

**CITY OF PINE LAKE, GEORGIA  
SPECIAL CALLED SESSION AGENDA  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
DECEMBER 19, 2023 @ 7:00PM  
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**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

Presentation – Citizenship Award  
Proclamation – Mayor Hammet

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE DAY**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- Regular Meeting – December 12, 2023

**PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 minutes each please**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Presentation of FY2022 Audit Report – James Whitaker P.C.
2. 2024 Appointment – City Auditor and Letter of Engagement – Auditor Services - For year ending December 31, 2023 – James Whitaker P.C.
3. 2024 Appointment - City Solicitor – Jonathan Kester
4. Resolution R-27-2023 – FY2024 Budgets Adoption
5. Resolution R-28-2023 – Confirmation of December 12, 2023 Executive Session

**REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Public Comments – 3 minutes each please**
- **Staff and Committee Reports**
  - Administration, Courts, and Public Works – City Manager
  - Public Safety – Chief of Police
- **Reports/Comments**
  - Mayor
  - City Council
- **Information for “The Pine Lake News” eblast.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MAYOR  
MELANIE HAMMET**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Jean Bordeaux, Mayor pro tem  
Tracey Brantley  
Nivea Castro  
Augusta Woods

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

ChaQuias Miller-Thornton  
City Manager

Sarai Y’Hudah-Green  
Chief of Police

Ned Dagenhard  
Assistant City Clerk

Missye Varnier  
Administrative Coordinator

Susan Moore  
City Attorney

**CITY OF PINE LAKE  
425 ALLGOOD ROAD  
P.O. BOX 1325  
PINE LAKE, GA 30072**

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**CITY OF PINE LAKE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Melanie Hammet called the Regular Session to order at 7:00pm.

Present: Mayor Melanie Hammet, Mayor Pro Tem Jean Bordeaux, Council Member Nivea Castro, and Council Member Augusta Woods. Also present were City Manager ChaQuias Miller-Thornton, Chief of Police Sarai Y'hudah-Green, City Attorney Susan Moore, and Assistant City Clerk Ned Dagenhard. Council Member Tracey Brantley and Administrative Coordinator Missye Varner were not in attendance.

**Public Hearing – FY2024 Budget Proposal**

City Manager Miller-Thornton presented the amended draft FY2024 Budget proposal to City Council and attendees. There were no substantial changes made relative to previous drafts. No action was taken by Council.

**Announcements/Communications**

Mayor Hammet reiterated her congratulations to City Manager Thornton and staff to and PLAIN for a successful Lighting of the Lake and Cookie Exchange event.

**Adoption of Agenda of the Day**

Council Member Castro moved to adopt the agenda of the day; Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Adoption of the Minutes**

- Regular Meeting – November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux moved to adopt the minutes from the November 28<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting; Council Member Castro seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Consent Agenda**

**1. 2024 Appointments**

- a. City Attorney – Susan J. Moore
- b. City Engineer – Rich Edinger, Clarke Patterson Lee
- c. Legal News Organ – Champion Newspaper

Mayor Hammet introduced the Consent Agenda and discussed each of the 2024 Appointments. Emphasis was given to the amount of time each appointment has been in partnership with the City of Pine Lake. Council Member Woods moved to approve the Consent Agenda; Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

**Old Business**

**1. FY2024 Budget Proposal**

No action was taken by Council.

**New Business**

**1. Memorandum of Understanding between Pine Lake Association of Interested Neighbors and the City of Pine Lake**

City Manager Thornton introduced the MOU and emphasized that no substantial changes had been made to the agreement relative the previous years. The new MOU reflects the 2024 dates of PLAIN hosted and sponsored events, as well as a change in PLAIN's officers. City Manager Thornton added that the agreement serves to present terms of the mutual benefit between City of Pine Lake and PLAIN to serve the Pine Lake community. Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux moved to approve the MOU; Council Member Castro seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**2. Employment Agreement between the City of Pine Lake and Judge L'Erin Barnes Wiggins; 2024 Appointment as Municipal Court Judge**

City Manager Miller-Thornton introduced the renewal of Judge Wiggins' employment contract with the City of Pine Lake as Municipal Court Judge. No changes were made to compensation or expectations within the contract. City Manager Miller-Thornton quoted Judge Wiggins as having expressed appreciation for an opportunity to continue to serve the City of Pine Lake. Council Member Woods moved to approve the Employment Agreement; Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**3. Resolution R-23-2023 – Declaring Results of the November 7, 2023 Election**

Mayor Hammet introduced the measure by noting that the DeKalb County Board of Registrations and Elections voted 3-2 along party lines to certify local elections in DeKalb County, including that of Pine Lake. Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux moved to declare the results of the November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 City of Pine Lake Municipal Election; Council Member Castro seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
459 Pine Drive, Pine Lake, GA**

**4. Resolution R-24-2023 – 2024 Qualifying Fees**

Mayor Hammet introduced the resolution to set fees necessary to qualify for candidacy for elected office in the City of Pine Lake. Council Member Castro inquired to City Manager Miller-Thornton whether the fees (which are established as no more than 3% of the position's annual salary) would reflect a recent salaries increase to the Mayor and City Council. City Manager Miller-Thornton clarified that the fee calculation is based on the previous year's salary, and that fees would increase beginning in 2025. Council Member Castro moved to adopt the 2024 Qualifying Fees for elected office; Council Member Woods seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**5. Resolution R-25-2023 – City of Pine Lake Holiday Schedule**

Mayor Hammet introduced the resolution to establish the 2024 public holiday schedule for City of Pine Lake. No comments were made by Council. Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux moved to adopt the 2024 City of Pine Lake Holiday Schedule; Council Member Woods seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**6. Resolution R-26-2023 – FY2023 Budget Amendment**

City Manager Miller-Thornton introduced an FY2023 Budget Amendment for the purpose of reconciliation and to transfer budgeted allocations for Local Maintenance Improvement Grant funds from the General Fund revenue and Public Works expense categories to the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax I (SPLOST I) Fund. Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux moved to adopt Resolution R-26-2023; Council Member Castro seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**7. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel**

Mayor Hammet proposed amending the Agenda of the Day, moving the Executive Session to immediately precede adjournment. Council Member Castro moved to approve the amendment; Council Member Woods seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Reports and Other Business**

**ChaQuias Miller- Thornton — City Manager (Director of Administration, Courts and Public Works)**

Please refer to [the link](#) to access the City Manager's report dated December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The City Manager reports are on file at City Hall for reviewing.

Please email [missyevartner@pinelakega.net](mailto:missyevartner@pinelakega.net) to request a copy or call (404) 999-4931 to schedule an appointment to review the copy on file.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 7:00 PM  
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**Chief Sarai Y'Hudah-Green — Chief of Police, Public Safety**

Please refer to [the link](#) to access the Police/Public Safety report dated December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The Police/Public Safety reports are on file at City Hall for reviewing. Please email [missyevartner@pinelakega.net](mailto:missyevartner@pinelakega.net) to request a copy or call (404) 999-4931 to schedule an appointment to review the copy on file.

**Pine Lake News E-Blast**

**Upcoming Events**

**December 19th Council meeting:** Please note that the final Council meeting for 2023 will be held on the 19th of December rather than the last Tuesday, which would be December 26th, the day after Christmas.

**March 12th Elections:** On March 12th, 2024 a special election will be held to fill the vacancy in the office of Pine Lake City Council for the unexpired term of Brandy Hall. Qualifying period will be January 8, 2024 through January 10, 2024 8:30am – 4:30pm. 425 Allgood Road, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083 [Qualifying Packet](#) is available on the Pine Lake Website.

**Holiday Office closing:** City offices will be closed Monday, December 25th and Tuesday, December 26th, 2023 in observance of the Christmas Holidays and Monday January 1st, 2024 in observance of New Year's day.

**Ongoing**

**Leaves in the Street:** We still have not received delivery of our new Leaf Vacuum/Loader. Public Works is doing the best they can implementing alternate methods to remove leaves. Please do not add to their work by blowing or raking leaves from your property onto the street.

**Executive Session to Discuss Personnel**

Councilmember Bordeaux made a motion to enter into executive session at 8:09pm; seconded by Councilmember Woods; motion passed unanimously.

Executive session held.

Councilmember Bordeaux made a motion to adjourn executive session and to reconvene regular session at 8:28pm; seconded by Councilmember Woods; motion passed unanimously.

**CITY OF PINE LAKE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
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Mayor and Council continued Old Business item no. 1, FY2024 Budget Proposal. Mayor Pro Tem Bordeaux made a motion to use an equitable amount of proposed general fund reserve to issue a one-time, lump sum payout of excessive compensatory time allocations, in lieu of cost of living adjustments for 2024. Comp time payout will exclude comp time held by the City Manager position.

**Adjournment:** Council Member Castro motioned for adjournment at 8:36pm.

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Ned Dagenhard  
Assistant City Clerk

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ChaQuias Miller-Thornton  
Acting City Clerk



# Memo

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**From:** ChaQuias Thornton, City Manager

**Date:** December 15, 2023

**Re:** Presentation of the FY2022 Audit Report  
Letter of Engagement for Audit Services – FY2022 Audit  
2024 Appointment – City Auditor – James Whitaker P.C.

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## Presentation of the FY2022 Audit Report

After the City Management's completion of the Management Discussion and Analysis report and as of 12/15/2023, James Whitaker P.C. has presented to the Manager's Office the Annual Financial Report, the Required Reports in Accordance with Government Audit Standards, and the Governance Report for the year ended December 31, 2022. The reports are scheduled to be presented to Council during the regular meeting on 12/19/2023.

## Letter of Engagement for Audit Services

Attached, please find the Letter of Engagement for Audit Services relative to completion of the City's FY2023 Audit as received by the Administration Office on 12/15/2023. Terms of engagement are in line with the terms of the previous year's engagement. However, cost for service is estimated between \$20,000 and \$24,000 (\$2,000 more than the previous year's estimation). Increase is estimated because of a new regulatory requirement that subscription-based technology agreements, along with the calculated costs and related liabilities – with an amortization schedule for each liability – will need to be reported as of December 31, 2023.

NOTE: The City's financials will be reported for the 2023 fiscal year using the old software system which leaves room for non-agreement between the beginning balances in the City's general ledger and the amounts in the City's audited financial statements for the previous year. The old software also does not provide for a separate set of self-balancing books for each of its individual funds. New software implementation is scheduled for January 2024 and a resulting savings in audit cost is expected.

## 2024 Appointment – City Auditor – James Whitaker P.C.

The Manager's Office requests Council consideration of the appointment of James Whitaker as the auditor of record for the 2024 fiscal year.

Please contact me if you should have any questions and/or concerns regarding the attached.

Thank you,  
CMThornton



# Memo

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**From:** ChaQuias Thornton, City Manager

**Date:** December 15, 2023

**Re:** 2024 Appointment – Solicitor – Attorney Jonathan Kester

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Attorney Jonathan Kester of Jonathan Kester Law Firm, LLC has served as City Solicitor since February 2021. Please consider reappointment of Attorney Kester as City Solicitor for the 2024 calendar year.

In accordance with city policy regarding the procurement of professional services, "Mayor and city council may appoint vendors for professional services annually, based upon qualifications and experience of the respective vendors. These professional services shall include, but not be limited to, auditor, attorney, solicitor, judge, judge pro-tem, engineers, artistic personnel, architects, and surveyors."

Thank you,  
CMThornton





**Memo: 12/15/2023**

**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** ChaQuias Thornton, City Manager  
**RE:** Resolution R-27-2023 – FY2024 Budgets Adoption

The FY2024 Budgets Proposal is set for consideration of adoption during the 12/19/2023 meeting of Mayor and Council. The 2024 Budget Proposal – as revised – can be found at: <https://pinelakega.sophicity.com/AnnualBudgets.aspx>. Any revision made after formal draft presentation on 11/28/2023, is reflected in bold, underlined text within the document. Please see summary explanation of proposed changes on next page.

<b>GENERAL FUND SUMMARY</b>					
<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>2023 Approved Budget</b>		<b>2023 Revised Budget</b>		<b>2024 Proposed Budget</b>
Taxes	799,069		886,681		895,460
Licenses & Permits	14,225		26,965		25,000
Intergovernmental	11,382		-		12,043
Charges for Services	72,392		48,010		48,010
Fines and Forfeitures	76,800		76,800		78,000
Investment Income	1,000		1,000		2,500
Private Grants	-		-		-
Miscellaneous Revenue	3,000		3,000		3,000
Other Financing Sources	-		123,185		-
<b>TOTAL CURRENT REVENUE</b>	<b>977,868</b>		<b>1,165,641</b>		<b>1,064,013</b>
Transfers To DDA Bond	77,230		77,230		77,230
Transfer to Debt Service	-		-		34,337
Transfer from ARPA (General O&M)					233,152
From Fund Balance	46,786		34,414		69,865
To Fund Balance					-
Assigned Fund Balance	-		-		185,028
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>947,424</b>		<b>1,122,825</b>		<b>1,070,435</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
Dept 011 Administration			336,744		379,570
Dept 012 Court			103,823		126,154
Dept 013 Public Safety			407,009		368,927
Dept 014 Public Works			220,126		156,546
Dept 023 Recreation			55,123		39,238
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES</b>			<b>1,122,825</b>		<b>1,070,435</b>
<b>Over/Deficit</b>			-		-

**City Manager Thornton submits revised formal budget estimates of a total General Fund Budget of \$1,070,435 in revenues with offsetting expenditure estimation of \$1,070,435.** Previous estimate of \$1,057,070 in revenue and offsetting expenditure was presented on 11/14/2024. Explanation of change is provided within the document.

Total taxes are budgeted at \$8,779 more than the 2023 budget as amended (through 12/12/2023) going from \$886,681 to \$895,460 in 2024.

\$0 is the adjusted FY2023 General fund total due for Local Maintenance Improvements Grant funds due to LMIG being accounted for in the SPLOST Fund as related to the Oak Drive Project.

Revenue from General Fund Balance - A shown below, Unrestricted Reserves is currently estimated at \$69,865 and is proposed to balance general fund revenues and expenditures. **Transfer of remaining unassigned ARPA revenue is shown in the amount of \$233,152. This transfer is proposed to offset Police Department salaries and wages for the 2024 year. (Further information can be found below in the ARPA Fund 12 section of the document.) Of the \$233,152 minus the \$13,789 police payout and the \$34,337 debt services payment, \$185,028 is proposed as assigned fund balance to be committed to future capital, sustainability, and environmental related projects.**

<b>TOTAL CURRENT REVENUE</b>	<b>977,868</b>		<b>1,165,641</b>		<b>1,064,013</b>
Transfers To DDA Bond	77,230		77,230		77,230
Transfer to Debt Service	-		-		34,337
Transfer from ARPA (General O&M)					233,152
From Fund Balance	46,786		34,414		69,865
To Fund Balance					-
Assigned Fund Balance	-		-		185,028
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>947,424</b>		<b>1,122,825</b>		<b>1,070,435</b>

Initially an across the board increase for all current regular FT and PT employees (in the amount of 3.00%, and as applicable) was considered as a total COLA Expense for all departments. The City Manager position was not included in COLA scenario. Any change in employment scenario for the City Manager position is to be considered via contract amendment. Inclusion of COLA would have constituted an increase of General Fund Reserve allocation in the amount of \$10,244.56. **However, a decision , was made instead to reduce the liability for deferred compensation for vacation hours accrued in excess of the 240 hour cap established in 2023 and all excessive compensatory time hours accrued and remaining through 12/31/2023. The estimated liability is \$13,789 and is expensed in the Police Department 013.**

**POLICE DEPT 013**

Total overall department expenditures were estimated at \$355,562 (\$51,447 less than the FY2023 budget as amended of \$407,009). As of 12/12/2023 total overall department expenditures are estimated at \$368,927 (\$38,082 less than the FY2023 budget as amended).

**Personal Services/Benefits – Is increased from \$266,265 to \$297,029 due to the on-boarding of a PT Police Admin/Terminal Agency Coordinator (\$14,560) and to Council decision to reduce deferred compensation liability for vacation hours held in excess of the 240 cap established in 2023 and accrued compensatory comp time hours (13,789).**

<b>CAP/COMP WAGES</b>	<b>\$12,240</b>
<b>SSI</b>	<b>759</b>
<b>MEDICARE</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>RETIREMENT</b>	<b>612</b>
	<b>\$13,789</b>

**There is a 2% standardized base wage increase given to applicable Police personnel in consideration of industry and area market wages for similar jobs. This increase helps to aid in competitiveness.**

**ARPA FUND 12** Signed into law on March 11, 2021, The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA”) provided \$350 billion in additional funding for state and local governments. The local funding portion is approximately \$130 billion, equally divided between cities and counties. Localities received the funds in two tranches. The City has received both of its ARPA distributions in the amount of \$140,785.50 each (Total \$281,571). The standard allowance has been selected for the City's ARPA funds.

**\$48,418 was appropriated in FY2023 for the Inner Berm Bridges engineering and plan administration and the Financial Software Conversion project. The remaining \$233,153 is proposed for transfer to the general fund for FY2024 public safety salaries and benefits under the standard revenue replacement option. This proposal is made for the following reasons:**

A local government may choose to allocate CSLFRF (ARPA) funds to those projects and expenditures that will trigger the fewest Uniform Guidance compliance requirements, thereby limiting the administrative burden. For example, instead of purchasing new police vehicles, which would trigger UG procurement and property management standards, a local government may opt to fund personnel salaries. In doing so, the unit will have freed up general fund revenue that would have otherwise been used to pay for salaries. This additional general fund revenue could then be expended on the purchase new police vehicles, which would only trigger state/local law procurement and property disposal requirements.

- Local Governments are authorized to spend Federal grant funds to cover employee salaries and fringe benefits when certain conditions are met. Specifically, salary expenditures must be reasonable and fringe benefits are allowable only if a specific covered benefit is required by law or provided as part of an established policy. Allowable fringe benefits may include: covering leave during authorized absences (annual leave, family-related leave, sick leave, holidays, court leave, military leave, administrative leave); employer contributions or expenses for social security; employee life, health, unemployment, and worker’s compensation insurance; individual retirement account contributions, and similar benefits.

**Therefore, I propose that the Council elect to assign remaining ARPA dollars to fund FY2024 Police Departments salaries and benefits and to subsequently place restrictions on an equivalent amount of the funds (minus the FY2024 debt service payment) to be expended on such capital, sustainability, and environmental related projects as Council might deem appropriate. This course of action will also serve to ensure that all ARPA funds are appropriated by the required date of 12/31/2024.**

Please contact me if you should have any questions and or concerns regarding this recommendation,

CMThornton

\* <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Compliance-and-Reporting-Guidance.pdf>

**RESOLUTION NO. R-27-2023**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
ADOPTING THE PROPOSED 2024 BUDGETS**

WHEREAS, the Charter of the City of Pine Lake provides that the City Council by resolution shall adopt the final operating, budget for the ensuing fiscal year not later than December 27 of each year.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia that the budget of revenues and expenditures for the various funds of the City for the year 2024, a copy of which is attached to this resolution as Exhibit 1 – FY2024 Budgets Proposal, is hereby adopted. The aforesaid copy of the budget of revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year 2024, labeled Exhibit 1 – FY2024 Budgets Proposal, is incorporated by reference into this resolution and expressly made a part hereof.

Effective: January 1, 2024

Adopted: December 19, 2023

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Melanie Hammet, Mayor

ATTEST:

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ChaQuias M. Thornton, City Manager/Acting City Clerk

**RESOLUTION**  
**R-28-2023**

WHEREAS, a quorum of the City Council of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, entered into executive session on December 12, 2023 as allowed by O.C.G.A. §50-14-4 for the purpose of discussing personnel matters; and,

WHEREAS, at the close of discussion of each subject, the City Council of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, did vote to close the executive session and begin open session; and,

WHEREAS, the members present were: Mayor Hammet; Mayor pro tem Bordeaux; and, Council members Brantley, Castro, and Woods.

WHEREAS, the members voting for closure were: Mayor pro tem Bordeaux; and, Council members Brantley, Castro, and Woods.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, and it is hereby resolved, by the City Council of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia, that:

- 1) Each member of the City Council of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia present for the meeting does hereby confirm that to the best of her knowledge, the said subject matter of the executive sessions were devoted to matters within the relevant exception as set forth above; and,
- 2) That the actions taken in executive session and discussion of the same are hereby ratified; and,
- 3) That the City Council of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia does hereby authorize and direct the Mayor to execute an affidavit in order to comply with O.C.G.A. §50-14-4(b); and,
- 4) That the affidavit be included and filed with the official minutes of the meetings and shall be in a form which substantially complies with the requirements of the statute.

This 19<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2023.

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Melanie Hammet, Mayor

ATTEST:

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ChaQuias M. Thornton, Manager/Acting City Clerk