



Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council
From: ChaQuias Thornton, City Manager
Date: July 11, 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 2023 Beach Season. Volunteers are being asked to serve on Saturday and Sunday, July 15th and 16th, 2023. Full shifts of 3pm to 9pm or half shifts of 3pm to 6pm and 6pm to 9pm are open for coverage.

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 has conducted initial meeting with the design firm and is working to schedule meeting in the next two weeks to conduct sight visit of the project to inform the project and to do inspection for current condition and design options.

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.

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.
 - **Mayor Hammet spoke with Commissioner Bradshaw and City Manager Thornton spoke with DeKalb County Chief Operating Officer Zach Williams and DeKalb Watershed Director David Hayes on Friday morning June 30th, 2023 regarding the matter – requesting an emergency inspection of Watershed. The Watershed inspectors were present on site within two hours of the calls. City Manager Thornton accompanied the team on the site inspection and identified several sewerage junction boxes that were improperly sealed and two that were below grade. City Manager Thornton continued to follow up with Director Hayes during the week of July 3rd, 2023. 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.**
- 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. **City Manager Thornton has met with former Mayor Greg Zarius to invite him to join the Council, the Administration, the City's Engineers, Public Works, and SEED in collaborating with the university.**

Rockbridge Road (DeKalb County SPLOST Project):

Update 07/10/2023

DeKalb County and the SPLOST Project Management Team will conduct a town hall to give update on the Rockbridge Road Project. The town hall will be held on Monday, July 17, 2023 at 6:30pm at the Clubhouse.

Both the 8" and 24" water mains have been installed. The 8" lines have been successfully pressure tested. The 24" lines were pressure tested and a leak has been detected in the line. As of 07/10/2023, the contractor was working to detect the location of the leak.

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.

05/04/2023 The water main work has continued slow but steady [being that] the weather has been favorable, finally. The contractor will complete the crossing and fire hydrant installation at the Rowland/Popular and Rockbridge this week. They plan on starting the crossing at the Family Dollar next week. The Prime contractor has come through and corrected the traffic control.

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 is gearing up to hold a listening session on Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 6pm at the Clubhouse. The purpose of the session is to hear resident concerns and values regarding environmental quality and recreation. This community engagement event is 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.

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 Administration Office has received notice from GMA’s Workers Compensation Audit division to conduct the City’s annual workers comp audit. We are working to compile all requested documentation in anticipation of the audit visit. **The audit is scheduled for Monday July 18th, 2023.**

Moratorium Preparation/Lake Health and Maintenance:

- **The City Manger has submitted sign design to the city’s sign vendor for production of the “No Fishing – Temporary Moratorium Enforced” signs that are to placed around the lake area. Signs are due to be completed, delivered and installed by Friday, July 14th, 2023.**
- **Securing of increased hours for Beach Maintenance and Monitoring is being secured.**
- **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 is 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.**
- **A more detailed and specific schedule of lake water testing is being implemented per advise of the City’s Environmental Engineer.**

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.

Required Reporting:

Education and Training:

Other City Matters:

2023 SPLOST

Tentative deadline for DeKalb cities to pass resolution regarding project referendum for the 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) is Labor Day 2023. DeKalb and its municipalities are expected to settle on the population/calculation formula for the cities by July 1, 2023. The referendum is scheduled for the November 2023 general election ballot and the Georgia legislature has passed a bill that has removed the percentage and specific nature of project restrictions that were attached to the 2017 SPLOST. Council should begin considering the nature of projects that it would like to include in its referendum. SPLOST is an optional one percent county sales tax used to fund capital outlay projects proposed by the county and participating qualified municipal governments. In general, county and municipal governments may not use SPLOST proceeds for operating expenses or maintenance of a SPLOST project or any other county or municipal facility or service.

The Administration has asked that Council consider scheduling a special work session to discuss the SPLOST II project list and any language changes that it would like to see in the SPLOST intergovernmental agreement between the County and the cities of DeKalb.

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 Administrator's office would be inclined to and/or charged to service.

Thank you,
CMThornton