

Pine Lake Budget Goes Up Slightly; Tax Rate Still at 15-Mill Cap

BYLINE: GUEVARA, CASTRO LILLIAN DeKalb

DATE: January 5, 1989

PUBLICATION: The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution

EDITION: The Atlanta Journal Constitution

SECTION: EXTRA

PAGE: A/7

Lillian **Guevara-Castro** Staff Writer

Pine Lake city officials have agreed to spend \$331,000 in 1989 to manage the city of less than 1,000 residents. The 1989 budget calls for the small town to spend about \$100,000 more than it did to run the city in 1988. The budget calls for the city's 15-mill tax to remain steady for the third year in a row, but, according to **Pine Lake** Mayor Myra Singer, the city's tax rate may be adjusted when **Pine Lake** receives the DeKalb County tax digest in July. "Fifteen mills is the maximum. According to what they evaluate our property at we can roll the tax rate back. I don't know if we will, but this leaves the door open [for a tax reduction] if we see we don't need the money," said Mayor Singer, whose term ends Dec. 15.

Neil Copeland will be sworn in as mayor at the Jan. 3 meeting. A 15-mill tax represents a \$540 tax bill for the owner of a \$100,000 home in **Pine Lake**, according to **Pine Lake** City Manager Judy Griswell. Correcting a drainage problem on the city's 12-acre lake, completing the construction of an access for the disabled to City Hall and buying a computer for the city's sole police car are some of the expenditures planned for 1989. The city plans to spend \$114,000 to run its four-man police force in 1989 - which includes about \$52,000 in salaries for the two full-time and two part-time police officers. The city also plans to equip its single police car with a 480 Data Terminal computer at a cost of \$6,021. The city's sanitation department plans to operate on \$86,000 in 1989 - \$31,600 of which will go for salaries for the city's two sanitation employees who serve as the city's general maintenance crew.

The City Council recently reduced the frequency of garbage pickup rather than increase residents' sanitation fees when the city renewed its contract with BFI Sanitation Systems. According to Ms. Griswell, the sanitation company wanted to double the city's fees from \$60 a year to \$126 a year for twice-a-week garbage service. Beginning Jan. 4, **Pine Lake** curbside garbage service will be offered once a week for \$60 a year. Earlier this year, the City Council approved a sanitation tax exemption for homeowners 65 or older. According to Ms. Griswell, about 50 **Pine Lake** residents qualify for this exemption. Other city expenditures include \$17,000 for the streets and bridges department chaired by Councilman Richard Newman. According to Councilman Richard Newman, the city plans to begin work on a culvert project which will alleviate flooding along Snapfinger Creek. The project will be funded with a combination of city, county and state monies, said Councilman Newman.

The city has also submitted for approval a request to the county LARP program to resurface several of the city's streets including Clubhouse Drive, Spruce Drive and Dogwood Road. The public buildings department, chaired by Councilman Philip Piper, has been allocated \$19,000 in the 1989 budget. Councilor Charlotte Neil, who chairs the city's park department, said that the

\$15,000 allocated for parks in the 1989 budget would be used to maintain the lake and its surrounding park area. The last three paragraphs did not appear in the final edition.
Photo: Mug of Myra Singer