance policies and can sometimes create eligibility opportunities for workplace safety and workforce related grants.

Other City Matters:

Public Works Bidding Exemption

HB 193 raised the general exemption for public works bidding contract from \$100,000 to \$250,000. Currently, the City's exemption threshold is \$100,000.

Conclusion

Please do feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding the information reported within this memorandum, and for any matter for which the manager's office would be inclined to and/or charged to service.

Thank you,
CMThornton