



STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT

FEBRUARY 2025



Introduction

I am pleased to debut the first installment of the Community Building Team’s (CBT’s) monthly Strategic Performance Report. The content of the standardized report will expand over time as team members make contributions or author sections intended to be comprehensive of the operations and issues affecting the City of Pine Lake.

Let’s first review the conceptual role of the Community Building Team (CBT).



The Community Building Team (CBT) consists of the City Manager, Department Leaders, and Supporting Staff who make up the administrative structure of the City of Pine Lake organization. Our role as executors and mine as chief executive officer is to facilitate the organization’s mission “to build quality community” while bridging available resources with the expectations of constituent groups served, namely, the community (our neighbors), the governing body (mayor and council), and employees (community builders).

As such, CBT's purpose rises above individual or siloed departmental responsibilities. Our approach must be strategic to meet the expectations of each constituency group in building the community most desired by stakeholders. On a monthly basis coinciding with the regular work session of the City Council, the Community Building Team will share strategic insight and performance including challenges and opportunities, as well as preview recommendations that may come before the Mayor and Council for action. Each report will be narrative based, storytelling in approach for easier comprehension by the public, composing timely topics that are concise in presentation, and showcasing images and illustrations, as may be helpful and fun.

Dear Pine Lake Neighbors, Who Am I?



I am Stanley Hawthorne and happy to be your neighbor and City Manager, effective January 1, 2025.

Borrowing from your welcoming message: "Pine Lake is where the stranger becomes a neighbor and the neighbor becomes a friend."

Now that's my kind of place and those are my choice of people.

I look forward to working with each of you, our neighbors, and staff to build the community that we collectively desire.

Our mission as a team is to build quality community.

My goal is to be an effective and caring public servant.

I understand the value of community engagement through listening, sharing and interacting earnestly with neighbors.

Through my many years of public service, I have had the privilege of serving diverse communities and now serving the wonderful micropolitan place of Pine Lake.

What a great honor it brings me to build community with enthusiasm, motivation, support, and guidance working hand in hand with each of you.

By nature, I am a quiet person much preferring to listen than talk.

However, when it comes to building greater community for Pine Lake, I assure you that passion will give me voice.

I am thrilled to be here in “Arts’ Natural Habitat.”

Thank you for the invitation to become a neighbor and a friend.

Very truly yours, Stanley

Role of City Manager

In 2024, Senate Bill 562 was passed by Georgia’s State Legislature amending the City of Pine Lake’s Charter to transfer powers from the Mayor to the City Manager and vest additional powers in the City Manager.



“The city manager shall be the chief administrative and executive officer of the city. The city manager shall report to the mayor and be responsible to the city council for the administration of all city affairs placed in the city manager’s charge by or under this charter. As the chief executive and administrative officer, the city manager shall:

- (1) Appoint and, when the city manager deems it necessary for the good of the city, suspend or remove any city employee and administrative officers the city manager appoints, except as otherwise provided by law or personnel ordinances adopted pursuant to this charter. The city manager shall authorize any administrative officer who is subject to the city manager’s direction and supervision to exercise these powers with respect to subordinates in that officer’s department, office, or agency;
- (2) Direct and supervise the administration and operation of all departments, offices, and agencies of the city, except as otherwise provided by this charter or by law;
- (3) Shall serve as the director of administration; or delegate such responsibility to any administrative officer under the city manager’s supervision;
- (4) Attend all city council meetings, except for closed meetings held for the purpose of deliberating on the appointment, discipline, or removal of the city manager or held for the purpose of

- receiving legal advice regarding the city manager, and have the right to take part in discussion, but the city manager may not vote;
- (5) Perform the general duties of treasurer, accountant, and fiscal officer;
 - (6) See that all laws, provisions of this charter, and acts of the city council, subject to enforcement by the city manager or by officers subject to the city manager's direction and supervision, are faithfully executed;
 - (7) Prepare and submit to the city council a recommended operating budget and recommended capital budget;
 - (8) Submit to the city council and make available to the public, at least annually, a statement covering the financial condition of the city and a report on the administrative activities of the city as of the end of each fiscal year;
 - (9) Make such other reports as the city council may require concerning the operations of the city departments, offices, and agencies subject to the city manager's direction and supervision;
 - (10) Keep the city council advised as to the financial condition and future needs of the city, and make such recommendations to the city council concerning the affairs of the city as the city manager deems desirable;
 - (11) Provide council with an organizational chart that identifies all directors and the departments of city government that have been legally activated;
 - (12) Be responsible for the administration of court service operations, maintenance of municipal court records and collection of fines as established by ordinance and state law; and
 - (13) Perform other such duties as are specified in this charter or as may be required by the city council."

Communications Between Council and Staff

Section 2.30 of the City Charter provides a clause on "Council's interference with administration. Except for the purpose of inquiries and investigations under Section 2.15 of this charter, the city council or its members shall deal with city officers and employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the city manager solely through the city manager, and neither the city council nor its members shall give orders to any such officer or employee, either publicly or privately."

In fulfilling our respective duties and responsibilities, as prescribed by the City's Charter, it is important how the city council and its individual members, chief executive and administrative officer (CEO/CAO), city officers and employees interact and communicate. I believe that an ineffective role of the City Manager would be serving as messenger between the members of the governing body and expert administrative officers. An overly restrictive communication scenario would likely consume much of my time adversely impacting my attention to other duties and responsibilities.



Nonetheless, we each have a responsibility of not confusing the distinguishing lines of authority and interaction between the governing body, chief executor, department heads, and all other employees of the organization. To provide practical clarification, I prescribe the following terms of communication between the members of the governing body and the members of the administrative team:

Communication from members of the governing body to staff is often organic based on questions, interests or circumstances as may relate to a staff member's responsibilities and expertise.

There is no reason to be uncomfortable with any natural occurrence of discussion between a staff member and a member of the governing body.

A members of the governing body may ask a question or request information of a staff member and the answer or information is not readily known or available. If the answer is known or the information is available, it should be provided promptly. If an answer to a question is not known or if information is not available, the staff member should answer, accordingly.

If a staff member is approached by an elected official for consultation or direction, the staff member should always listen respectfully and advise the City Manager, particularly if the request or discussion is questionable or makes one uncomfortable.

A staff member may ask any request be made in writing, preferably by email so that staff member can fully assess the request and copy the City Manager and others. Email affords all applicable parties an opportunity to not only memorialize questions and requests but to ensure proper inclusion, assessment, and response.

Staff is strongly discouraged from initiating communications of substance with select member(s) of the governing body. Substantive communications deemed worthy to communicate should be shared with all members of the governing body.

Consent Agenda



A suggestion is made to reincorporate a “consent agenda” as part of the City Council’s Regular Meeting Agenda. Historically, a consent agenda has been used for some meeting agendas.

For background and perspective, I offer the following research link: [Consent agenda: great tool for speedier meetings - Jurassic Parliament/consent-agenda-in-roberts-rules/](#)

Foreword

“One of the most useful tools for efficient meetings is a “consent agenda.” This is a single item of business on a regular agenda that includes several items bundled together. The items cannot be discussed or debated. They are approved with a single vote.

Removing an item from the consent agenda

When the board reaches that point in the meeting agenda, the chair first asks if anyone wants to remove any item from the consent agenda. If a member requests, the chair immediately removes the item from the consent agenda. It will be considered at its proper place in the usual order of business. Board members don’t need to give a reason for requesting that an item be removed from the consent agenda.

Voting on the consent agenda

The chair then takes a single vote on the remaining package of items, and the board votes to approve them *en bloc* (all at once, as a batch). The key point is that if anybody wants to comment about or discuss any item, in any way whatsoever, it is immediately removed and placed on the regular agenda.

If you would like to use this method, you should adopt a special rule of order (read how to do this in our article [What are special rules of order in Robert’s Rules](#)) or include the consent agenda in your rules of procedure or standing rules.

2024 and 2025 Budget Schedules

As the City’s fiscal year (FY) coincides with the calendar year, there are future review or work sessions followed by formal actions of the City Council required for the Fiscal Year 2024 Adopted Budget that ended December 31, 2024 as well as for the Fiscal Year 2025 Adopted Budget that ends on December 31, 2025.

As staff completes its review over the next several weeks of revenue and expenditure reconciliations for recommendation to ensure meeting balanced budget requirements, we recommend in successive order that the FY 2024 Budget review and reconciliation be followed by the FY 2025 Budget review and adjustments beginning at the City Council Work Session in March 2025. Multiple sessions may be required for review and formal action.



Position Classification and Pay Plans

Section 3.16 of the City Charter provides “The city manager shall be responsible for the preparation of a position classification and pay plan which shall be submitted to the city council for approval.”



From my continuing education and assessment of organizational requirements, the status of employee pay, and classification is an urgent priority. My early assessment is that we have a small but mighty and dedicated workforce who in general have taken on multiple assignments as part of their regular duties to keep the City minimally operationalized. My concerns are exacerbated by potential internal and external market equity issues that will need to be scientifically assessed with swift redress of findings, if any.



As we consider budget adjustments necessary for the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget noted above for future scheduling purpose, you should expect a recommendation for the fulfillment of Charter Section 3.16. From my preliminary research, a comprehensive update of the City's Classification and Pay Plans are past due.

Very truly yours,

Stanley D Hawthorne

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