

CITY OF PINE LAKE
MINUTES
January 11, 2022
7:00 PM
Council Chambers
459 Pine Drive Pine Lake, GA

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Melanie Hammet called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. Present: Mayor Hammet; Mayor pro tem Jean Bordeaux; and Council members Brandy Hall and Augusta Woods. Council members Brandy Beavers and Tracey Brantley attended electronically. Acting City Administrator Peggy Merriss, City Attorney Susan Moore, Chief Saria Y'Hudah-Green and Administrative Coordinator Missye Varner were also present.

OATH OF OFFICE

City Attorney Moore administered the Oaths of Office for Council Members Bordeaux, Hall and Woods to serve their new terms.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

On a motion by Council Member Woods; second by Council Member Hall; and all voting "aye", the agenda was adopted.

CONSENT AGENDA

Adoption of the Minutes of the regular meeting of December 28, 2021.

On a motion by Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux; second by Council Member Woods; and all voting "aye", the consent agenda was adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading – Ordinance Amending Definitions in the Tree Preservation Ordinance to Authorize the City Council to Serve as the Pine Lake Tree Authority Board and Clarifying the term "Qualified Professional".

Ms. Merriss reviewed the proposed amendments for Council.

In response to a question from Council member Brantley, Ms. Moore stated that having a background in horticulture and landscape design as one of the list of qualifications existed in the current ordinance and the proposed second amendment only omitted the parts of the existing ordinance that were not being done.

On a motion by Council Member Woods; second by Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux; and all voting “aye”, the Ordinance Amending Definitions in the Tree Preservation Ordinance were approved as recommended.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of Mayor Pro tempore

Council member Bordeaux was nominated by Council member Hall to serve as Mayor pro tempore and was unanimously approved.

Reappointment of City Attorney Susan Moore was unanimously approved.

Reappointment of Municipal Court Judge L’Erin Wiggins was unanimously approved.

Oak Drive Repair and Maintenance Project Bid

Acting City Administrator Merriss stated that on October 21, 2021, the City of Pine Lake issued an invitation to bid on a repair, maintenance and repaving project for Oak Drive as this project was designated as part of the City of Pine Lake’s Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) project list.

On Tuesday, November 23, 2021 at 2:00pm, bids were opened with Dickerson Group proposing a cost of \$489,665 and Anderson Grading proposing a cost of \$391,999. Both bids exceeded the amount of total funding available from the combined proceeds of the SPLOST revenue and the State of Georgia Local Maintenance Improvement Grants (LMIG). The City’s Engineering Consultants with CPL were surprised at the high price of both bids and generally attributed it to the rock removal and the impact of COVID-related issues that were impacting construction projects throughout the United States including labor and material shortages and unreliable delivery schedules.

In discussions with CPL, the project was modified by removing the intersection and drainage improvements at the corner of Oak Drive and Forest Road. The low bidder, Anderson Grading provided an amended lump sum price of \$337,505. CPL thinks this is a lot of money for the value that we are getting but also do not think that rebidding will yield better results.

The SPLOST allocation includes \$150,000 specifically for the Oak Drive project and \$168,500 for general street repair for a total of \$318,500. There is also approximately \$30,990 in accumulated State LMIG funding for a total of \$349,490. We anticipate receiving at least \$9,000 in 2022 LMIG funding for an estimated total of \$358,490. We have already spent \$25,360 for engineering services and anticipate needing an additional \$15,000 for project management services. This leaves \$318,130, which is a shortfall of \$19,375 to complete the project.

Ms. Merriss presented several options for Council consideration.

- Reject the bids and decide to rebid the project no later than early 2023, so that if acceptable bids are received, then the project can be completed before the end of the current SPLOST project authorization in March 2024. This would also allow time to receive additional LMIG funding in 2023.
- Reject the bids and explore the possibility of having the Pine Lake project included with another city's bid as an alternate to determine if there is enough cost savings through economies of scale so that the project can be completed within existing budget allocations. If not, the project could be rebid as a stand-alone project as described in the above option.
- Accept the low bid with a project scope change order to reduce the lump-sum cost to \$337,505. Cover the project shortfall of \$19,375 with funds from the General Fund Balance or consider using American Rescue Plan Act funding. This is a public project which fits the ARPA criteria.

Jeff Mueller with CPL, the City's engineering consultant, provided a detailed explanation of the project and a description of the change to the scope for the bid change order

In response to Council member Beavers request for clarification regarding changing the scope and the impact that would have on reducing the drainage improvements, Mr. Mueller stated that road improvement at Forest and Oak was done to improve the turning radius at the corner and the change in scope would still include the drainage improvements to the south on Oak Drive.

Acting City Administrator Merriss indicated that the intersection improvement could be included in future projects and that not all of the elements in the bid needed to occur right now.

Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux inquired if the project could be reduced in price and recommended changing the scope of work. Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux indicated that she was not in favor of using fund balance to pay for the project.

Council member Hall indicated she thought trying to see if the City could add its project on with another City's would be helpful in order to take advantage of economies of scale to reduce the overall cost. She did add that it was likely that the cost of the components of the project would not decrease and could likely increase.

After discussion Mayor Hammet stated that the majority of council did not seem to be inclined to move forward with the current bids or with the bid amendment, She summarized options that might be possible in order to move forward that included:

- Redefine the scope of work before seeing if the City could tag along with the current scope
- Tagging along with another city within the new defined scope of work
- Redefine the scope of work and rebid the project

On a motion by Council member Hall, second by Mayor Pro tem Bordeaux and all voting "aye", the bid was rejected.

Further discussion of the project will be placed on the January 25th Council meeting agenda.

Nomination of new City Administrator (Director of Administration)
Confirmation of the new City Administrator contingent on approval of an Employment Services Agreement on January 25, 2022.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Bordeaux, second by Council member Woods, and all voting "aye," Mayor Hammet's nomination of ChaQuias Miller-Thornton as the new City Administrator was confirmed contingent on approval of an Employment Services Agreement on January 25, 2022.

Ms. Miller-Thornton introduced herself and spoke on her background and interests in local government.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Public Comments – Thomas Torrent and husband Tim McLeod, 4538 Orchid Drive stated that there was lots of litter in the eastern wetlands and that on Sunday, January 16th between 2:00 pm - 4:00pm they will do cleaning of the area. He invited others to join them.

Staff - Acting City Administrator Merriss stated that City Hall Administrative Offices and Public Works will be closed on Monday, January 17th in observation of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.

Chief Green welcomed Ms. Miller-Thornton to the City in her new role as the City Administrator.

Mayor – There were no comments.

City Council – There were no comments.

Information for "The Pine Lake News" eblast.

- Holiday Closing on Monday, January 17th for Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.
- Foodwell Grant Phase II for volunteers will be on January 22nd at the Beach House.

Adjournment

On a motion by Council member Hall; second by Council member Woods; and all voting "aye", the meeting was adjourned at 8:16pm.