

CITY OF PINE LAKE, GEORGIA
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
JANUARY 28TH, 2025 @ 6:00PM
COURTHOUSE & COUNCIL CHAMBERS
459 PINE DRIVE, PINE LAKE, GA 30072

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

CALL TO ORDER – PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

PUBLIC HEARING – HB 581, Statewide Homestead Exemption Opt Out

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE DAY

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

- **December 17, 2024 – Regular Meeting**
- **January 14, 2025 – Work Session**

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 minutes each please

OLD BUSINESS

1. Ordinance 2025-01, Domestic Partnerships – Discussion & Potential First Read
2. Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for Regular & Part-time Employees
3. Communications Policy – Discussion & Revisions

NEW BUSINESS

1. One-month Extension of Contractual Agreement with Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick
2. Resolution R-2025-01 - Setting Qualifying Fees for 2025 Council Elections
3. Resolution R-2025-02 - Establishment of SPLOST II Bank Account
4. Resolution R-2025-03 - Authorization of City Manager or Designee to Apply for Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG)
5. Resolution R-2025-04 - Authorization of the Acceptance of a Bid in the Amount of \$345,000 - Oak Road Maintenance

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 minutes each please

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Reports/Comments

- d. Mayor
- e. City Council

Information for “The Pine Lake News” eblast.

ADJOURNMENT

MAYOR
Brandy Hall

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jean Bordeaux, Mayor pro tem
Jeff Goldberg
Tom Ramsey
Thomas Torrent
Augusta Woods

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COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager 

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: House Bill (HB) 581 Statewide Homestead Exemption Opt Out Election – Public Hearing

RECOMMENDATION

A public hearing is recommended to be held for the City of Pine Lake's election to opt out of the HB 581 Statewide Homestead Exemption program.

BACKGROUND

House Bill 581 was passed by the Georgia General Assembly during the 2024 legislative session and was signed into law by Governor Brian Kemp on April 18, 2024. HB 581 provides for several significant changes impacting local government revenue.

In general, HB 581 has three major components: first, the bill provides for some procedural changes to property tax assessments and appeals; second, the bill provides for a new statewide homestead exemption that applies to local governments unless the local government affirmatively opts out; third, the bill creates a new local option sales tax available to be used for property tax relief.

As authorized through a constitutional amendment (House of Representatives HR 1022 (2024) and outlined in House Bill (HB) 581, the local government seeking to opt out of the HB 581 homestead exemption must advertise and hold three public hearings of intent to opt out and then pass a resolution opting out and file it with the Secretary of State.

RESOURCE IMPACT

There is no resource impact from the holding of a public hearing; however, a reduction of revenue adversely impacting the City's General Fund is projected because of the HB 581 Statewide Homestead Exemption program.

ATTACHMENTS

HB 581 (2024): Frequently Asked Questions Document



191 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 700 • Atlanta, GA 30303



201 Pryor Street, SW • Atlanta, GA 30303

ASSOCIATION COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GEORGIA & GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

HB 581 (2024): Frequently Asked Questions Document

The Local Opt-out Floating Homestead Exemption & Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST)

House Bill 581 was passed by the Georgia General Assembly during the 2024 legislative session and was signed into law by Governor Kemp on April 18, 2024.

[HB 581](#) provides for several significant changes impacting local government revenue. Counties and cities must understand these changes and be prepared to make critical decisions in the coming months that will have lasting impacts. In general, HB 581 has three major components: first, the bill provides for some procedural changes to property tax assessments and appeals; second, the bill provides for a new statewide homestead exemption that applies to local governments unless the local government affirmatively opts out; third, the bill creates a new local option sales tax available to be used for property tax relief.

This document provides frequently asked questions (FAQs) to give an overview of the key provisions of the bill, the statewide homestead exemption and new local option sales tax, and the considerations local governments must have in mind. Appendix A then includes an outline of these key provisions to help guide local decision making.

A. Generally

1. In a nutshell, what is HB 581 (2024) about?

HB 581 contains multiple provisions related to property tax and sales tax. Most relevant to this FAQ, the bill:

- a. Grants a statewide homestead exemption that limits the increases in the taxable value of homes to no more than the inflation rate that occurred over the prior year;
- b. Allows local governments to elect to opt out of this homestead exemption within their jurisdiction so that it will not apply to their taxable values; and
- c. Authorizes most local governments with the new homestead exemption (or equivalent) to levy a new sales tax to be used for property tax relief.

2. Where did this proposal come from and what was the reason?

Entering the 2024 legislative session, many legislators were concerned with the rapid rise in property values across the state, and in turn, the rise in property taxes. The homestead exemption proposal came from the General Assembly and was first introduced in the Senate. The reason was to provide more certainty to homeowners who are concerned about the significant increases to the taxable value of homes in recent years. Under this bill, if the local government does not opt out, then the homeowner knows their value may not increase by more than the rate of inflation, which prevents large jumps and helps them budget.

The sales tax provision (FLOST) came from the House and was originally designed as a flexible new sales tax to act in place of sales tax laws written to apply to only one jurisdiction, such as that for the Coliseum SPLOST for Augusta-Richmond County; however, it changed throughout the legislative process to become a method to reduce millage rates imposed on all properties (homestead and non-homestead).

B. The Homestead Exemption of HB 581

1. What type of homestead exemption does HB 581 provide? Is there a difference between floating, base-year, adjusted base-year, and frozen homestead exemptions?

The core purpose of any base-year, floating, or frozen homestead exemption is to reduce or eliminate the tax impact of increases in the fair market value of a homesteaded property that occur following the purchase of a home. The terms are generally synonymous and used to describe either the practical or technical effect of the exemption. The key difference is whether such an exemption allows for adjustments to the base year value based on a standard rate or the inflation rate.

For a base-year, floating, or frozen homestead exemption *without* an adjustment factor, the value of the exemption changes or floats each year to always equal and exempt the full difference between the base-year value of the home and the current value of the home, so that the taxable value of the home never increases (but the millage rate may still increase). These are most often called frozen exemptions because the assessed value of the home is blocked from increasing (and often, from decreasing).

For a base-year, floating, or frozen homestead exemption *with* an adjustment factor, the base year and the base year value for a homestead does not change, but the base year value is adjusted annually by a percentage equal to either a set rate or the inflation rate that occurred during the prior year. These are best called adjusted base-year homestead exemptions.

In the case of HB 581, practically speaking, the homestead exemption limits the amount of any increase in the assessed value of homes to no more than the rate of inflation experienced over the prior year—it does not freeze the value. This is best described as an adjusted base-year homestead exemption, because it grants an exemption equal to the difference between the homestead's adjusted base-year value—generally the value for the year prior to the homeowner's application for the exemption plus an inflation factor for each year since the exemption was first granted—and the current year's true value.

It is important to note that most of these homestead exemptions do account for substantial changes in the property. For example, if a homeowner doubles the size of their house, then the base-year value may be increased, regardless of any freeze or limitation, but thereafter, the new base-year value enjoys the benefit of the exemption. Also important to note, these exemptions do not stay with the property nor the property owner when a change in ownership occurs. If an individual sells their home, the taxable value of that home resets to fair market value for the next owner. Similarly, the individual cannot carry the value of the exemption to their new home.

2. How is the value of the HB 581 homestead exemption determined?

The value of the exemption is unique to each individual property and will generally change each year for such properties. The core purpose of a base-year or floating homestead exemption is to reduce or eliminate the impact of increases to the fair market value of a homestead. In the case of HB 581, the homestead exemption prevents rapid increases in the assessed value of homes but does not freeze the value.

HB 581 is considered an adjusted base-year homestead exemption, because it allows the homestead's base-year value to increase annually by up to the inflation rate determined by the State Revenue Commissioner (likely the consumer price index) which occurred during the prior year. The value of the exemption is the difference between the adjusted base-year value and the fair market value. Even if two properties begin with identical base year values, if the fair market value of the properties diverge over time, then the property with the higher fair market value will receive the larger exemption while potentially paying the same in property taxes.

3. If my local government wants to opt out of the HB 581 homestead exemption, how can we do that?

As authorized through a constitutional amendment (HR 1022 (2024)) and outlined in HB 581, the opt-out process is very similar to the "public notification of tax increase" process that is required when a local government does not fully rollback its millage rate. The local government seeking to opt out of the HB 581 homestead exemption must advertise and hold three public hearings of intent to opt out, and then pass a resolution opting out and file it with the Secretary of State. The process may not begin until the effective date of the bill on January 1, 2025, and must be completed by March 1, 2025. Each local government (county, city, school) may independently make the decision whether to opt out; any combination may elect to do nothing or opt out of the HB 581 floating homestead exemption. If a local government opts out, its taxpayers will not receive the benefit of the exemption, and their property will be taxed (absent other exemptions) at the property's fair market value.

4. Should my local government opt out of the homestead exemption if we already have another form of a floating, base-year, or frozen homestead exemption?

There are at least a few things to consider when answering this question for your jurisdiction.

First, how far does your current floating homestead exemption extend? Does it cover all millage rates, including those for special districts? The reason that this is important to answer is that the HB 581 homestead exemption extends to all millage levies except for any bond levies.

Second, does your current homestead exemption incorporate any form of inflationary or automatic increase? The value of the HB 581 homestead exemption for each homeowner is, in effect, reduced annually by the amount of inflation that occurred over the prior year, which allows the taxable value of the homestead to rise over time in-line with inflation. If your jurisdiction has a set rise over time that is expected to exceed the inflation factor in HB 581, then your jurisdiction may want to opt out.

Third, if the homestead exemptions are equivalent, you may want to consider opting out of the HB 581 floating homestead exemption to reduce confusion. Your jurisdiction would still have access to the new sales tax for property tax relief (FLOST) assuming all the conditions to impose the tax are met.

5. Does the HB 581 homestead exemption apply to community improvement districts (CIDs)?

For all practical purposes, the homestead exemptions would not apply to CID's as CID's may only levy taxes on nonresidential property. Ga. Const. Art. IX, Sec. VII, Para. III(c).

6. How does the HB 581 homestead exemption affect tax allocation districts (TADs)?

The homestead exemption could potentially reduce the amount of expected property tax revenue growth within the TAD by limiting the assessed value increase of homestead property over time. This question requires analysis specific to the TAD in question.

7. Can the HB 581 floating homestead exemption be later repealed for my county or city?

If a jurisdiction elects not to opt out of the HB 581 homestead exemption, they will not have an opportunity to opt out in the future and will have the homestead exemption permanently. There may be a method to remove such jurisdictions in the future, but it would require a change to general law or a constitutional amendment done by the legislature.

8. Will the HB 581 homestead exemption affect a homeowner's existing homestead exemptions?

HB 581 does not eliminate any existing homestead exemptions for any jurisdiction, regardless of the type of homestead exemption, but it may override existing floating, base-year, and frozen exemptions, if the HB 581 exemption provides a greater benefit to the taxpayer.

- a. If your local government has an existing non-floating homestead exemption, such as an exemption for \$5,000 of assessed value, that will be unaffected by HB 581. The floating homestead exemption is calculated first, and then the non-floating exemptions are calculated on the back end. That said, if the existing, non-floating local homestead exemption says that it may not be applied in addition to any other homestead exemption, then it may not be applied.
- b. If your local government has an existing base-year homestead exemption, then the taxpayer will receive whichever provides them with the largest benefit in any given year. Your tax assessor's office will be responsible for tracking both floating homestead exemption values in addition to the fair market value.

For example, if there is an existing base-year or floating homestead exemption that does not have inflationary increases, then it would generally provide the larger benefit to the taxpayer. Similarly, if the base-year of a homestead exemption that is comparable to HB 581 pre-dates HB 581's base-year, then the older base year will likely provide the larger benefit.

9. Will it affect the county's ability to impose a FLOST if another city opts out of the homestead exemption granted by HB 581?

Yes, if a city that imposes a property tax opts out, then the county and all cities within the county will be ineligible for the FLOST. If a city that does not levy a property tax opts out, then it would not affect the ability for the county to levy a FLOST. If even one city that opts out does levy a property tax at such time, then the FLOST would not be permitted. Of course, jurisdictions may opt out and not impact eligibility if the jurisdiction has another eligible homestead exemption in place.

10. If the county opts out of the homestead exemption will this impact a municipality's ability to impose a FLOST?

Yes. Similarly, if a county opts out all municipalities in the county will be ineligible for the FLOST unless the county has another eligible homestead exemption in place.

11. If a municipality or a county opts out of the HB 581 homestead exemption will homesteads have multiple assessed values for tax assessment?

Yes, if the homestead exemption applies for some but not all jurisdictions, the taxable value of the property will essentially be different. The fair market value of a property is the same for all taxing jurisdictions where the property is subject to property tax. Homestead exemptions are applied after the fair market value of the home is determined and reduce the taxable value of the home—the taxable value may be different among jurisdictions based on applicable homestead exemptions.

Every county assessor's office is required to maintain a set of books with the fair market value of the property. The assessor's office will be required to maintain two or more sets of values if there are one or more floating homestead exemptions. Each homestead may have a different base-year value across multiple jurisdictions, but this will be tracked by the assessor's office.

12. For a home that has an exemption under HB 581, what happens if the home is substantially improved or is destroyed? How are changes to the home's value that do not result from market forces handled?

Substantial changes to the property are considered when assessing the property. Any substantial change will increase or decrease the adjusted base year value of the home.

Example: The adjusted base year value of a home as of January 1, 2028, was \$500k. During 2028, the homeowner doubles the square-footage of her home and adds a swimming pool. As of January 1, 2029, the tax officials for the county determine that the changes to the home increase the value by \$200k. The adjusted base year value for the 2029 tax year = \$500k (the 2028 ABYV) + \$200k (substantial change value) + any applicable inflation factor.

13. If my local government opts out of the floating homestead under HB 581, can we opt in at a later date?

If your local government opts out, there is no future opportunity for the local government to unilaterally opt-in or rejoin the HB 581 exemption.

However, a local government may still obtain a similar homestead exemption in a traditional manner. The General Assembly may pass a local Act creating an equivalent local floating homestead exemption. This would require 2/3's vote in the General Assembly and a local referendum. The General Assembly may do this against the will of the local government. We encourage you to maintain a dialogue with your local legislators, especially if you intend to opt out.

14. If my local government opts out of the HB 581 floating homestead exemption and our legislative delegation disagrees with that decision, can they take action to mandate the floating homestead exemption on my local government?

If your local government opts out of the HB 581 floating homestead exemption and your legislative delegation disagrees with that decision, your local delegation can pass a local Act to impose a floating homestead exemption within the jurisdiction. HB 581 has not changed the ability of the legislature to create specific homestead exemptions for local governments. This local Act would be subject to 2/3 vote in the General Assembly and approval by the voters in a local referendum. If the referendum is successful, then your local government would be subject to the homestead exemption provided for in the local Act, even though you opted out of the HB 581 exemption.

Note: A local government could elect to opt out of the HB 581 exemption and ask their local delegation to proceed with a more customized version of the homestead exemption.

15. Can the floating homestead exemption be transferred to a new owner of the home?

No, the homestead exemption is not portable or transferable—it is tied both to the property owner and the home. However, in the case of a surviving spouse who was not on the deed at the time of their spouse's death, said surviving spouse may continue the homestead exemption in the same manner as the deceased spouse, provided that the surviving spouse is otherwise eligible for the homestead exemption.

For anyone else that acquires the home as a homestead, the base-year and base-year value will be reset to the year prior to the person's acquisition of the home and to the actual value for the home for such prior year.

16. How much land can be included in a qualified floating homestead exemption?

Georgia state law states that the homestead exemption applies to the homestead and the land immediately surrounding the homestead; there is no specification for acreage. Many local homestead exemptions do limit the total acreage. It is likely up to local interpretation as to what

land constitutes the land “immediately surrounding” the homestead. The exemption would not include buildings or structures on the property, which are not part of the homestead dwelling, itself.

17. Does the HB 581 floating homestead exemption apply to special service districts?

Yes, the HB 581 floating homestead exemption applies to all millage rates except for millage rates to retire bonded indebtedness.

Point to consider: If the local government has an existing floating homestead exemption that *does not* apply to special service districts, then you may want to consider opting out, so your special service district millage levies are unaffected.

18. If a homeowner’s assessed value was locked following their appeal to the Board of Equalization in 2022, would that value be used for the 2024 base year for the purposes of the HB 581 exemption?

The homestead’s final assessed value for the base year is the base year value for the purposes of the HB 581 exemption. Code Section 48-5-44.2(a)(3)(A). Accordingly, if the locked assessed value from 2022 is what was lawfully used as the homestead’s final assessed value for 2024, then that taxpayer would have their HB 581 2024 base year assessed value set at that same amount.

19. Will the market value or the adjusted base year value be used when calculating value increases to the tax digest that are factored into the rollback millage rate that cannot be exceeded without advertising a tax increase?

The digest value for rollback purposes utilizes the net taxable digest, which is the value of the digest *after* exemptions are accounted for.

C. The Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST)

1. Generally, what is the FLOST?

The Floating Local Option Sales Tax or FLOST (named for its relation to the floating homestead exemption) is a new sales tax that can be levied up to 1 percent and collected county-wide. Funds are split between the county and cities based upon an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) and used for property tax relief.

2. What are the minimum requirements for a given county or municipality to be eligible to levy a FLOST?

- a. The county or municipality must levy a property tax and have a base-year or floating homestead exemption in effect¹;
- b. All other municipalities within the county that currently levy a property tax must also have a base-year or floating homestead exemption in effect²;
- c. The county or municipality must have available room under the overall sales tax cap³;
- d. The county and the applicable number of municipalities must enter into an intergovernmental agreement as required under Code Section 48-8-109.31(d)(1)(B);
- e. Hold a successful local referendum⁴; and
- f. Utilize the proceeds for property tax relief and in accordance with the IGA⁵.

3. Who must sign the intergovernmental agreement to authorize the referendum for the FLOST?

The county must reach an intergovernmental agreement with municipalities levying a property tax that represent at least 50% of the total municipal population within the county. This minimum requirement does not preclude more municipalities than those representing 50% of the municipal population from signing the IGA if all parties agree.⁶

Any municipality that does not sign the IGA is treated as an 'absent municipality' and will receive proceeds from the FLOST based upon the size of its population relative to the total municipal population within the county, excluding any municipalities that do not levy a property tax. Municipalities that do not levy a property tax are excluded from the calculations and from sharing in FLOST revenues.⁷

¹ Code Section 48-8-109.31(d)(1)(A).

² Code Section 48-8-109.31(d)(1)(A).

³ Code Section 48-8-6(a).

⁴ Code Section 48-8-109.32.

⁵ Code Section 48-8-109.42.

⁶ Code Section 48-8-109.31(d)(1)(A).

⁷ Code Section 48-8-109.31(d)(2).

4. What must an IGA to levy FLOST include?

- a. The rate of the tax: incremental in .05% increments up to a full 1.0%;
- b. The duration of the tax: up to 5⁸ years;
- c. Provisions for calling the referendum for the tax, including the question for the ballot;
- d. The distribution schedule⁹ apportioning proceeds among:
 - i. County
 - ii. Municipalities
 - iii. Absent Municipalities
- e. The IGA is not required to specify how property tax relief is to be applied but may do so.

5. How is the sales tax referendum scheduled?

First, there must be a valid intergovernmental agreement between the county and cities specifying the distribution of the tax. Next, the county may call for the sales tax referendum similar to other sales tax referenda.¹⁰

6. Is a local referendum necessary to impose the FLOST even if the ballot measure in November is successful?

Yes. It is important to note that the ballot question in November of 2024 proposes a constitutional amendment which enables the homestead exemption. If this amendment is not approved, all of HB 581 (including the FLOST) is repealed. If the constitutional amendment is approved, a subsequent referendum within the county is still required to levy the FLOST. Counties and cities should be mindful that the FLOST must be approved by voters in the county to be levied when making policy decisions concerning the homestead exemption.

7. Does FLOST revenue affect the rollback millage rate that is calculated for the purposes of Code Section 45-5-32.1 (Taxpayer Bill of Rights), which requires the advertising of a property tax increase, if exceeded?

Yes. Unlike LOST, the total amount of FLOST collected in the preceding calendar year must be subtracted from the millage equivalent calculated to provide the jurisdiction with the same net proceeds from the current year's net taxable digest value as those derived from the previous year's millage rate when multiplied by the previous year's net taxable digest value.

⁸ Code Section 48-8-109.32(a).

⁹ Code Section 48-8-109.36(2).

¹⁰ Code Section 48-8-109.32.

8. What can the FLOST revenues be used for?

FLOST revenue must be used for property tax relief. Per Code Section 48-8-109.42, FLOST revenues:

- “[S]hall be used exclusively for tax relief and in conjunction with all limitations provided in the intergovernmental agreement authorizing the tax for such political subdivision.”
- Additionally:
 - “Each taxpayer’s ad valorem tax bill shall clearly state the dollar amount by which the property tax has been reduced as a result of the imposition of the tax imposed under this article”; and
 - “The roll-back rate for the political subdivision, which is calculated under Code Section 48-5-32.1 [Taxpayer Bill of Rights], shall be reduced annually by the millage equivalent of the net proceeds of the tax authorized under this article, which proceeds were received by the political subdivision during the prior taxable year.”

9. In what ways may the local government calculate and apply the FLOST property tax relief to the property tax bill?

Outside of the parameters in Code Section 48-8-109.42, jurisdictions have latitude to apply the funds for legal purposes within the special district and as may be provided for in the intergovernmental agreement.

- The tax relief must be applied uniformly across all forms of tangible property within the given taxing jurisdiction for which it applies. For these purposes, taxing jurisdictions for which property tax relief may be granted can be the county, a municipality, or a special district, provided that the application is uniform within the given taxing jurisdiction.
- When the credit or reduction is shown on the taxpayer’s property tax bill, it **MUST** be applied as property tax relief, which would be a reduction in a charge that is assessed and levied upon the value of a property. The credit *cannot* reduce any charge or fee, which is not levied upon the value of the property (ad valorem). If a flat dollar amount is shown on the property tax bill, said dollar amount must be derived from the taxpayer’s savings from the reduction in the millage rate or assessed value.
- While not required, the best practice is to include within the required IGA exactly how the proceeds of the FLOST will be applied as property tax relief.

10. What types of communities would benefit most from a FLOST?

Communities that wish to supplant property taxes with sales tax would benefit from FLOST. It is a policy decision that would be expected to shift some of the tax burden imposed on the local government’s property owners to those who make purchases within such jurisdiction. Accordingly, communities with sales tax revenues derived disproportionately from those living outside of the local government’s jurisdiction would expect to see a net benefit for its property owners by shifting the tax burden to consumers; whereas those communities that have disproportionately few property owners among its many resident consumers would find only a shifting of the tax burden within the jurisdiction.

11. How often does the FLOST have to be voted on?

FLOST may be implemented for up to 5 years at a time, so at least every 5 years. Moreover, all FLOST renewals require a local Act of the General Assembly, so there is no renewal without a local Act and a new IGA, and passage in a local referendum.¹¹ While there is no requirement of a local Act to initially levy the FLOST any subsequent renewal does require a local Act from the General Assembly.

12. My county doesn't have a LOST. How will this affect my county, city, etc.?

Having a LOST is not a requirement for the FLOST. LOST is the most similar sales tax to the FLOST, but the way property tax relief is calculated under FLOST is more flexible than LOST.

13. Does this bill require the Department of Revenue to provide point-of-sale information?

This bill does not require DOR to provide point of sale information but does require such information to be furnished to DOR by the retail establishments that are required to collect the tax. All sales for FLOST occur countywide (within the special district which is conterminous with the boundaries of the county), except in the case of a county containing a municipality that levies the Water and Sewer Projects Cost Tax (MOST), in which case the FLOST is not collected within the boundaries of the MOST city.

14. Are Water and Sewer Projects Cost Tax (MOST) cities ineligible for a FLOST?

Yes, the cities that levy a MOST tax are ineligible to levy or receive proceeds from FLOST. This means that they are not counted when determining the municipal population in the county levying the LOST, the city levying the MOST cannot share in the proceeds of the FLOST, and the FLOST may not be levied within the municipal boundaries of the city levying the MOST.

Currently, the MOST cities are: Atlanta, East Point, College Park, and Hapeville.

15. If the school board opts out of the floating homestead exemption, can the county and municipalities still levy the FLOST tax?

Yes, if the school board opts out, you can still levy the tax assuming all other requirements are met. Schools generally cannot receive revenues from sales taxes other than those authorized by the Constitution (ESPLOST) and certain existing Local Constitutional Amendments (ELOSTs), so it would require such a constitutional amendment specifically authorizing or requiring that school districts receive a share in the FLOST.

¹¹ Code Section 48-8-109.33(c)

16. If my jurisdiction opts out of the HB 581 floating homestead exemption and has an existing base-year or floating homestead exemption, but which only applies to the general maintenance and operations (M&O) levy, would my jurisdiction be blocked from participating in the FLOST?

No, not on that basis alone. If your local government has an existing floating or base-year homestead exemption of any kind, you may still qualify for the FLOST, even if you opt out of the HB 581 floating homestead exemption. HB 581 only requires that you have some form of a base-year or floating homestead exemption to participate in FLOST. Such exemption can either be a local floating homestead exemption (predating HB 581 or added after) or the HB 581 floating homestead exemption. Please note that the HB 581 floating homestead exemption will apply to all levies, including special service districts, except for bonded indebtedness.

17. If my county or city decides to opt of the homestead exemption, is it forever ineligible to levy the FLOST?

No. First, your city or county may already have a homestead exemption in place making them eligible for the FLOST. Second, if there is no homestead exemption in place and your county or city opts out, it can once again become eligible to levy the FLOST in the future through a subsequent eligible homestead exemption put in place by a local Act of the General Assembly.

18. What happens if we pass a FLOST and our legislative delegation does not approve the renewal, or the voters do not renew it?

If you pass a FLOST and your legislative delegation does not approve the renewal or the voters do not renew it, then the most likely outcome is an increase in the applicable millage rates. Since FLOST is sales tax being used to offset property tax, if the FLOST expires, the local government will have to cut expenses, raise property taxes, or some combination thereof.

19. If my county has an ELOST, can we utilize the FLOST?

If your county has an ELOST, the availability of FLOST depends on a few factors:

- a. Does the exact verbiage of the local constitutional amendment (LCA) limit the distribution of proceeds in the way that FLOST requires? Some of the LCAs are very permissive, and others are very restrictive. Please consult with your local jurisdiction's attorney for a legal opinion.
- b. Is the jurisdiction otherwise eligible to levy a FLOST?
- c. Does the jurisdiction have sufficient room under its local sales tax cap to levy a FLOST? See Code Section 48-8-6(a).

ELOST Counties: Habersham County; Chattooga County; Catoosa County; Harris County; Pickens County; Walton County; Houston County; Towns County.

Appendix A: HB 581 - Timeline/Decision Tree

- 1) November 5, 2024: Statewide ballot measure determining approval of constitutional amendment enabling homestead exemption.
 - a) If the ballot question is not approved, HB 581 is repealed in its entirety. No further action is needed by local governments. All other property tax changes and the FLOST are repealed as well.
 - b) If the ballot question is approved, counties, cities, and school boards may independently determine whether they would like to “opt out” of the homestead exemption and not have the exemption apply to their homeowners.
- 2) Beginning January 1, 2025 through March 1, 2025, local governments may “opt out” and not have their homeowners receive the HB 581 floating homestead exemption.
 - a) If the local government decides not to “opt out” no action is required by the local government and the homestead exemption will go into effect.
 - i) The HB 581 homestead exemption does not replace existing locally enacted homestead exemptions.
 - (1) If your local government has an existing flat dollar homestead exemption, the 581 exemption will be in addition to that exemption.
 - (2) If your local government has an existing base year or adjusted base year exemption, the taxpayer will receive the more beneficial exemption.
 - b) If your local government decides to opt out, it must advertise and hold three public hearings of intent to opt out, and then pass a resolution opting out and file it with the Secretary of State by March 1, 2025.
 - 3) If the November 2024 ballot question is approved, your county or city may decide whether to levy a FLOST for property tax relief. You must determine if you are eligible for the FLOST.
 - a) If your county/city does not levy a property tax, you are not eligible to levy/participate in the FLOST.
 - b) If you levy a property tax:
 - i) Your county/city must have a base year or adjusted base year homestead exemption in place.

*This may either be the homestead exemption provided by HB 581 or an existing base year or adjusted base year homestead exemption created by a local Act.
 - ii) The county and every municipality in the county that levies a property tax must also have a base year or adjusted base year homestead exemption in place (HB 581 or existing).

- iii) If the county or any city that levies a property tax does not have an eligible homestead exemption in place, the county and all cities within are not eligible for the FLOST.
- c) If the eligibility criteria is met:
 - i) The county and city or cities representing at least 50% of the municipal population of cities levying a property tax must sign an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for the levy of the tax. This IGA will set the rate (up to 1%), duration (up to 5 years), distribution of proceeds among the county and cities, and the ballot question to be used.
 - ii) The levy of the FLOST must be approved by the voters across the county in a referendum.
- d) The FLOST may then be levied for up to 5 years before needing to be renewed. Prior to the expiration of the tax a renewal requires: A local Act by the Georgia General Assembly approving the renewal for the jurisdiction, a subsequent IGA between the eligible county and cities, and a subsequent referendum for the voters to approve the renewal of the tax.

Disclaimer

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**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Call to Order: Mayor Hall called the Work Session to order at 6:00pm.

Present: Mayor Brandy Hall, Mayor pro tem Bordeaux, Council Member Jeff Goldberg, Council Member Thomas Torrent, Council Member Tom Ramsey, and Council Member Augusta Woods. Also present were Interim City Manager Billy Beckett, Chief of Police Sarai Y'hudah-Green, City Attorney Susan Moore, Public Works Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick, and Assistant City Clerk Ned Dagenhard.

Announcements and Communications

Mayor Hall mentioned that the final meeting of the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners had taken place, and thanked exiting-Commissioner Steve Bradshaw for his continued support of the City of Pine Lake.

The Mayor continued by commenting on the completed Courthouse renovation and “open house” the previous weekend, thanking Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick, and any residence who attended the open house.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux announced that she had been notified of the signing of the SPLOST Intergovernmental Agreement with DeKalb for an additional \$2 million to be dispersed to the City of Pine Lake. Ms. Bordeaux continued by expressing direct thanks to former-City Manager ChaQuias Miller-Thornton, former-City Attorney Susan Moore, and “Mayor emeritus” Melanie Hammet, crediting these women with the lobbying success.

Council Member Goldberg stated that he had attended his first meeting as a Member of the Georgia Municipal Association’s Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council. The first order of business, he added, was changing the name, citing the current political climate.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Adoption of the Minutes

- **November 26th, 2024 – Regular Meeting**

- **December 10th, 2024 – Work Session**

Council Member Rasmey moved to adopt the Minutes from the previous two meetings; Council Member Torrent seconded.

No discussion took place.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

Adoption of the Agenda of the Day

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux moved to adopt the Agenda of the Day; Council Member Woods seconded.

No discussion took place.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Public Hearing

1. Proposed FY2025 Budget

Mayor Hall opened the public hearing at 6:06pm.

The public hearing took place, wherein Mayor pro tem Bordeaux advised City Council and the public of her correction of a formatting error in the FY2025 Budget document, which she corrected. All other aspects of the budget remained unchanged, namely figures.

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett gave a summary of budget categories, and reasserted his recommendation of amending the FY2025 Budget via resolution early in 2025 to reflect City Council priorities.

Finance Director Danny Lamonte introduced himself—citing 20 years of local government experience—adding that he looks forward to working with the City of Pine Lake.

Seeing no further requests for comment, Mayor Hall closed the public hearing at 6:17pm.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux moved to adopt the FY2025 Budget; Council Member Ramsey seconded.

No further discussion took place.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

New Business

1. Appointment of Mr. Stanely Hawthorne – City Manager

Council Member Torrent moved to appoint Mr. Stanley Hawthorne as City Manager of Pine Lake; Council Member Goldberg seconded.

Council Member Torrent stated that he felt “very good” about Mr. Hawthorne, adding that a “big weight has been lifted” off of the City.

Mayor Hall thanked Interim City Manager Billy Beckett for his service to the City, a sentiment that was echoed by other City Council Members.

Council Member Goldberg stated that Mr. Hawthorne was not the only candidate interested in the position, adding that he felt this spoke to the attractiveness of working in Pine Lake.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

2. Appointment of Mr. Chris Balch – City Attorney

Council Member Ramsey moved to appoint Mr. Chris Balch as City Attorney of Pine Lake; Mayor pro tem Bordeaux seconded.

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett advised that Mr. Balch came “highly recommended” from the two previous City Attorneys of Pine Lake, Laura Henderson and Susan Moore.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

3. Appointment of Ms. Ansley Sluss – Public Defender

Council Member Woods moved to appoint Ms. Ansley Sluss as Public Defender of Pine Lake; Council Member Torrent seconded.

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett stated that the City has not previously retained a Public Defender, but rather reached out to a rolodex of local attorneys on an as-needed basis. Mr. Beckett recommended one of these attorneys—Ms. Ansley Sluss—who has agreed to do one session per month on a \$300 monthly retainer.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux inquired as to whether twelve sessions was sufficient. Asst. City Clerk Dagenhard affirmed this, speaking to the function of Municipal Court, stating that bench trials fall an alternating schedule.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

4. Contractual Agreement with Professional Probation Services

Council Member Ramsey moved to approve the Contractual Agreement with PPS; Mayor pro tem Bordeaux seconded.

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett stated that the contract had been reviewed by City Attorney Moore, who recommended changes agreed to by Professional Probation Services. Mr. Beckett added that this was the current probation servicer, and that the service is paid for through fines paid by the individual, not city funds.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

5. One-Month Extension of Contractual Agreement with Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick

Council Member Goldberg moved to approve the One-Month Extension of Contractual Agreement with Mr. Kendrick; Council Member Woods seconded.

Mayor Hall stated that Mr. Kendrick's current contract was set to expire 12/31/2024, and that Mr. Kendrick had graciously agreed to a one-month extension while awaiting further budget and contract review by the entering-City Manager.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

6. PTSD Insurance for Police Officers – GMA/ACCG Sponsored Program

Council Member Ramsey moved to authorize the City Manager to approve the pending contract with GMA/ACCG; Mayor pro tem Bordeaux seconded.

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett recommended City Council approve the agreement, adding that program enrollment is mandated. Mr. Beckett continued that the estimated cost is \$148.00 per year per eligible employee.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

7. Out-of-Scope Recommended Improvements to Courthouse

Council Member Ramsey moved to approve the out-of-scope recommended improvements to the courthouse; Council Member Goldberg seconded.

Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick advised City Council of recommended improvements to the courthouse discovered during the interior renovation. These improvements include repairs to the conference room ceiling and Police Department awning, security and insulation, keyless door access, an additional recording module requested by the Court Department, winterization, and duct maintenance. The additional repairs totaled \$34,789.77. As the interior Courthouse Renovation was completed \$46,000~ under budget, the additional repairs would be completed using previously-allocated funds.

Mayor Hall added a recommendation of better exterior lighting for the facility at 462 Pine Drive, citing safety concerns.

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett echoed Mayor Hall's lighting concerns, adding that a project of similar purpose was taking place at City Hall with assistance from Georgia Power, and recommended reaching out. Mr. Beckett added a recommendation to update the generator outside of the Courthouse—which provides emergency power to both the Police Department and de facto shelter, the Pine Lake Clubhouse—as the current generator has exceeded its serviceable life.

A discussion took place regarding additional items suggested by City Council, Mr. Beckett, Chief of Police Y'hudah-Green.

Council Member Goldberg recommended that City Council approve the list of out-of-scope improvements recommended by Mr. Kendrick, suggesting they research and revisit the additional items at a later date.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

8. Acceptance of Withdrawal – Bid Submission, Oak Road

Council Member Ramsey moved to accept withdrawal of the bid; Council Member Goldberg seconded.

Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick corrected the original title of the item, stating that a bid had yet to be awarded. Mr. Kendrick continued that the contractor failed to properly review the bid, and lacked the expertise to perform the work. Mr. Kendrick, Interim City Manager Beckett, and the contractor had determined it was in the best interest of all parties that the contractor withdraw.

Council Member Torrent asked for confirmation that the contractor was seeking compensation, which was confirmed by Mr. Kendrick.

In response to a question from Council Member Ramsey regarding next steps, Mr. Kendrick suggested the best course of action would be to sit down with the second bidder, and discuss a change in the scope of work if necessary.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

9. Adoption of 2025 City Council Meeting Calendar

Council Member Woods moved to adopt the 2025 City Council Meeting Calendar; Council Member Torrent seconded.

Council Member Torrent asked that the final meeting of the year (12/30/2025) be rescheduled to an earlier date. Mayor pro tem Bordeaux suggested 12/16/2025, and a consensus was observed.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

10. Request by City Manager to Close City Hall at 12:00PM on December 31, 2024

Council Member Torrent moved to grant the request by the City Manager to close City Hall at 12:00PM on December 31, 2024; Council Member Ramsey seconded.

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett stated that it was his recommendation to allow staff to leave early on December 30th, 2024, citing that celebration of the New Years Day holiday often takes place the previous evening.

Following some discussion, City Council arrived at a consensus in support of Mr. Beckett's suggestion.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

11. Approval of Lease and Maintenance Agreement – Scanner/Copier – City Hall and Police Department

Council Member Ramsey moved to approve the Lease and Maintenance Agreement; Council Member Torrent seconded.

Mr. Beckett recommended approval of the agreement, stating that the current copier units in the Police Department and City Hall are beyond their useful and serviceable lives. The City, he continued, arrived at the recommendation of EGP Document Solutions following a competitive bid process.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Reports and Other Comments

Mayor

Mayor Hall thanked “tireless” staff for meeting challenges despite limited resources. The Mayor spoke directly to Interim City Manager Billy Beckett, expressing her gratitude for his guidance amid a tumultuous leadership change.

Mayor Hall continued by thanking exiting-City Attorney Susan Moore, citing a substantive tenure and legacy. The Mayor then turned to her compatriots on Council, asserting that they should “be very proud” of themselves.

City Council

All members of City Council echoed the Mayor’s sentiments.

Council Member Goldberg suggested that the Governing Authority schedule more town halls in the new year.

Council Member Ramsey thanked Chief Green for a “virtual code enforcement” education, and thanked Mr. Kendrick for continued wetlands maintenance. Mr. Ramsey then noted the entering-City Attorney’s relationship with the City of Brookhaven, citing an ongoing lawsuit regarding property value assessment by the DeKalb County Tax Commissioner, expressing interest.

City Manager

Interim City Manager Billy Beckett expressed gratitude to the Mayor and City Council, as well as staff. Mr. Beckett summarized completed projects, and provided suggestions to the Governing Authority on how best to proceed on those initiatives still in progress. Those suggestions included diversification of revenue sources, and salary improvements for staff. Mr. Beckett concluded by lauding entering-City Manager Stanley Hawthorne’s experience, and by expressing a desire to “stay in touch.”

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Adjournment

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux moved for adjournment at 7:32pm.

Ned Dagenhard
City Clerk or Delegate

DRAFT

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 14th, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Call to Order: Mayor pro tem Bordeaux called the Work Session to order at 6:01pm.

Present: Mayor pro tem Bordeaux, Council Member Jeff Goldberg, Council Member Thomas Torrent, Council Member Tom Ramsey, and Council Member Augusta Woods. Also present were City Manager Stanley Hawthorne, Chief of Police Sarai Y'hudah-Green, City Attorney Chris Balch, and Assistant City Clerk Ned Dagenhard. Mayor Hall and Public Works Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick were not in attendance.

Announcements and Communications

Council Member Goldberg announced that the Pine Lake Association for Involved Neighbors would be hosting a recycling event the following Saturday.

Council Member Ramsey thanked Administrative Coordinator Missye Varner for her recovery of an existing resolution regarding domestic partnerships.

Adoption of the Agenda of the Day

Council Member Torrent moved to adopt the Agenda of the Day; Council Member Ramsey seconded.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux advised that New Business items 2 and 3 were added to the agenda late (*revised agenda was immediately republished*).

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 14th, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

New Business

1. Introduction of City Attorney Chris Balch

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux invited City Attorney Chris Balch to introduce himself.

Mr. Balch expressed gratitude in the Governing Authority's confidence in allowing him to serve in his respective role. Mr. Balch continued that it was his first mission to develop an understanding of policy priorities, adding that he knows the previous two City Attorneys for Pine Lake and recognizes he has "big shoes to fill."

Council Member Ramsey inquired about litigation between the City of Brookhaven and the DeKalb Tax Assessor's Office. Mr. Balch advised that that issue had not arisen to a lawsuit.

Council Member Goldberg thanked Mr. Balch for taking a private meeting with him, and encouraged other Council Members to request the same.

All members of the body thanked and welcomed the new City Attorney.

No action was taken by City Council.

2. H.B. 581, Statewide Homestead Exemption – Discussion

A discussion took place, wherein City Attorney Chris Balch explained the purpose, mechanism, and potential ramifications of HB 581. City Attorney Balch explained that the General Assembly had not provided clear direction for setting Public Hearing schedules should the City choose to opt-out of the Statewide Homestead Exemption. It was Mr. Balch's suggestion, he continued, that the City use the model set forth by the millage rate adoption process.

A discussion ensued as to when Public Hearings ought to take place, considering the March 1st, 2025 deadline for filing necessary documentation with the Secretary of State's office. The suggestion was put forth that the hearings be scheduled for **January 28th at 7:00PM**; **February 11th at 11:00AM**; and **February 11th at 6:00PM**. A consensus of City Council was observed

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux proposed following City Attorney Balch's recommendation for providing Public Hearing notice via the City's official news organ (*The DeKalb Champion*); a consensus of City Council was observed.

No further action was taken by City Council

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 14th, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

3. Domestic Partners Resolution Update

Council Member Ramsey introduced the topic, stating that he had been approached by residents intending to utilize Domestic Partnership certification to solve an issue related to healthcare coverage. Mr. Ramsey continued that multiple DeKalb County cities offer this service. Upon requesting City Administration to research in preparation for a resolution, an existing resolution was discovered, filed physically at City Hall.

Council Member Torrent offered his support for the resolution, suggesting that an ordinance and/or Charter amendment may be more appropriate. In response to this, City Attorney Balch suggested that an ordinance was the most appropriate vehicle given the timeline associated with Charter amendments.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux suggested preparing an ordinance for the next regular session.

Council Member Ramsey asked the City Attorney if the existing resolution could be utilized by the aforementioned residents, and Mr. Balch responded in the affirmative.

No action was taken by City Council.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 14th, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

4. Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) for Regular Employees

Council Member Torrent spoke first on the issue, in support of a COLA, as well as merit-based raises and/or bonuses for staff.

Council Member Woods echoed Mr. Torrent's comments.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux suggested verifying the 3% increase figure listed in the supplemental document, which was echoed by Council Member Ramsey, who cited the 2.5% figure published by the Social Security Administration.

City Manager Stanley Hawthorne advised the Governing Authority that no COLA had taken place at the beginning had been offered at the beginning of 2024. In response to this, Council Member Torrent suggested the 3% figure may be insufficient.

City Manager Stanley Hawthorne then spoke at some length in support of increases in compensation overall, citing concern over staff retention.

A discussion took place regarding the timeline for adoption of a 2025 COLA and further discussion of increases in staff compensation.

No action was taken by City Council.

5. Communications Plan & Policy – Discussion of Tactical Next Steps (For example, setting up a Facebook page, who will be able to post on it, what's happening with the recordings of broadcasted meetings, etc.)

City Council discussed tactical next steps, specifically preferences surrounding social media communication and interfacing with the public (i.e. dialogue, comments).

Further discussion took place regarding delegation of social media management responsibilities, to be housed within the Administration Department.

Positive sentiments were expressed regarding the City's implementation of "live-streaming" City Council Meetings on YouTube, with the added action items of troubleshooting technical issues and publishing meeting links to the Pine Lake website, and eventual the yet-to-be-created Pine Lake Facebook account.

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux suggested to the rest of City Council that the Communications Policy acts as a living document to be amended and re-adopted as needed.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 14th, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Council Member Goldberg suggested that the Governing Authority be intentional and strategic with implementation of the Communication Policy, and thanked the Administration Department for their continued efforts.

No action was taken by City Council.

Reports and Other Business

Public Safety – Chief Sarai Y’hudah-Green

The supplemental report presented is available to the public upon request. Please contact Asst. City Clerk Ned Dagenhard at (404) 999-4901 or neddagenhard@pinelakega.net for more information.

Public Works – Special Projects Manager Bernard Kendrick

The supplemental report presented is available to the public upon request. Please contact Asst. City Clerk Ned Dagenhard at (404) 999-4901 or neddagenhard@pinelakega.net for more information.

City Council

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux expressed appreciation to City Council and staff, describing a “very productive meeting.”

Council Member Torrent echoed earlier comments made regarding Corporal Andrew Atkins of the Pine Lake Police Department, who responded to a welfare check on foot due to unsafe road conditions. Mr. Torrent reasserted the suggestion that all members of the City of Pine Lake organization be trained in first amendment rights as a safeguard against predatory lawsuits. Mr. Torrent also thanked Public Works for their continued wetlands maintenance efforts, stating that increased visibility would help address functional issues related to the wetland pipe and flume network. Mr. Torrent concluded his comments by welcoming new staff.

Council Members Woods and Ramsey echoed Council Member Torrent’s comments and welcome.

Council Member Goldberg thanked City Manager Hawthorne, and expressed excitement and optimism at Pine Lake being fully-staffed.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 14th, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Adjournment

Council Member Ramsey moved for adjournment at 8:02pm.

Ned Dagenhard
City Clerk or Delegate

DRAFT



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager 

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: Domestic Partnership Registry and Certificate Program Ordinance

RECOMMENDATION

A Domestic Partnership Registry and Certificate Program for the City of Pine Lake established by Ordinance is recommended.

BACKGROUND

On January 4, 2025, Council Member Tom Ramsey proposed an agenda item for an upcoming City Council Work Session regarding a Domestic Partnership Registry and Certificate Program. As background, he stated, "In late December 2024, I was approached by some Pine Lake residents who are in a committed Domestic Partnership. They are struggling with healthcare insurance coverage issues, which could be easily resolved if Pine Lake were to recognize, register and certify Domestic Partnerships within our City, for both same-sex and opposite sex couples."

Upon further research, City staff shared Resolution number R03-2014 approved by the Pine Lake City Council on April 14, 2014. The enacted resolution provided an official registry of same-sex partnerships as well as opposite sex partnerships residing within the city. It resolved that such a registry be maintained at City Hall and for City Administration to receive requests for domestic partnership certificates upon a showing by the applicants that they are bona fide domestic partners residing within the City.

Following discussion of this topic by the City Council at the January 14, 2025 Workshop Meeting, consensus was reached that the previously enacted resolution should be updated both in terms of language and as an ordinance.

RESOURCE IMPACT

Potential resource impact to the City of Pine Lake is negligible.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ordinance 2024-01
2. Related backup documents submitted as part of the January 14, 2025 Work Session

Stanley D Hawthorne
City Manager
stanleyhawthorne@pinelakega.net
425 Allgood Road Stone Mountain GA 30083
PO Box 1325 • Pine Lake, GA 30072 • 404-999-4932
www.pinelakega.net

**CITY OF PINE LAKE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Pine Lake Courthouse
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

Adjournment

Mayor pro tem Bordeaux moved for adjournment at 7:32pm.

Ned Dagenhard
City Clerk or Delegate

DRAFT

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PINE LAKE, TO ENACT SECTION 2-158 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, TO RECOGNIZE LONG-TERM DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS, TO CREATE A REGISTRY FOR DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS, TO AUTHORIZE CORECTIONS OF SCRIVENER'S ERRORS BY THE CITY CLERK, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2014, the City Council of Pine Lake adopted Resolution 03-2014 recognizing domestic partnerships; and

WHEREAS, when the original Resolution was adopted by the Council, Georgia law did not provide for the lawful right of persons of the same gender to be married; and

WHEREAS, Georgia by Statute, O.C.G.A. § 19-3-1.1, eliminated the existence of "common-law marriage" whereby persons of opposite genders could deem themselves married by evidence of their intent to cohabitate, to hold themselves out to be married, and other indicia of commitment to a single home or family, in 1997; and

WHEREAS, Precedent of the United States Supreme Court has now recognized as a matter of the United States Constitution that all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States have a right to marry the person of their choice; and

WHEREAS, In the event the precedent of the United States Supreme Court should change, the City of Pine Lake wishes to offer a lawful and reasonable alternative to a traditional state recognized marriage; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 03-2014 also created a process by which those persons meeting the criteria established by the Resolution could register their commitment with the City and receive official recognition of that commitment from the City; and

WHEREAS, the need for a formal process consistent with the City's New Charter, particularly Section 2.23, which requires an Ordinance of the City for rules or procedures of a permanent nature; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to establish permanent and searchable process by which the citizens of Pine Lake may be able to locate and rely on this process to facilitate the recognition of their commitment to each other;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDANCED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Pine Lake that Section 2-158 is enacted and made a part of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Pine Lake as follows:

SECTION 1:

2-158 Domestic Partnerships Registration

- a. "Domestic Partnerships" shall be defined in this Ordinance as relationship where two people, whether of the same gender or of different genders, who are not married under the laws of the State of Georgia or the United States, but who live together in a mutually beneficial and intentional relationship with the stated intent of creating a single home.
- b. The City shall maintain a registry of all persons who have filed with the City the Application required to have their relationship recognized by this Ordinance.
- c. The City Manager shall create a form to be used by the applicants for recognition of their relationship that must be signed, and notarized, by both partners.
- d. An Application fee of \$5.00 shall be paid at the time of the application to defray the costs of supplies and staff time in managing this process.
- e. The registry of persons and relationships recognized by the City shall be maintained by the City Clerk or their designee in the official records of the City.

SECTION 2:

This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

SECTION 3:

If any section of this Ordinance shall be found by a court of competent jurisdiction not to be lawful or to be unenforceable, such judgement on a single section shall not render other sections unenforceable or affect the lawful effect of other sections.

SECTION 4:

All laws and ordinances of the City of Pine Lake in conflict with this Ordinance shall be repealed.

SO ORDAINED, this 28th Day of January, 2025.

BRANDY HALL
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

NED DAGENHARD
Deputy City Clerk

CHRISTOPHER D. BALCH
City Attorney

Domestic Partnership Registry and Certificate Program

Dear Colleagues.

Background: In late December 2024, I was approached by some Pine Lake residents who are in a committed Domestic Partnership. They are struggling with healthcare insurance coverage issues, which could be easily resolved if Pine Lake were to recognize, register and certify Domestic Partnerships within our City, for both same-sex and opposite sex couples.

Upon researching the issue, I discovered that Atlanta, Athens-Clarke County, Avondale Estates, Clarkston, and Decatur. All offer the Registration and Certification of Domestic Partnerships as a service to their residents. It can be done by Ordinance or Resolution. Avondale Estates, Clarkston, and Decatur, all enacted their programs in late 2013 by Resolution, and all seem to be working well for their residents.

I did have a phone conversation with Ms. Tomika Mitchell, City Clerk for the City of Clarkston for the last 5 years, and she confirms that they have had no issue or complaints with the program.

I am proposing that we follow the Clarkston model. Clarkston City Clerk Mitchell kindly provided all of the documents needed to get a program started in Pine Lake.

I would like to add this our upcoming work session on either 1/14/2025 or 2/11/2025, and voted on at the earliest possible date.

Thank you,
Tom Ramsey, Council Member

City of Pine Lake

Pine Lake City Council Work Session

January 14, 2025 or February 11, 2025

Subject: Proposed Resolution to Establish a Domestic Partnership Registry and Certificate Program

Sponsor: Tom Ramsey, Council Member

Purpose: To consider and approve the attached Domestic Partnership Registry and Certificate Program Resolution

Need/Impact: The proposed Resolution grants official recognition and registration of both same-sex and opposite-sex Domestic Partnerships living in the City of Pine Lake. In 2013, our neighboring cities in DeKalb County, Avondale Estates, Clarkston, and Decatur, were among the first cities in the State of Georgia to take this official action. In solidarity of their bold action more than a decade ago, and in recognition of the broad diversity and open accepting nature of the Pine Lake community, we are proposing to adopt a similar Resolution.

With respect to the City's authority to do so, the Mayor of Avondale (at the time in 2013) describe the Resolution as " the provision of a new service for our residents and as a means of showing respect and recognition to the many couples we have living in our city that may want to receive a Domestic Partnership Certificate"

Residents would be able to request a Domestic Partnership Certificate during normal business hours at City Hall and be entered into a new Domestic Partnership Registry. Pursuant to the Resolution, after filing an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership along with copies of certain documentation to confirm co-habitation, the couple would be issued a "Certificate of Domestic Partnership" signed by the Mayor.

To be considered for a Certificate of Domestic Partnership, you **must bring the following** to your appointment:

1. A State or Government-issued ID
2. Proof of joint residency with co-applicant. This includes:
 1. Utility bill
 2. Bank statement
 3. Tax bill
 4. Property deed
 5. Current paystub
 6. State ID

This document must prove that **both applicants reside at the same address.**

This Certificate may make it easier to show evidence of Domestic Partnership to receive healthcare benefits, gain hospital visitation rights, and access other rights already afforded to married couples.

Recommendations: It is this Council Member's recommendation to quickly adopt the attached Resolution to establish a Domestic Partnership Registry and Certificate Program.

A RESOLUTION (DRAFT)

Whereas, the City of Pine Lake recognizes that all forms Domestic Partnership are valid and deserving of respect and recognition; and

Whereas, the City of Pine Lake desires to provide for the official recognition, registry, and certification of Domestic Partners residing within the City; and

Whereas, a “Domestic Partnership” for the purpose of this Resolution is defined as “two people of the opposite or same gender who live together in the mutually intended dependence of a single home”.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved By the City Council and Mayor of the City of Pine Lake, to hereby direct the City Manager to receive requests for Domestic Partnership Certificates and , upon a showing by the applicants that they are bonafide Domestic Partners residing within the City of Pine Lake, to place such certified Domestic Partnerships on a registry to be maintained at City Hall.

Be It Further Resolved that upon the registry of a Domestic Partnership pursuant to this Resolution, the Mayor will sign and issue a Certificate of Domestic Partnership to the Domestic Partners so recognized.

So Resolved, this day of _____, 2025

The Mayor and City Council of Pine Lake, Georgia

Brandy Hall, Mayor

Witness:

Ned Dagenhard, Asst. City Clerk

Affadavit of Partnership
Declaration of Committed Relationship for Domestic Partnership

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Please select the correct answer:

ORIGINAL AMENDMENT

1. Are you a resident of the City of Pine Lake? Yes or No
2. Have you previously filed a Declaration of Committed Relationship with the City of Pine Lake ?

If "Yes", when? _____

DECLARATION

We, the undersigned, declare that:

1. We are two people at least 18 years of age and competent to enter into a contract;
2. We share the same primary, regular and permanent residence (documentation must be submitted verifying joint residency);
3. We have a committed personal relationship that is mutually interdependent and intended to be lifelong;
4. We are not married to anyone or legally separated from anyone;
5. We are not related by blood closer than would bar marriage in this state;
6. This is our sole committed relationship;
7. We agree to file a notice of change or termination of our relationship, within 30 days, if any of the facts set out in this definition change;
8. We are jointly responsible for our necessities of life.

AFFIDAVIT

We do hereby affirm, under penalty of perjury, that the assertions in this Declaration are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Resident Signature Date

Partner Signature Date

NOTARIZATION

STATE OF _____ COUNTY OF _____

The foregoing affidavit was acknowledged before me this _____ day of _____, 20____.

By: _____, Notary Public My Commission Expires:

(Notary Signature/Seal)

Print Resident Name (Last, First, Middle) : Print Partner Name (Last, First, Middle):

Date of Birth:

Date of Birth:

Address: City: State: Zip:

For Official Use Only

Affidavit and supporting documentation received/certified by _____
on _____.

This certificate number _____. Cross reference certificate number
_____.

RESOLUTION # R03-2014

WHEREAS, the City of Pine Lake recognizes that same-sex partnerships are valid and deserving of respect and recognition; and

WHEREAS, the City of Pine Lake recognizes that Georgia law currently does not permit same-sex partnerships to be legally married, therefore leaving it to local jurisdictions to recognize same-sex partnerships; and

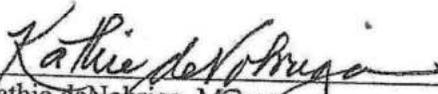
WHEREAS, the City of Pine Lake desires to provide an official recognition and registry of same-sex partnerships, as well as opposite-sex partnerships, residing within the city; and

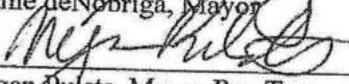
WHEREAS, a "domestic partnership" for the purpose of this resolution is defined as "two people of opposite or same gender who live together in a mutual intended dependence of a single home."

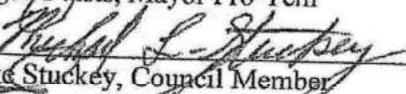
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE City Council that such a registry be maintained at City Hall, and the Mayor of the City of Pine Lake hereby directs the City Administrator to receive requests for domestic partnership certificates, upon a showing by the applicants that they are bona fide domestic partners residing within the City.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon registry of a domestic partnership pursuant to this resolution, the mayor will sign and issue a certificate of domestic partnership to the domestic partners so recognized.

SO RESOLVED, this 14th day of April, 2014.


Kathie deNobriga, Mayor


Megan Pulsts, Mayor Pro-Tem


Mike Stuckey, Council Member


Erika Brown, Council Member


George Chidi, Council Member


Lynn Ehrlicher, Council Member

Attest:


Valerie Caldwell, City Clerk

Declaration of Committed Relationship for Domestic Partnership



ORIGINAL

AMENDMENT

APPLICATION INFORMATION

\$25.00

Method of Payment _____

Resident Name (Last, First, Middle)	Date of Birth:
_____	_____
Address: _____	City: _____
_____	State: _____
_____	Zip: _____
Print Partner Name (Last, First, Middle):	Date of Birth:
_____	_____

Please select the correct answer:

1. Are you a resident of the City of Pine Lake? _____
2. Have you previously filed a Declaration of Committed Relationship with the City of Pine Lake? If "Yes", when? _____

DECLARATION

We, the undersigned, declare that:

1. We are two people at least 18 years of age and competent to enter into a contract;
2. We share the same primary, regular and permanent residence (documentation must be submitted verifying joint residency);
3. We have a committed personal relationship that is mutually interdependent and intended to be lifelong.
4. We are not married to anyone or legally separated from anyone;
5. We are not related by blood closer than would bar marriage in this state
6. This is our sole committed relationship;
7. We agree to file a notice of change or termination of our relationship, within 30 days, if any of the facts set out in this definition change;
8. We are jointly responsible for our necessities of life.

AFFIDAVIT

We do hereby affirm, understand penalty of perjury, that the assertions in this Declaration are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Resident Signature _____ Date _____

Partner Signature _____ Date _____

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this _____ of _____, 20____

My Commission expires: _____

For Official Use Only

Affidavit and supporting documentation received/certified by _____ on _____

Certificate Number # _____



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager 

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) for Regular and Part Time Employees

RECOMMENDATION

A cost-of-living adjustment of 3% effective January 1, 2025 is recommended for regular and part time employees of Pine Lake as listed on the enclosed exhibit prepared by Finance Consultant Danny Lamonte.

BACKGROUND

As you know, a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is an increase in pay or benefits that is intended to help people keep up with inflation. COLAs are often given to retirees as well as public and private sector employees. COLAs are based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures the average price of a basket of goods. The COLA for a given year is usually the same percentage increase as the CPI for a specific period. COLAs are designed to ensure that benefits increase at the same rate as inflation.

My understanding is that City of Pine Lake employees were not granted a COLA in 2024. With that understanding and for the purpose of illustration and supporting a minimum 3% COLA for City of Pine Lake employees in 2025, a benchmark comparison is made with adjustments to federal Social Security recipients for 2024 and 2025:

The cost-of-living adjustment for social security retirement, disability, and supplemental security income recipients was 3.2%. This increase went into effect in January 2024. The cost-of-living adjustment for 2025 is 2.5% meaning Social Security recipients will see a 2.5% increase in their monthly benefits effective in January 2025.

RESOURCE IMPACT

As provided in the attached exhibit, the 2025 annualized incremental and aggregate cost of a 3% COLA for City of Pine Lake employees factoring base pay increase, FICA (Federal Insurance Contributions Act - federal payroll tax) tax increase, and Medicare tax increase is \$12,738.82.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution and spreadsheet

Stanley D Hawthorne
City Manager
stanleyhawthorne@pinelakega.net
425 Allgood Road Stone Mountain GA 30083
PO Box 1325 • Pine Lake, GA 30072 • 404-999-4932
www.pinelakega.net

Employee	Department	Pay Rate	Frequency	Annual Pay	3% Proposed Increase	New Pay rate- 3%	5% Proposed Increase	New Pay rate- 5%
Atkins, Andrew	Police	\$ 17.04	Hourly	\$ 35,443.20	\$36,506.50	\$17.55	\$37,215.36	\$17.89
Capers, Stephanie	Court	\$ 21.64	Hourly	\$45,011.20	\$46,361.54	\$22.29	\$47,261.76	\$22.72
Cooper, Jason	Police	\$ 17.13	Hourly	\$35,630.40	\$36,699.31	\$17.64	\$37,411.92	\$17.99
Hodges, DeAndre	Public Works	\$ 16.00	Hourly	\$33,280.00	\$34,278.40	\$16.48	\$34,944.00	\$16.80
Palms, Robert	Police	\$ 20.77	Hourly	\$43,201.60	\$44,497.65	\$21.39	\$45,361.68	\$21.81
Stokes, Michael	Police	\$ 17.44	Hourly	\$14,510.08	\$14,945.38	\$17.96	\$15,235.58	\$18.31
Washington, Danette	Police	\$ 16.00	Hourly	\$13,312.00	\$13,711.36	\$16.48	\$13,977.60	\$16.80
Y'hudah-Green, Sarai	Police	\$ 2,299.13	Bi-weekly	\$ 59,777.38	\$61,570.70	\$2,368.10	\$62,766.25	\$2,414.09
Dagenhard, Ned	Admin	\$ 1,660.39	Bi-weekly	\$43,170.14	\$44,465.24	\$1,710.20	\$45,328.65	\$1,743.41
Robinson, Danita	Recreation	\$ 172.50	Bi-weekly	\$4,485.00	\$4,619.55	\$177.68	\$4,709.25	\$181.13
***Varner, Missye	Admin	\$ 19.95	Bi-weekly	\$24,897.60	\$25,644.53	\$20.55	\$26,142.48	\$20.95
				\$ 352,718.60	\$ 363,300.16		\$370,354.53	

Base Pay Increase	3% COLA Increase	5% COLA Increase
FICA increase	\$10,581.56	\$17,635.93
Medicare Increase	\$656.06	\$1,093.43
	\$153.43	\$255.72

\$ 11,391.05 \$18,985.08

Total Increase

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A COST OF LIVING INCREASE FOR ALL
EMPLOYEES AT 3% OF BASE WAGE OR SALARY**

WHEREAS, The Mayor and City Council passed an annual budget for the City in December 2024 for Fiscal Year 2025; and

WHEREAS, The Budget as passed did not include a Cost of Living Allowance (“COLA”) for City employees; and

WHEREAS, The Governing Authority of the City recognizes that inflation has been and continues to be a challenge for all citizens, but especially for City employees who did not receive a COLA increase during the last budget cycle; and

WHEREAS, The Governing Authority desires that ;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing authority of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, that the City Manager is authorized to provide a retroactive Cost of Living Allowance increase equal to 3% of the employee’s hourly rate or annual salary as provided in the spreadsheet attached to this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any and all resolutions or any part thereof in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Pine Lake, this 28th day of January, 2025.

BRANDY HALL
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

NED DAGENHARD
Assistant City Clerk

CHRISTOPHER D. BALCH
City Attorney



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: Communications Policy Revisions

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Hawthorne", is written over the "FROM:" line of the memorandum.

RECOMMENDATION

Revisions to the City of Pine Lake's Communications Policy are recommended.

BACKGROUND

The importance of strategic internal and external communications was a clear theme that came out of the City Council Retreat held on October 25, 2024. From a comprehensive listing of dozens of individual strategic priorities, the governing body's members reached consensus on a top 5 master list with "communications" rising to the top of the list. As summarized, the City Council expects "clear, transparent, and timely communication on issues, topics of discussion, and the status of ongoing projects and programs."

Since the retreat session, the City Council has refined its expectations through the City of Pine Lake Communications Policy. The purpose of the Communications Policy is to establish guidelines for the City of Pine Lake when communicating or releasing information on behalf of the City to ensure information is provided in a timely, transparent, accurate, consistent and appropriate manner. This policy applies to all City of Pine Lake employees and all contractors or partners who communicate with citizens, other agencies or the media on behalf of the City.

During a discussion of the City's Communications Plan and Policy listed on the City Council's Work Session Agenda of January 14, 2025, several revisions (substantive and typographical) to the policy were discussed along with other commentary since the work session dealing with procedural timelines in responding to neighbor inquiries received through the online "Contact Us Form." An exhibit of the Communications Policy with highlighted revisions is included as an attachment.

RESOURCE IMPACT

There is no resource impact from the recommended revisions to the policy; however, in the future, I anticipate a resource impact to be factored for budgetary consideration in addressing the overall strategic communications goal.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution Adopting the Revised Communications Policy
2. City of Pine Lake Communications Policy Exhibit with highlighted revisions

Stanley D Hawthorne
City Manager
stanleyhawthorne@pinelakega.net
425 Allgood Road Stone Mountain GA 30083
PO Box 1325 • Pine Lake, GA 30072 • 404-999-4932
www.pinelakega.net

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY
FOR THE CITY OF PINE LAKE**

WHEREAS, The City Council is authorized by the Charter of the City of Pine Lake to adopt and implement such policies as it deems prudent and appropriate for the operation of the City; and

WHEREAS, The City Council concludes after due consideration and input from the Administration and the City Attorney that a communications policy is required to guide and direct the official communications activities of the City of Pine Lake;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing authority of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, the Policy attached hereto as Exhibit A is adopted as the Communications Policy of the City of Pine Lake.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is directed to implement the policy with all City staff and to conduct such training as he deems appropriate on the application and implementation of this policy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any and all resolutions or any part thereof in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Pine Lake, this 28th day of January, 2025.

BRANDY HALL
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

NED DAGENHARD
Deputy City Clerk

CHRISTOPHER D. BALCH
City Attorney

CITY OF PINE LAKE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

APPROVED BY COUNCIL: _____

PURPOSE:

This purpose of the Communications Policy is to establish guidelines for the City of Pine Lake when communicating or releasing information on behalf of the City. ~~To~~ **to** ensure information is provided in a timely, transparent, accurate, consistent and appropriate manner.

This policy applies to all City of Pine Lake employees and all contractors or partners who communicate with citizens, other agencies or the media on behalf of the City.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

To establish standards for effective City communications.

POLICY:

1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All communication activities conducted by the City of Pine Lake must adhere to the applicable policies, procedures, guidelines, and statutory requirements set out by legislation.

Communications activities must also reflect the City of ~~Pine~~ **Pine** Lake's Communications Principles:

1. Provide information that is timely, accurate, clear, accessible, and responsive.
2. Consider the range of communication tools at our disposal and use those most appropriate to address the needs associated with each circumstance.
3. Work collaboratively across the organization to ensure that information is thorough, factual, and timely.
4. Respect the access to information and privacy rights of citizens and employees.
5. Support opportunities for engagement to inform public policy.
6. Strive to achieve a culture of excellence in and communications practices.

2. PLAIN LANGUAGE

The City of Pine Lake will use plain language for its internal and external communications as much as possible while also meeting statutory requirements.

Plain language can be broadly described as any writing designed to ensure the reader understands the message as quickly, easily, and completely as possible. Plain language strives to be easy to read, understand, and use. It avoids verbose, convoluted language and jargon and uses document structure and visual aids (such as graphics or charts) to guide the reader.

3. TIMELY RESPONSE

The City of Pine Lake will strive to provide residents, business, visitors, and other interested and invested parties timely, accurate, clear, accessible, and responsive information. City of Pine Lake employees will respond to inquiries as promptly as is practicable. An acknowledgement or answer of a neighbor's inquiry by the applicable City party is expected within 24 hours of a business day following receipt of inquiry. Follow-up responses with neighbor should be regularly updated until issue is answered or addressed.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The City of Pine Lake is committed to involving its citizens in the decision-making processes, where appropriate. When the City gathers feedback from the community, the community will be informed of how the information will be used and the results of the public engagement will be made public.

The City is guided by the following core values as its foundation when considering public participation and engagement:

- *Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process, when applicable.*
- *Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision, as applicable.*
- *Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.*
- *Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.*
- *Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.*
- *Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.*

5. MEDIA RELATIONS

Media relations activities will be coordinated in accordance with applicable supporting administrative procedures as may be periodically approved by the City Manager.

6. PARTNERSHIPS AND THIRD-PARTY PROMOTION

For the purposes of this policy:

6.1 "Partnership" is defined as an arrangement where parties agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests in order to increase the likelihood of each achieving their mission and to amplify their reach.

6.2 "Sponsorship" is defined as a formal agreement in which cash and/or an in-kind fee is paid toward a program, service or amenity in return for marketing, advertising, public relations or other recognition.

The City of Pine Lake regularly, as part of its legislative process, enters into partnerships or sponsorships with other organizations, governments, societies, and businesses.

The City will not actively promote or advertise any third-party organization, society, entity or business over another similar organization, unless as part of an officially recognized partnership or sponsorship relationship.

7. SOCIAL MEDIA

The City of Pine Lake will use social media as communication and engagement tools to:

- Engage citizens at their convenience.
- Make it easy for citizens to participate.
- Create a two-way dialogue with the community.
- Provide the City with the ability to communicate effectively and quickly.

Use of City social media platforms and accounts will adhere to applicable supporting procedures as found in appendix A of this policy.

8. BRANDING AND BRAND ELEMENTS

The City of Pine Lake has a single and consistent visual identity for its roles and responsibilities to be clearly recognized. All communication from the City from signage to correspondence to digital platforms will include only applicable and approved City logo and/or City seal.

Where naming rights exist additional branding may be present in accordance with any contractual obligations but this does not preclude any City branding unless authorized by the City Manager.

9. WEB ELEMENTS

The City of Pine Lake will maintain one official website (www.pinelakega.net) to provide the public with information regarding City services, Council decisions, Council and committee meeting

schedules, minutes and agendas, bylaws, activities and events, and ongoing local government business.

The website and any other City web elements will only be used to promote activities provided by the City or in partnership with the City.

APPENDIXES BEGIN ON THE NEXT PAGE

City of Pine Lake Communications Policy
Appendix A

Social Media Policy

Purpose

The City of Pine Lake's Social Media Policy ("Policy") is a guiding document that provides general guidelines that will govern the City's participation in social media. It also provides guidance and protocols and defines roles and responsibilities for the content and administration of the City's social media accounts.

Principles of Engagement

The City of Pine Lake is committed to openness and transparency and the engagement of the Pine Lake Community regarding City programs, services and policies. The City recognizes that social media provides valuable opportunities to communicate with stakeholders and provides timely, accurate, and relevant information. Further, the City has an inherent interest in participating in the presence of on-line conversations pertaining to the City in order to proactively address community issues and to nurture a relationship of collaboration with its stakeholders.

The City supports the following principles in the administration of social media:

- Community engagement
- Timely, accurate, and responsive information
- Positive public image
- Transparency and accountability

Social Media Accounts Generally

The City will maintain multiple social media accounts and explore opportunities for new accounts as they arise. Social media sites must:

- Benefit the Citizens of Pine Lake
- Enhance City of Pine Lake operations and communications
- Operate at reasonable cost to the City of Pine Lake

The City's website (<http://www.pinelakega.net>) will remain the City's primary and predominant internet presence. The most appropriate uses of social media tools are as informational channels to increase the City's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.

Wherever possible, content posted to the City's social media sites must contain hyperlinks directing users back to the City's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the City of Pine Lake.

The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.

- Social Media Platforms:
- Facebook
 - YouTube
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - Other platforms as approved by the City Manager or Council Action

Content

The content on City social media accounts should be professional and intended to inform and engage. Information posted by the City must be accurate, relevant and consistent with established City policies and ordinances. Only properly authorized staff or vendors will post content and comments on the City's social media sites. Administrator(s) of City social media sites will adhere to confidentiality requirements as needed and not provide any information that may be detrimental to the City, to City of Pine Lake Elected Officials, or to City of Pine Lake Staff. Site administrators must ensure that privacy, confidentiality, copyright and data protection laws are respected.

Definitions Related to Content Management

Administrator - The site administrator is the person or his/her delegate(s) that is ultimately responsible for the content posted to the City's social media sites. The Administrator shall be the City Manager. The City Manager can designate delegates to serve as content specific administrators.

Affiliated organizations - Official affiliates of the City of Pine Lake that are privy to necessary and applicable information about the organization. Official affiliates are boards, commissions, committees and other groups that are directly appointed by the City Council or that have an official agreement with the City, such as through a memorandum of understanding or other similar agreements.

Administration

The City Manager will serve as the site administrator (s) for the oversight and administration of social media for the City of Pine Lake. All City activity on social media will be take place through this administrator or his/her delegates and, will ultimately subject to the action of Mayor and Council. There may be a separate content specific administrator for each form of content (i.e. city administration, department operations, community events and affiliated organizations, emergency management).

Control of Content

The site administrator and his/or delegate(s) works collaboratively with staff and affiliate organizations to ensure that information published online about activities is accurate, easy to understand and responsive to public inquiries. The site administrator reserves the right to edit or remove content from City social media sites where it is deemed unsuitable, inappropriate or in violation of this Policy. The City will retain any content that is edited or removed from a social media site. The time, date and the reason it was edited or removed will be recorded.

Information Flow

The site administrator(s) relies upon City departments, City committees, and affiliated organizations to provide ongoing information as content for keeping the sites up-to-date. The site administrator is responsible for ensuring the clarity and relevance of posted content. Each department head or his/her department delegate will be responsible for online content relevant to that department and to serve as the contact person for new requests.

Inappropriate Content

The site administrator may moderate any City of Pine Lake social media account with unsuitable content. This will be stated in a disclaimer on each City of Pine Lake social media site. Some examples of inappropriate content include but are not limited to the following:

- content that are profane, abusive, threatening, harassing, intimidating, hateful or intended to defame any person or organization
- content considered to be disrespectful or insulting to City officials, staff or representatives
- content that suggest or encourage illegal activity
- content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, gender identity or sexual orientation
- sexual content or links to sexual content
- solicitations or advertisements, including promotion and endorsement of any financial, commercial or non-governmental agency
- information that may compromise the safety or security of the public, a public facility, or a public event
- public disclosure of personal and confidential information
- religious and political messages
- promotional messages for personal gain or personal solicitation
- harmful software, viruses, Trojan horses or malware in any form
- data that could reasonably be expected to cause, directly or indirectly, strain on any computing facilities, or interfere with others' use of the service, such as spam
- inappropriate jokes, slurs, or innuendos
- content for the purposes of promoting a candidate for any elected or appointed office
- content that violates intellectual property rights of any other party

Copyright Adherence

Intellectual property issues (e.g., copyright, trademark, brand names, logos, moral rights to a work, etc.) exist and must be respected. Proper permission to use others' intellectual property will be obtained prior to usage.

Personal Use

The City of Pine Lake social media presence and social media sites/accounts are for City of Pine Lake purposes only and will not be used for personal use. Outgoing messages of a personal nature will not be posted on the City's social media. Only the site administrator, or his/her designee(s) can authorize or post City content to City social media sites. Other City employees are not permitted to represent the City on these sites. Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary standards as provided for by the City's personnel policies and all other rules and regulations of the City and its departments as applicable.

Disclaimer & Terms of Use

Each City of Pine Lake social media site will contain the below disclaimer:

This site is maintained by the City of Pine Lake for the purpose of providing information and engaging the community. It is informal and should not be considered official communication from the City. For official information on the City of Pine Lake and its programs, services and policies, please visit <http://www.pinelakega.net/>. The views of external participants commenting on this site do not necessarily represent those of the City of Pine Lake.

The City's regular scheduling of postings to this site is during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm, excluding City holidays.

All information provided by the City of Pine Lake on this site is for informational purposes only and is subject to change without notice.

The City of Pine Lake reserves the right, without notification and at our sole discretion, to remove any objectionable content.

The appearance of external links on this page does not represent official endorsement by the City of Pine Lake.

The City does not accept responsibility for ads, videos, promoted content or comments accessible from any external website and we do not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness or completeness of information contained on a linked website. We do not endorse the organizations sponsoring linked websites or the views they express or the products/services they offer.

The City has taken reasonable precautions to ensure there are no viruses associated with this page and advise we are not responsible for any loss or damage resulting from your use.

Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are third party service providers that may collect, store, and manage your personal information whenever you access and use this site. Please refer to their terms of service and/or privacy statements for particulars. Note that the City of Pine Lake has no control over what is done with your personal information.

If you have any questions about the City's collection of personal information through this page please contact the City at (404) 999-4901.

Content Retention and Open Records

City of Pine Lake social media accounts and sites are subject to the Georgia Open Records Act and the U.S. Freedom of Information Act. Any content maintained on a social media website that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers or "friends," is public record. As such, the City is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on its social media activities. Content related to City business shall be maintained in an accessible format and so that it can be produced in response to an open records request.

Whenever possible, City social media websites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.

Content will be retained in accordance with the appropriate Georgia Local Government Records Retention Schedules.

Monitoring

The site administrator will monitor City social media sites on an ongoing basis to ensure that all content is in compliance with the Policy guidelines. Inappropriate content is immediately recorded for record-keeping purposes and deleted.

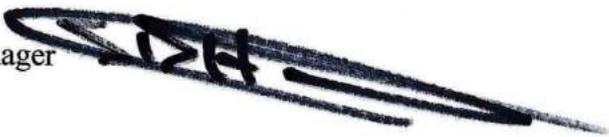
Oversight provided by the site administrator, generally:

- monitor social media sites to track content on City related topics
- respond to ~~inquiries~~ inquiries as appropriate and in accordance with the established protocols
- consult regularly with designated representatives of City departments, committees, and affiliated organizations to collect content and package appropriately for the City's social media sites
- post City content to social media sites as necessary
- record any content that is inappropriate and remove said content from City sites
- report regularly on the results of all monitoring and measurement activity
- ensure social media activity coincides with established City of Pine Lake policies, ordinances, communication networks, etc.



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager 

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: One-month Extension of Contractual Agreement with Special Projects Manager Kendrick

RECOMMENDATION

An additional one-month extension through February 28, 2025 is recommended as an amendment to the agreement for professional services of Public Works Special Projects Manager Vernon B. Kendrick.

BACKGROUND

The original agreement was effective from May 13, 2024 through December 31, 2024. The original contract expired December 31, 2024, but was extended by action of the City Council on December 17, 2024. If the City and Mr. Kendrick agree to extend the term of the contract until February 28, 2025, all other terms and conditions of the existing contract continue in full force and effect for the extended term.

During this interim period, the City Manager and Special Projects Manager will continue discussions to conclude a more permanent arrangement of Public Works leadership, services, compensation, and related other issues including in-house organization.

RESOURCE IMPACT

Contracted compensation is currently paid biweekly at a rate of \$2115.39.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Second amendment to original agreement for action
2. Original agreement
3. First amendment to original agreement

**AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OF SPECIAL PROJECTS
MANAGER – PUBLIC WORKS**

Effective February 1, 2025, this Agreement amends the contract between the City of Pine Lake (“City”) and Vernon B. Kendrick (“Kendrick”) for Kendrick to serve as Special Projects Manager – Public Works. The existing contract expired December 31, 2024, but was extended by action of the City Council on December 17, 2024. City and Kendrick agree to extend the term of that contract until February 28, 2025. All other terms and conditions of the existing contract continue in full force and effect for this extended term.

Date of Execution: _____

CITY OF PINE LAKE, GEORGIA

By: _____

Brandy Hall, Mayor

Attest:

Assistant City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

Date of Execution: _____

SPECIAL PROJECT MANAGER

By: _____

Vernon B. Kendrick

**AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
OF SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER – PUBLIC WORKS**

WHEREAS, the City of Pine Lake has a number of capital projects planned and needs someone with appropriate professional expertise to assist in overseeing the assessment, planning, execution and completion of such projects;

WHEREAS, the City of Pine Lake needs someone to assess the City's recreation, stormwater and public works infrastructure and create maintenance schedules and standard operating procedures for the Public Works Department;

WHEREAS, the City of Pine Lake needs someone to temporarily supervise the Public Works Department; and

WHEREAS, Vernon B. Kendrick has represented that he has the necessary skills, education, experience and certifications to serve as a Special Projects Manager – Public Works;

NOW THEREFORE, THIS CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is entered into this _____ day of _____, 2024 by and between the City of Pine Lake, Georgia ("City") for the professional services of Vernon B. Kendrick, an individual who the City is contracting with to serve as a Special Projects Manager – Public Works ("Special Project Manager") subject to approval by the City Council. The Special Project Manager shall be an independent contractor and not an employee of the City. In consideration of the mutual covenants stated herein, the parties hereby agree as follows:

SECTION I. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Agreement shall become effective May 13, 2024 and be in effect until December 31, 2024 unless terminated earlier by either party acting under Section 3. The parties may extend or renew the Agreement in writing properly approved and signed by both parties. The City shall notify the Special Projects Manager no later than November 30, 2024 whether the City wants to renew or extend the Agreement.

SECTION 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Special Projects Manager undertakes to provide the following professional services to the City:

- In-field management of special and capital public works projects;
- Assessment of street infrastructure for maintenance prioritization including compiling of conditions list and creation of maintenance schedule(s);
- Assessment of stormwater infrastructure including compiling of conditions list and creation of maintenance schedule(s);
- Assessment of environmental and recreational infrastructure (lake/wetlands/parks) including compiling of conditions list and creation of maintenance schedule(s);
- Assessment and scheduling of public works duties and tasks (regular operating) including drafting comprehensive Public Works Standard Operating Procedures (regular operations and maintenance) customized for the City;

- Formulation of vendors list and contacts for public works;
- Assisting Administration in administering public works projects as assigned from assessment of project scope to project completion;
- Plan, schedule, and assign work duties that are under the Public Works department's purview including instructing and training in correct methods and procedures as necessary and examining work for completion;
- Supervise and participate in the repair and maintenance of the City's buildings, parks, right-of-way, streets, and storm utility structures;
- Supervise and participate in grounds maintenance work including, but not limited to, mowing, weed control, pruning hedges, and rubbish removal for all city facilities as needed;
- Supervise and participate in storm water system maintenance work including, but not limited to clearing drains, mitigating reported spills, and assisting in annual storm water system reporting;
- Performs and/or provide for water testing, maintenance and monitoring the lake, wetlands, and associated grounds and set up seasonal beach/lake opening and operation;
- Supervise and participate in street maintenance including, but not limited to, sweeping and clean-up of debris and materials from the roads, snow and ice removal from roadways in situations of inclement weather, and sign replacement and installation;
- Supervise and perform semi-heavy to heavy manual labor, including lifting heavy objects and working in all type of weather conditions;
- Monitors performance of employees (regular, temporary, contract, or otherwise) and contractors performing public works tasks; and
- Prepare reports for the City Manager and attend City Council meetings and other meetings as requested.

SECTION 3. TERMINATION

The City may terminate this Agreement at any time without cause but shall provide payment for all work provided up to that point by the Special Projects Manager plus an additional payment equivalent to two (2) bi-weekly payments for services (total additional payment of \$4,230.78). The City may terminate this Agreement immediately at any time for failure to satisfactorily perform the duties, violation of the City's Code of Ethics, causing damage to any person or property, or any other activity, including but not limited to, charged criminal activity which undermines the Mayor, City Council or City Manager's confidence in the ability of the Special Project Manager.

SECTION 4. ON SITE AND REMOTE WORK; AVAILABILITY

During the term of this Agreement, the Special Projects Manager shall be in the City of Pine Lake to perform services no less than 32 hours each week and shall provide service to the City for at least 40 hours each week. As some tasks the Special Projects Manager is engaged to provide may be done remotely, the Special Project Manager may provide remote access services to the City one day per week (8 hours equivalent). The Special Projects Manager shall comply with the City's practices on procurement, conduct (as reflected in City policies as may be amended from time to time), and reimbursement for expenses incurred. The Special Projects Manager may be requested to attend City Council meetings or other public meetings, and will be available on call Friday through Sunday via telephone or text. The Special Projects Manager acknowledges that much flexibility is required for

performing services pursuant to this Agreement, as there are meetings outside regular business hours that will also require his presence.

SECTION 5. PAYMENT

The City shall pay the Special Projects Manager ___\$33,846.24 (\$2,115.39 bi-weekly equivalent, \$55,000.14 annual equivalent)_____ for the period of May 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 paid in equal installments bi-weekly. The Special Projects Manager's payments will not be subject to the ordinary and customary withholdings of employees of the City, including federal and state taxes or assessments or withholdings for employee benefits, as the Special Projects Manager is a contractor and not an employee. The Special Projects Manager is not eligible for any employee benefits including workers' compensation coverage, health, retirement, or paid time off. For performing work remotely, the Special Projects Manager has and will provide his own computer, printer, and Internet access at no expense to the City.

SECTION 6. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

The Special Projects Manager acknowledges that he may have access to and become acquainted with confidential and other information proprietary to the City or its contractors or vendors, including, but not limited to, information concerning operations, customers, citizens, business and financial condition, as well as information with respect to which the Special Projects Manager has an obligation to maintain confidentiality due to obligations of the City under contracts (collectively referred to herein as "Proprietary Information"). The Special Projects Manager agrees not to disclose, directly or indirectly, to anyone or to use or to allow others to use, for any purpose whatsoever, any Proprietary Information of any type, whether or not designated confidential or proprietary, acquired in the course of performing services under this Agreement. Notwithstanding the foregoing provision, it is expressly understood and agreed that disclosure of Proprietary Information may be required by law, including specifically subpoenas and requests pursuant to the Georgia Open Records Act. The obligations of the Special Projects Manager under this section shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

SECTION 7. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

The Agreement is the entire agreement between the parties. All prior discussions, representations, and negotiations of any type are merged herein, and no provision or condition otherwise discussed shall be deemed part of the Agreement unless contained herein.

SECTION 8. LAWS APPLICABLE AND VENUE

The Agreement is entered into under the laws of the State of Georgia, and shall be construed in accordance with Georgia law. Any action to enforce any provision of the Agreement or to establish a breach thereof shall be commenced in a court of competent jurisdiction sitting in Fulton County, Georgia.

SECTION 9. MODIFICATION

No modification to the Agreement is valid unless it is reduced to writing, specifically identifies what provisions herein are to be changed or what new provisions are to be added, and is signed and executed by both parties. Any modification must be executed with the same formality as this document.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement through their duly authorized representatives.

CITY OF PINE LAKE, GEORGIA

By: _____
Brandy Hall, Mayor

Date of Execution: _____

Attest:

Acting City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

SPECIAL PROJECT MANAGER

By: _____
Vernon B. Kendrick

Date of Execution: _____

**AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
OF SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER – PUBLIC WORKS**

Effective December 17, 2024, this Agreement amends the contract between the City of Pine Lake ("City") and Vernon B. Kendrick ("Kendrick") for Kendrick to serve as Special Projects Manager – Public Works. The existing contract expires December 31, 2024. City and Kendrick agree to extend the term of that contract until January 31, 2025. All other terms and conditions of the existing contract continue in full force and effect for this extended term.

CITY OF PINE LAKE, GEORGIA

By: _____

Brandy Hall, Mayor

Date of Execution: _____

Attest:

Assistant City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

SPECIAL PROJECT MANAGER

By: _____

Vernon B. Kendrick

Date of Execution: _____



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager 

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: Setting the Qualifying Fee for the Office of Council Member for the 2025 Election

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the qualifying fee for the office of City Council Member be set at \$18.00 for the 2025 calendar year.

BACKGROUND

The Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) requires the governing authority of any county or municipality, not later than February 1 of any year in which a general primary, nonpartisan election, or general election, to fix and publish a qualifying fee for each municipal office to be filled in the upcoming primary or election.

It also provides that such qualifying fee shall be 3% of the total gross salary of the office paid in the preceding calendar year. Therefore, the qualifying fee for the office of City Council Member in the upcoming general municipal election for the 2025 calendar year is set at \$18.00 (3% of the annual salary of \$600 for the position of Council Member).

RESOURCE IMPACT

There are negligible costs for setting the qualifying fee and related other requirements of the applicable State Statute.

ATTACHMENTS

Enacting resolution

A RESOLUTION TO SET THE QUALIFYING FEE FOR THE OFFICE OF COUNCIL MEMBER FOR THE 2025 CALENDAR YEAR

WHEREAS, O.C.G.A. § 21-2-131(a)(1)(A) requires the governing authority of any county or municipality, not later than February 1 of any year in which a general primary, nonpartisan election, or general election is to be held and at least 35 days prior to the special primary or election in case of a special primary or election, shall fix and publish a qualifying fee for each municipal office to be filled in the upcoming primary or elction; and

WHEREAS, O.C.G.A. § 21-2-131(a)(1)(A) also provides that such qualifying fee shall be 3% of the total gross salary of the office paid in the preceding calendar year including all supplements authorized by law if a salaried office; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing authority of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, that the qualifying fee for the office of City Councilmember to be filled in the upcoming general municipal election for the 2025 calendar year is set at \$18.00 (3% of the annual salary of \$600 for the position of councilmember).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any and all resolutions or any part thereof in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Pine Lake, this 28th day of January, 2025.

BRANDY HALL
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

NED DAGENHARD
Deputy City Clerk

CHRISTOPHER D. BALCH
City Attorney



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager 

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: Establishment of Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) II Bank Account

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that a separate bank account be established for the special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) II funds.

BACKGROUND:

Currently there is no bank account for SPLOST II funds. These funds are being deposited into the bank account for SPLOST I funds. It is best practice not to commingle funds for SPLOST funds. Maintaining separate bank accounts for these funds assists the City being more transparent and in compliance with any financial reporting requirements.

RESOURCE IMPACT

Fiscal costs to set up a bank account are negligible.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution exhibit

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE AND DEFINED ACCOUNT DEDICATED TO THE RECEIPT AND DISBURSEMENT OF PROCEEDS FROM THE SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX AUTHORIZED IN 2023 FOR THE CITY OF PINE LAKE

- WHEREAS, The City is a party to an Intergovernmental Agreement (“IGA”) with DeKalb County and the other qualified municipalities within DeKalb County related to the 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (“SPLOST II”); and
- WHEREAS, The IGA between the City, DeKalb County, and the other qualified municipalities of DeKalb County requires funds be kept separate and apart from other funds held by the City, as well as specifying certain audit procedures be performed to account for and ensure that funds are utilized only as authorized by the electorate; and
- WHEREAS, Georgia law requires that proceeds from SPLOST II be kept and maintained in separate accounts and used only for the authorized purposes of the SPLOST as approved by the voters in the referendum, O.C.G.A. § 48-8-115(b)(1)(F); and
- WHEREAS, Generally Accepted Accounting Practices require guarding against commingling funds between purposes;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing authority of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, the City Manager, or his designee, is authorized to establish and maintain a separate and distinct bank account, to be titled SPLOST II, in an accredited and insured financial institution, authorized to do business in the State of Georgia, for the purposes of keeping separate and apart all funds received or spent as part of SPLOST II, thereby complying with the City’s obligations under the IGA and in accordance with State law and Generally Accepted Accounting Practices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any and all resolutions or any part thereof in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Pine Lake, this 28th day of January, 2025.

BRANDY HALL
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

NED DAGENHARD

CHRISTOPHER D. BALCH

Assistant City Clerk

City Attorney



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members
FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager
DATE: January 28, 2025
TITLE: Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Application for 2025

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the City Manager or designee to apply for funds for local infrastructure improvements from the Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Program.

BACKGROUND

According to the Georgia Department of Transportation 2025 LMIG formula, the City qualifies for a grant amount of \$12,248.55 with a required LMIG match of 30% equaling \$3674.57.

The amount of allocation is based on the total centerline road miles for the City's local road system and the total population of the City as compared with the total statewide centerline road miles and total statewide population.

Historically, since 2019, the City has committed to use LMIG funds for the long-needed maintenance and upgrades to the street and stormwater infrastructure on Oak Road. As a companion agenda item, award of contract for the Oak Road Project is included on the January 28, 2025 Regular Agenda. Therefore, this project is recommended for use of applied 2025 LMIG funds.

RESOURCE IMPACT

The City qualifies for a grant amount of \$12,248.55 with a required LMIG match of 30% equaling \$3674.57.

ATTACHMENTS

Approving resolution

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR THEIR DESIGNEE TO APPLY FOR FUNDS FOR LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FROM THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION LOCAL MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

- WHEREAS, The State of Georgia through the Department of Transportation (“GDOT”) administers the Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program (“LMIG”) to provide funds to cities and counties for the purpose of improving and maintaining local streets and rights of way; and
- WHEREAS, GDOT has released funds to be applied to the program and is accepting applications for those funds; and
- WHEREAS, The City Council finds and concludes that seeking and utilizing grant funds from the State for paving and roadway repair saves local tax dollars for other City priorities; and
- WHEREAS, The City Council wishes to express its support for the application for these funds and commit to accepting them once released by the State;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Authority of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, the City Manager, or his designee, is authorized to apply for the GDOT LMIG program funds on behalf of the City of Pine Lake.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governing Authority of the City of Pine Lake commits and agrees to accept the funds available pursuant to the LMIG Program, and commits to the acceptance of any and all conditions imposed on the use of those funds by GDOT.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any and all resolutions or any part thereof in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Pine Lake, this 28th day of January, 2025.

BRANDY HALL
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

NED DAGENHARD
Assistant City Clerk

CHRISTOPHER D. BALCH
City Attorney



COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM (CAM)

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Stanley D Hawthorne, City Manager

DATE: January 28, 2025

TITLE: Oak Road Project

RECOMMENDATION

Approval is recommended of the submittal bid from Construction 57, Inc in the amount of \$345,000 for the Base Bid and a revised Alternate 1 and not including the additional work requested by the residents of 487 and 497 Oak Road.

BACKGROUND

On September 10, 2024, a bid opening was conducted at the Pine Lake City Hall for the purpose of accepting bids for the FY 2024 Road Maintenance Project (Oak Road Project).

There were 4 bidders for the project. The apparent lowest bid by K&E Group USA was found to be unresponsive and the contractor willingly removed themselves from consideration.

The Mayor and Council tasked the Special Project Manager with negotiating a project resolution with the next low bidder, Construction 57, Inc.

Construction 57, Inc's overall bid was submitted as follows:

\$295,000 Base Bid
\$ 50,000 Alternative 1
\$345,000 Subtotal
\$ 40,360 Additional Work
\$385,360 Grand Total

RESOURCE IMPACT

Construction 57, Inc's bid was \$295,000 for the base bid and \$298,000 for alternate 1; this is a \$248,000 variation in the initial bid of \$298,000 for Alternative 1. After meeting with Construction 57, Inc representative, the Special Project Manager submits the recommendation of \$345,000 for consideration by the Mayor and Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Related documents and resolution

Stanley D Hawthorne
City Manager
stanleyhawthorne@pinelakega.net
425 Allgood Road Stone Mountain GA 30083
PO Box 1325 • Pine Lake, GA 30072 • 404-999-4932
www.pinelakega.net

BID FORM

This form is mandatory and must be completed in its entirety.

BASE BID - LUMP SUM COMPLETE & FINISHED:

OAK DRIVE RESURFACING AND PATCHING AND ROAD MAINTENANCE PROJECT
CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Two Hundred and Ninety Five Thousand Dollars = Cents
(Base Bid Includes all work identified in the contract documents).

\$ 295,000.00

ADD ALTERNATE 1 -LUMP SUM COMPLETE & FINISHED:

OAK DRIVE REMAINING SEGMENT RESURFACING AND PATCHING AND
OAK ROAD RESURFACING AND PATCHING

\$50,000 - Add Alternate 1 (Asphalt Work)

Dollars Cents

(Base Bid Includes all work identified in the contract documents).

(a) Five Hydrant - \$4800.00

(b) 2 Inch Waterline - \$35,560.00

\$ 90,360.00

Grand Total: - \$ 385,360.00

Attached prices shall include all labor, materials, balling, shoring, removal, overhead (Direct and Indirect), profit, insurance, bonds, and other costs, to cover all finished Work.

Bidder agrees this Bid shall be good and may not be withdrawn for a period of 90 calendar days after scheduled closing time for receiving bids.

There is enclosed herewith a certified or cashier's check or a Bid Bond to the order of City of Pine Lake, Georgia, in the sum of \$ _____ Dollars.

Check or Bid Bond shall be equal to, not less than, the amount stipulated in INVITATION TO BID and it is understood and agreed that said check or Bid Bond shall be subject to terms and conditions stipulated in Bid Document Package.

Undersigned Bidder hereby agrees to each and every stipulation in Bid Document Package pertaining to the submission of Bids and further, if awarded the Contract, duly agrees to execute and secure the required Contract and Bid Document Package within fifteen (15) days from service of Notice of Award and deliver a surety bond or bonds as required by General Conditions. The name and business address of Bidder to which all formal Notices shall be sent:

BID FORM

Company: CONSTRUCTION 57 INCORPORATED

Address: 809 PARK NORTH BOULEVARD
CLARKSTON GA. 30021

Undersigned Bidder states the names and addresses of persons interested as principals in this Bid are as follows: (Write first name in full):

OLUSEGUN OSHO
809 PARK NORTH BOULEVARD
CLARKSTON GA. 30021

CONSTRUCTION 57 OAK ROAD PROJECT	BASE BID	ALTERNATE 1	ADDITIONAL WORK	TOTAL COSTS
	\$ 295,000.00	\$50,000.00		\$345,000.00
			\$40,360.00	\$40,360.00
CITY OF PINE LAKE			\$4,436.91	
JORDAN TOMESCH			\$12,500.61	
ALAN GORDON			\$23,422.48	
TOTAL				\$385,360.00

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A BID IN THE AMOUNT OF \$345,000 FROM CONSTRUCTION 57 FOR MAINTENANCE ON OAK ROAD

WHEREAS, The City issued a Request for Proposals for this project and seeking sealed bids from interested contractors; and

WHEREAS, The lowest bidder was unresponsive and withdrew from consideration for the project; and

WHEREAS, The Governing Authority of the City authorized the Public Works Director to negotiate a project resolution with the next lowest bidder; and

WHEREAS, A revised contract and scope of work has been negotiated with Construction 57 for work on Oak Road ;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing authority of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, that the Mayor is authorized to execute a contract with Construction 57 in the amount of \$357,000 for maintenance on Oak Road under the terms and conditions of the Request for Proposal as modified in negotiations by the Public Works Director.

ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Pine Lake, this 28th day of January, 2025.

BRANDY HALL
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

NED DAGENHARD
Assistant City Clerk

CHRISTOPHER D. BALCH
City Attorney