

CITY OF PINE LAKE
CITY COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING & WORK SESSION
ACTION ITEM REPORT (AIR)
January 13, 2026 at 6:00PM
Courthouse & Council Chambers
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA 30072

Call to Order: Mayor Hall called the Organizational Meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Present: Mayor Brandy Hall, Council Members Jeff Goldberg and Thomas Torrent. Also present were City Manager Stanley Hawthorne, City Attorney Chris Balch, Chief of Police Sarai Y'Hudah-Green, Public Works Director Bernard Kendrick, City Clerk Ned Dagenhard, and Finance Associate Stephen Mayer.

Oath of Office

Superior Court Judge Ana Martinez presided over the swearing-in ceremony, for Council Members-elect Deborah Hull, Stephanie Kohler, and Jane Lowers.

The new Council Members were seated at the dais.

No other action was taken.

Nomination and Election – Mayor pro tempore

Mayor Hall called for nominations for Mayor pro tempore.

Council Member Kohler motioned to nominate Council Member Torrent as Mayor pro tempore.

Council Member Hull motioned to nominate Council Member Goldberg as Mayor pro tempore.

No further nominations were offered.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

Council Members Kohler and Torrent voted for Council Member Torrent; Council Members Goldberg, Hull, and Lowers voted for Council Member Goldberg.

Council Member Goldberg was named Mayor pro tempore.

STAFF FOLLOW-UP: **Executive Assistant Varner** is expected to update the City's directory with the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), notifying the organization of the naming of Jeff Goldberg as Mayor pro tempore.

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Appointment of City Officers

Council Member Torrent motioned to appoint City Attorney Chris Balch, Chief Judge of Municipal Court L'Erin Barnes-Wiggins, Associate Judge of Municipal Court Tracy Moran, Solicitor of Municipal Court Jonathan Kester, and Public Defender of Municipal Court Ansley Sluss; Council Member Lowers seconded.

No discussion took place.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motioned carried.

STAFF FOLLOW-UP: Court Administrator Capers is expected to notify the various Municipal Court Officers of their re-appointment.

Adjournment

Council Member Kohler motioned to adjourn the Organizational Meeting at 6:10PM.

Call to Order: Mayor Hall called the Work Session to order at 6:10PM.

Present: Mayor Brandy Hall, Mayor pro tempore Jeff Goldber, and Council Members Deborah Hull, Stephanie Kohler, Jane Lowers, and Thomas Torrent. Also present were City Manager Stanley Hawthorne, City Attorney Chris Balch, Chief of Police Sarai Y'Hudah-Green, Public Works Director Bernard Kendrick, City Clerk Ned Dagenhard, and Finance Associate Stephen Mayer.

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Adoption of the Agenda of the Day

Council Member Hull motioned to adopt the agenda; Council Member Torrent seconded.

No discussion took place.

Mayor Hall called for a vote.

All members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

Public Comment

Comments and questions focused on the ongoing dam inspection, which required removal of vegetation on both the upstream and downstream slopes of that critical feature. Fortification of the foot of the dam was done using rip rap. The immediate aftermath produced a stark contrast, and comments were understandably fueled by emotion.

Kari Loomis, Barbara Whitlow, and Brandy Beavers wanted to know why all the rooted vegetation needed to be removed.

Catrina Davis and Mary Shuman want to see more proactive notification of projects that impact our physical environment.

Mira Alibasic and Kenneth Culbreath, frequent visitors, are uneasy about the riprap, as is Amy Colburn—who sees the jagged rocks as hazardous, for visitors and maintenance workers alike.

Susie Pope's comment alluded to the grief many in the community felt, after blackberry bushes and purple passion flowers were removed from the dam, in addition to alders and oak saplings.

Jean Bordeaux—on a separate issue—inquired about availability and appropriation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

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STAFF FOLLOW-UP:

PUBLIC WORKS – *Public Works Director Kendrick*—in collaboration with **Mayor Hall**, vegetation management contractors, and resident volunteers—is expected to present a strategy for replanting along the dam. Plants will be expertly chosen, ensuring species are native to Georgia’s piedmont region, grow with horizontal and/or shallow root structures (so as to not risk negative impact of the structural integrity of the dam going forward) and beneficial to pollinators and avianies. Furthermore, no additional work will be proposed or scheduled until a reevaluation of existing conditions has taken place.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – The **Governing Authority** is expected to confer with **City Manager Hawthorne** and **City Clerk Dagenhard** regarding scheduling of a town hall style meeting, as well as informal “community chats” that focus on ideation for vegetation management.

FINANCE – *Finance Director Salvatore* and *Associate Mayer* are expected to consult banking reconciliations to discern whether any ARPA funds remain available to the City.

Oath of Office

At the approval of the Mayor, the agenda was augmented to allow for the swearing-in of Municipal Court Judge L’Erin Barnes-Wiggins, whose arrival was delayed.

City Attorney Balch presided over the swearing-in of Judge Wiggins.

No other action was taken.

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New Business

1. 2024 Audit Report, Presentation – *McNair McClemore Middlebrooks & Co.*

Kurt Hardison, CPA of *McNair McClemore Middlebrooks & Co.* presented the City's 2024 Audit Report.

A discussion took place.

No action was taken by City Council.

STAFF FOLLOW-UP: City Clerk Dagenhard and City Attorney Balch—working with City Manager Hawthorne and the Finance Department—are expected to prepare a resolution for action ahead of the January 27, 2026 Regular Meeting, for tentative formal “acceptance” of the 2024 Audit Report.

2. 2026 City Council Meeting Calendar, Discussion

A discussion took place.

No action was taken by City Council.

STAFF FOLLOW-UP: City Clerk Dagenhard and City Attorney Balch are expected to prepare a resolution for action ahead of the January 27, 2026 Regular Meeting, for tentative adoption of the 2026 City Council meeting calendar.

3. City Council Orientation Kickoff

A discussion took place.

No action was taken by City Council.

STAFF FOLLOW-UP: City Manager Hawthorne is expected to continue consultation with the Community Building Team and Governing Authority to discern the most effective and practical method for department presentations and discussions with the Governing Authority, preferably in an informal setting.

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Adjournment

Council Member Hull motioned to adjourn the Work Session at 7:57PM.