



AGENDA
COUNCIL MEETING
4040 S. BERKELEY LAKE RD.
BERKELEY LAKE, GEORGIA 30096
NOVEMBER 20, 2025

7:00 PM Work Session
8:00 PM Formal Session

Citizens are encouraged to offer comments on issues of concern as agenda items are reached and at the end of the meeting for all other issues. Please limit citizen comments to 2 minutes. Longer citizen comments are welcome in writing and will be added to the official record of this meeting.

WORK SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARING

- a) 2026 Proposed Budget

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Minutes of October 16, 2025, Council Meeting
- b) Minutes of October 16, 2025, Council Work Session
- c) Financial Statements of September 2025 – Unaudited

OLD BUSINESS

- a) 2026 Proposed Budget

NEW BUSINESS

- a) O-25-260, Amendment to Section 46-2, Discharge of Weapons
- b) R-25-06, Resolution Certifying 2025 Election Results

EXECUTIVE SESSION *(if needed)*

CITIZEN COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Requests for reasonable accommodations required by individuals to fully participate in any open meeting, program, or activity of the City of Berkeley Lake government should be made at least five days prior to the event by contacting the ADA Coordinator at 770-368-9484.



**SPECIAL CALLED COUNCIL MEETING
4040 SOUTH BERKELEY LAKE ROAD
BERKELEY LAKE, GEORGIA 30096
DRAFT MINUTES
OCTOBER 16, 2025**

ATTENDANCE

Mayor: Lois Salter

Council Members: Barbara Geier, Scott Lee, Chip McDaniel, and Resa Mechling

City Officials: Leigh Threadgill - City Administrator, Dick Carothers – City Attorney

Members of the Public: 27

Members of the Press: 0

CALL TO ORDER

Salter called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM. A quorum of council members was in attendance.

AGENDA

Salter solicited a motion regarding the agenda.

Mechling made a motion to accept the agenda as submitted. Spitler seconded the motion. All council members were in favor and the motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARING

Salter noted that there were no public hearings.

CONSENT AGENDA

Salter noted the following as items on the consent agenda and solicited a motion:

- a) Minutes of August 18 ,2025, Council Meeting
- b) Minutes of August 18, 2025, Council Work Session
- c) Financial Statements of July 2025 – Unaudited
- d) Financial Statements of August 2025 - Unaudited

Lee made a motion to approve all items on the consent agenda. McDaniel seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Salter noted that there was no old business tonight.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Greenspace Monitoring Report

Tonight, we have members of the Georgia Piedmont Land Trust board, Carol Hassell and Dale Higdon, who will speak to us about their 22 years of annual monitoring visits to the Berkeley Lake green space.

In 1998 Carol co-founded the Georgia Piedmont Land Trust, a qualified and nationally accredited land conservation organization. For the past 27-plus years, she has worked to further its mission: the preservation of open and green space in the northern portion of Georgia; protection of water quality in area streams and rivers; habitat; working land; historical and archeological features; and education about the values of and tools for land conservation. She presently serves as Executive Director.

Previously, as Vice President of Administration for the Georgia Wildlife Federation, she had responsibility for human resources and organizational administration, and for creation of the Mill Creek Nature Center at the Mall of Georgia. Earlier experience included serving as Executive Director of the Georgia Environmental Council, an umbrella organization for environmental advocacy and education groups across the state.

Carol is a Gwinnett County Master Gardener; and has actively supported and fostered land conservation and green space in various community and nonprofit activities.

She served a term on City of Suwanee City Council; is a Leadership Gwinnett graduate and a member of the charter class of the Institute for Georgia Environmental Leadership.

Dale has been on the GPLT board since 1998 and currently serves as board secretary. He retired from the Georgia Forestry Commission in 2008 after a 32-year career as a forester working in forest management and urban forestry in the Atlanta metro area. Dale received a BS in Forest Resources from the University of Georgia in 1974 and was a Georgia Registered Forester until 2019. Berkeley Lake fell in his service area and he was always a good friend and resource to our city. Much of his work with the state forestry agency involved assisting private landowners with forest management advice and providing technical assistance to urban homeowners with tree diagnosis, especially insect and disease problems. His background in timber evaluation and knowledge of the natural resources in Georgia, especially the Piedmont region provided good experience for work in conservation preservation.

Dale is a member of the Society of American Foresters, Georgia Urban Forest Council, Georgia Arborist Association, Georgia Wildlife Federation and American Chestnut Foundation. He has received the Outstanding Individual Award from the Georgia Urban Forest Council and the Kim Coder award from the Georgia Arborist Association.

Salter noted they are both well suited with their history to advise about the greenspace. She further noted that while the written report had been provided in advance, tonight there will be a slide-show of photographs.

Carol Hassell presented a slideshow of photographs taken of the greenspace at various points in history depicting the greenspace through the years. She acknowledged that she and Dale have walked this property for many, many years.

She explained the evolution of the greenspace in terms of the mix of species at various points in time that depict a healthy mature forest.

Shade tolerant ground species are growing on the forest floor. They have begun to replace the species that were there when it was more open and had some sun. There is nothing wrong with this, it is the evidence of a woodland from disruption to early succession to now more canopy. Ground level shade increases over time, and the species shift to those that can tolerate considerable shade. This is forest succession and what is expected of a healthy woodland. The lack of a lot of undergrowth is very typical due to the shade cover.

Dale Higdon stated he has been involved here since the early 80's and has been in the greenspace every year since 1997 when the city acquired the property. There have been two forest stewardship plans on the property. Those plans incorporate forestry, wildlife and soil conversation.

The forest provides benefits because it has been preserved. Higdon noted that he agrees with Hassell, this is a healthy forest. There are always changes going on, but this is a valuable resource as a preserved greenspace.

Geier asked Hassell if she was involved in the creation of the Berkeley Lake conservation easement. Hassell said she was. Geier asked about the process for the creation of the easement. Hassell explained the starting point for the document is a template that is standard in the world of land conservation. There are three key areas in the template that are important to any piece of property. The first is a statement of the conservation purposes. The reason land can be protected in this manner is that the landowners articulate what makes the property valuable from a conservation perspective. The second is a list of prohibited uses, things that should not happen to the property henceforth if the property is to be protected for its conservation value. Generally, they include development rights that typically go with property that are invasive or destructive. The third is the list of retained rights that land owner can continue to enjoy and exercise as long as they don't conflict with the purpose of the easement.

Geier asked if the easement can be amended and, if so, the process for doing so. Hassell said that basically it cannot. There is a policy that stipulates that we do not amend easements except under really rare circumstances. We will not consider amending an easement if it would result in diminution of the conservation values. If it's something that would take the protection of the conservation values backward, we will not do that.

McDaniel asked about the dead fall and whether it is normal. Higdon responded that it is normal. Natural mortality is normal, and dead trees in the greenspace are older hardwoods and no cause for concern.

b) Hunting Law Review Report

Salter acknowledged Carothers as a municipal law expert and asked him to deliver the report that was requested by the council in August related to a deep dive regarding the possibility of hunting in the city. This is a deep dive that has layers of laws – municipal, county, state and perhaps federal laws.

Carothers stated that he has been here for some time. In August of 1992 he was appointed City Attorney of Berkeley Lake. Early on in his appointment, there was a zoning lawsuit at one of the current commercial developments. As a result of that, he had the chance to walk the greenspace. He had never heard the word greenspace until we started using it in Berkeley Lake. He relayed the history of the acquisition of the greenspace and the role of Dr. Cohen who pushed to acquire it. It is a great asset.

The deer live in it as well as everywhere else in Berkeley Lake. The Mayor mentioned I have done a deep dive into this subject. When I did, I discovered the water is shallow on this topic. There is not a lot of law on this topic. To ask the question what can be done about deer overpopulation, it will be reducing the numbers of deer, which gets into hunting. One of the things that makes it so hard for us to decide how to handle deer overpopulation is that this is the state's domain. One of the code sections, reads "the ownership of, jurisdiction over, and control of all wildlife, as defined in this title, are declared to be in the State of Georgia, in its sovereign capacity, to be controlled, regulated and disposed of in accordance with this title...all wildlife of the State of Georgia is declared to be within the custody of the Department for purposes of the management and regulation in accordance with this title". The Official Code of Georgia goes on to say "Except as otherwise provided by general law, the power and duty to promulgate rules and regulations relating to hunting, trapping and fishing rests solely with the Board of Natural Resources. No political subdivision of the State may regulate hunting, trapping, or fishing by local ordinance...nothing contained in this Code section shall prohibit municipalities or counties, by ordinance, resolution, or other enactment, from reasonably limiting or prohibiting the discharge of firearms within the boundaries of the political subdivision for purposes of public safety."

We all know the problems that deer create. If it's created by overpopulation, what can we do about overpopulation? Basically, that is regulated hunting. Hunting isn't mentioned in local

ordinances, but discharge of weapons, including bows, is mentioned. Discharge of firearms is weapons that shoot – rifles and pistols.

Contrary to popular belief, county and municipal governing units aren't authorized to regulate hunting, that specific authority to regulate hunting is with the DNR Board. Local ordinances that regulate hunting include language so broad as to prohibit the lawful discharge of firearms that deliberately prohibit hunting or extend beyond firearms to include archery equipment are contrary to the authority provided under state law. You can limit use of firearms, but you can't include bows in firearms.

Jurisdictions have tried to figure out what to do. We want to have bow hunting that has to comply with state requirements, and it can only be on the owner's property or an invitee of the owner. This will help diminish the population and allows sport for people who enjoy that and allows the use of the property. Jurisdictions have tried to enact various regulations, but a lot of them don't have any. What you find is, for instance, City of Atlanta says no bow hunting unless in an enclosed archery facility. This ordinance has never been challenged before, so it is still valid and still on the books. It's clear that the DNR doesn't think cities get to do that.

Berkeley Lake's ordinance limits discharging a weapon including a bow or crossbow within 300 yards of a street or house or anything, which left no eligible properties. I'm not sure that we can do that, and I'll be recommending that council look at this (code) to make some changes, but it's still valid right now.

Therefore, the foundational question is whether the City can prohibit discharge of bows and arrows, including crossbows, for the purposes of public safety. Crossbows will shoot forever and go through quarter-inch plywood. You need to be at least 300 yards away.

City of Roswell has a permit system with a 2-page ordinance (that doesn't mention the word hunting). You have to get a permit to discharge a bow and arrow in Roswell unless in a facility (like mentioned in Atlanta's ordinance). You have to have a backstop to keep the arrow from leaving the property. It's somewhat elaborate. There's a hole in it that is intended to allow for hunting.

Deer are moving and the population is growing with increased traffic accidents, or deer are eating plants in yards and in the greenspace, whether that's a significant problem or not, all of a sudden there is a real problem. Culling programs that may look at addressing overpopulation. The only place in the city for that is probably the greenspace, which doesn't appear to be available. The only relief is for individual property owners, subject to hunting laws, to hunt by bow and arrow.

The Peachtree Corners ordinance on this topic is as follows: "It shall be unlawful to discharge any firearm within the City of Peachtree Corners. This section shall not be construed to prohibit any officer of the law from discharging a firearm in the performance of his/her duty, or to prohibit any citizen from discharging a weapon when lawfully defending person or property

(including without limitation domesticated pets) or destroying a dangerous wild animal. This section shall not apply to bb guns or air pellet rifles or authorized indoor shooting ranges. It shall be unlawful to discharge any bow or crossbow within the City of Peachtree Corners. This section shall not apply to persons discharging a bow or crossbow on that person's own property or with written permission of the owner(s) of any property where such discharge of any bow or crossbow will occur. Discharging any bow or crossbow upon the property of another, or causing an arrow or bolt to cross the property line of another, without first obtaining written permission of such property owner(s) shall be considered a violation of this section."

You can't just fire them wherever you want to, but it allows you to discharge on your own property, give permission to an invitee, or discharge on another's property as an invitee with the property owner's written permission. Therefore, you can hunt. You can do your part in reducing overpopulation and use your property in a way that is largely permitted by state law. This (Peachtree Corners) ordinance has been in place and there haven't been any legal issues with it.

There may be a middle ground to allow some hunting, still keeping it safe and in compliance with hunting regulations. This ordinance should pass muster. As we look at this issue, you have no bow hunting, permit systems, 300-yard separations, none have been termed wrong. The Peachtree Corners ordinance may be the easiest to defend, but that may not be the point of this discussion.

In the culling, you can cull during non-hunting season because it's a public safety thing. If you haven't seen the figure, there are about 160,000 deer strikes on cars in Georgia. There is data on the overpopulation. But the easement on the greenspace won't allow it. They couldn't agree to it even if they wanted to. It puts it on individual property owners to take action during hunting season. Anything that we do will require an amendment to the existing ordinance. Not only can we not regulate hunting, but we can't change the rules and regulations relative to hunting that are promulgated by the state. The Georgia codes regulates things like hunting hours, hunting while under the influence, legal weapons, unlawful to hunt on or discharge a weapon on or across a public road. The city can't even enforce that, that's for the game warden. Game warden Brock Hoyt was quoted as saying if a wounded deer wanders on another property, the hunter can't go onto that land without the owner's permission. These are meant to protect the rights of the property owner.

Spitler reminded the audience of proper protocol for speaking at a city council meeting.

Geier asked about hunting regulated by cities and if shooting a bow on your property has to fall within the archery hunting season, which seems to be very short and limits on that hunting. Is culling an exception to all of these rules? Carothers stated that it is and has to be a program with the DNR.

Geier clarified that even owners shooting at deer on their property with archery equipment have to comply with archery season. There was discussion about archery season.

Spitler stated she is concerned about safety of citizens. Even if bowhunting on your own property, do you need to be certified, whether you have training or not? Carothers says you can bow hunt with a license for whatever is in season on your own property. Spitler asked how the city would police this. Carothers stated that policing would be up to the game warden.

Salter opened it up to the citizens with a two-minute limit.

Skip Dahlstrom, 4362 River District Way, commented on bow season which goes through the end of rifle season into mid-January. Bow hunting opens earlier than rifle season and runs through rifle season. If you shoot a deer across a road with a bow or gun, that's illegal. As far as a deer running onto someone else's property, you have to get permission to retrieve the deer. You could end up with a dead animal in your yard, which would not be good, but it is the way it goes. The DNR is responsible for all of this if you shoot a deer on someone else's property then that is poaching, and that's illegal.

Laura Lehman, 106 Little Ridge Road, noted her property is heavily wooded with lots of deer traffic. She further explained that she is a dog owner and has lived here for ten years and been an English mastiff owner for twenty years. The dogs look similar to deer at a brief glance and her property is underground. Who will be hunting? If you have a hunting license in Georgia, you can come and hunt deer. My property is unique and maybe my next-door neighbor gave permission, I don't know how you hunt, I don't know your skill set, but I'm not comfortable with it. I don't think it's safe. I don't think changing this ordinance haphazardly without a whole lot more research and input from citizens is a good idea. It is a public safety risk. I agree we have a major deer problem. But we have to do a lot of serious thinking. If a deer were wounded or killed, who will come take care of that on my property, if I didn't give written consent. Who's going to come get that carcass because I'm not paying for it. If someone accidentally kills one of my animals, how will that be handled. This needs a lot more thought.

Al Work, 4204 Dogwood Bend Park, stated the explosion of the deer population is going to get worse and worse. It's untenable, there's no ideal solution to this problem, but something needs to be done. I've been hunting for 25 years, and in my experience in hunting in Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina I've seen a group of 10 deer maybe twice. I had 20 deer behind my house sometimes last winter. I regularly see 10-12 deer. I've seen six fawns in my general vicinity in the neighborhood this year. The population is exploding. There is no ideal solution, but some kind of action is needed.

John Thaveline, 10 Lakeshore Drive, as a long-time hunter for at least 50 years wanted to address an earlier comment from the lady who spoke just before. A non-hunter doesn't necessarily understand the rigorous thinking behind a serious hunter. To even shoot at anything without seeing its head, I think that hunter should lose his license because that's very irresponsible. Serious hunters make sure they have a backstop. You don't fire a rifle or an arrow without knowing you have a backstop. Dog owners don't need to be concerned about this. There are a number of serious hunters in this city who act according to very strict behaviors. I

understand the potential concern, but as a hunter, and potential deer culler, I can assure you that that is not likely to ever happen.

Barry Sinnock, 3910 Berkeley View Dr., acknowledged he is no expert, he is not a biologist or forester and indicated he has a lot of questions. The last six months, this has been a very passionate topic on both sides. Based on everything that we've heard tonight, I would implore the city council to consider a formal deer management committee to dig into this even deeper so we can come up with some sort of formal plan. Something needs to be done. It's not just Berkeley Lake, it's not just the greenspace, it's everywhere, it's Peachtree Corners and Johns Creek, it's all over. I would ask the council to consider some sort of formal deer management committee.

Karen Geiger, 630 Lakeshore Drive, noted she had a question for the forester and GPLT president and asked if that was allowed. Salter responded that this was for comment. Geiger indicated that she needed more information about how they thought the greenspace was doing. Salter responded that she thought that had already been answered. Geiger said that they had not really answered and clarified that her question was what would the forest look like with an overpopulation of deer. If the forest had an overpopulation of deer, how would we know that? What would we be looking for? If the review didn't have anything to do with whether the deer are damaging the greenspace, should we not be taking that into consideration.

John Homonek, 566 Lakeshore Drive, stated that he hit a deer back in January on Peachtree Industrial and we do have an overpopulation problem and they're coming into people's yards and things. We recently put up a 5-foot fence all around. They are jumping it, but there is less deer traffic. I'm curious, and this may be more of a question than a comment, is it illegal to feed deer in Berkeley Lake? Salter responded that it is. Homonek stated that he knows people do that. Could HOA property be used for culling as the HOA would be the property owner?

Steve Seitz, 34 Lakeshore Drive, acknowledged being on the deer committee and helping out in gathering information and noted they did an ad hoc survey earlier in the year that was shared with a lot of people. I believe it should have been shared with the city council. This is a very difficult situation and there's not one realistic answer based on the information we got from Ben McCullar when we did the meeting at Pinckneyville. One good thing is that Peachtree Corners is taking the steps to try to evaluate and understand the population. We should try to be doing the same thing here at the appropriate time. The ad hoc committee that Barry alluded to that we hope the council will support putting something more formal together is to go ahead and gather information, gather data, put together FAQs and try to educate everybody on all the different issues so that we're all on the same level. The volunteers willing to support and work in conjunction with the city would be a good thing for the betterment of the community and try to find a final solution.

Rex Spitler, 3825 Berkeley View Dr., complimented the city and property homeowners for having an environment that is so fruitful and productive and attractive to wildlife. We are

obviously taking very good care of our property and being good stewards of the earth. I think we all recognize that there is a lot of concern about deer. It is a larger problem inside the state of Georgia. As such, a small city trying to do something in isolation would have limited results. Deer are migratory. They seek out those garden spots. Berkeley Lake being one of those garden spots. If we eliminate deer one season, the next season we'll have more deer because the other surrounding locales are not doing anything about the deer. I don't know if a study needs to be done to determine the migratory range of deer and developing a plan to deal with all the municipalities in that migratory range for us to have any real effect on dealing with a long term issue with the deer. Unless we do that, we're throwing a pebble into a pond. Secondly, be careful about making generalization comments. I understand the comment about 160,000 deer being killed via traffic accidents in Georgia. We need to know how many are dealing with us here in this local area to be of a concern to us as opposed to being a rural area out in a remote county.

Mechling asked Carothers whether subdivision covenants can overrule the hunting rules of the state. If we had neighborhoods who didn't want to allow bow hunting, they could still restrict it. Carothers confirmed that and many covenants do so provide.

c) 2026 Proposed Budget

Threadgill: O-25-259 is the proposed budget for 2026. This measure as presented anticipates no increase in the real property tax millage rate for 2026 over the rollback rate for 2025 and is presented for first read consideration after having been reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee. Staff requests that you schedule a public hearing to receive citizen comments to be held on November 20th.

Salter: You have all received a copy of the budget that is being proposed and had time I'm sure to study it. I just would like to add that the budget was also carefully studied by our citizen finance committee a week or so ago when they met with me, our city administrator, and city treasurer. The committee members had no objections to this budget. During that meeting, we talked about the reserves which have accrued slowly over years as a result of the pattern we have had of moving any money left over in a budget line to reserves rather than finding something else to spend it on. I know from talking with officials of other municipalities that the latter is sometimes, perhaps often what happens elsewhere. Our management of money has been **extremely** conservative relative to other cities and I would be happy to discuss that more in detail with you at some point if you would like, but **no comparisons with other cities are relevant as I'm sure you know, unless that city also has the total responsibility for a high hazard dam.** When our dam was damaged by a storm in Sept. 2009, it took a little over \$5 million to fix it. Fortunately, after much time and effort, we were able at that time to obtain partial support for the repair from FEMA and GEMA. I do not believe we can count on that in the future based on multiple conversations being had now at the federal level about eliminating FEMA, and I don't believe we can expect that we will not continue to have very strong storms in the future. Climatologists are predicting that they will get worse.

Fortunately, our reserves are now approaching the former \$5 million repair bill. Not quite there yet, and of course future costs will have risen, but the financial management that has gone into this accrual over time is a real achievement. **However**, there are other concerns that must also be factored into any consideration of reserves. The finance committee discussed other risks like cyber crime, as one example. The city of Atlanta has had to pay large amounts in ransom for their data twice recently in order for the city to continue to function. There are lawsuits and all kinds of unexpected eventualities. I told our city treasurer just after that meeting, that with his support and that of our city council, I would like to ask our citizen finance committee to do a brief, high-level study of what risks to the city should be considered in a reasonable responsible preparation.

I want **also** to point out that our citizens in general are now exploring the possibility of using some of our reserves to affect developments in our commercial and industrial areas, thus protecting the rest of our city. The process of making sure that all of our citizens have a chance for input into those very important decisions will take time. What they decide, may take money.

Ultimately, how all this develops and how all of our money is spent will be decided by our City Council, so I bring before you tonight my suggestion to consult our finance committee about risks and bring that back to you for your consideration, and ultimately for your decision.

There is one other factor related to budgets that I want to share here. Council members will remember receiving a report from me in July about personnel issues. I'd like to read some of that into the record here so that our citizens are also aware.

"I do not usually record things for you that I learn at Mayor meetings, but I thought this was important enough to write up my notes and share it. This is taken from a meeting with Greg Wilson of the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Significant points were as follows: 85% of surveyed Georgia cities say it is very hard for them to attract and maintain staff. The main reason given for staff leaving is compensation. The situation is expected to get worse because in Georgia the average municipal employee age is in the 50s, which is higher than the national average age. Aside from pay being the top challenge, very few cities have flex work options. The ones that do have been pleased. 30% allow flex hours and 10% allow telework.

It was emphasized that cities need a succession plan. Small cities especially have no "bench" and therefore losing a valued employee can be devastating. There is no appropriate candidate to promote from within, and it is very hard to find competent municipal employees from outside. The Georgia Municipal Association having been made aware of these concerns did a needs assessment and has created a workforce development council, but it is in the early stages. Cities are advised to look at their whole package of compensation, including benefits and to consider student internships. The parting emphasis was, "This is gonna get worse because of demographics that are already clear to people who are paying attention."

I share this with you tonight because our Berkeley Lake citizens are unusually good at paying attention. Citizenship has its own responsibilities, and I will continue to try to support you in fulfilling those, to the benefit of the city that we all love.”

Salter introduced John Pendleton, the City Treasurer, for a brief comment.

John Pendleton, 385 Lakeshore Drive, thanked Salter for the opportunity to be treasurer and commended her for forming the citizen finance committee, because it is not a requirement to do that. He also commended her for listening to the finance committee’s advice. There were two recommendations, one is that we do need to think about succession planning and two we need to identify the purpose of our reserves which have been growing. At that point you said “ok, smart guy, help me out with that”. After a cursory review, it seems there are three buckets for reserves. The money you need to manage day to day cash a couple to three months back, and that’s important, we all need that, right. And then there’s the rainy-day fund, which literally we’ve had a rainy day here, so we know what that can mean. And then there’s investments, development fund, that kind of thing. The middle one is what we’ll focus on. Step number one is to do a risk analysis. I don’t think we’ll come out to a point estimate for what we should have, but I do think we can give you a range of what the risks are. Leigh and Tom Rozier before her did some work with the University of Georgia to start this process, and it’s not just the dam, and it’s not just cybercrime. It’s the spillway and a million other things that if we get a foot of rain like they did in North Carolina, we could have a big problem and its things we don’t imagine. The finance committee looks forward to doing that and will do it as expeditiously as possible.

Salter thanked Pendleton and asked council if they support tasking the treasurer and finance committee to do a risk analysis for our reserves. In the meantime, we’ll continue the very careful management of our money that has allowed us to accrue what we have thus far. Historically, we thought about the dam, but there are other risks that are significant. In my view, it would be irresponsible not to consider all the risks.

There was consensus among the council to ask the finance committee to look into this.

Spitler noted that she one hundred percent agrees because we cannot assume that we will continue to have SPLOST. We’ve been lucky that the county citizens have constantly voted for each new SPLOST. But I think every time, I think it becomes a little harder and harder to get that vote. And then there’s also state and federal money that we’ve gotten once in a while to do infrastructure type of work. I don’t think people really understand how very expensive infrastructure is to repair and maintain much less replace. It’s really important to get an updated reserve study.

Spitler made a motion to place O-25-259, an ordinance to establish the budget for the year 2026, to repeal conflicting ordinances, to provide for an effective date and for other purposes, on first read and to schedule a public hearing on the matter for Thursday, November 20th at 8:00 PM. Geier seconded the motion. All council members were in favor and the motion passed.

d) Mauldin & Jenkins Proposal – 2025 Audit

Threadgill: Jimmy Whitaker, the auditor who performed the last several audits for the city, has retired. Before you is a proposal from Mauldin & Jenkins for preparation of the city's 2025 audit at a cost of \$17,500.

McDaniel made a motion to accept the Mauldin & Jenkins proposal for the 2025 audit. Mechling seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

e) Change Order One – 2025 CIPP Stormwater Project

Threadgill: The change order before you is for work to repair a catch basin in Berkeley Walk. It increases this year's drainage improvement project cost by \$2,500 for a total project cost of \$302,316.00. The cost of the change order is within the \$29,982 contingency originally approved for the project.

Geier made a motion to approve the 2025 CIPP Stormwater Project Change Order 1 in the amount of \$2,500. Lee seconded the motion. All council members were in favor and the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Spitler moved to adjourn. McDaniel seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Salter adjourned the meeting at 9:32 PM.

Submitted by:

Leigh Threadgill, City Clerk



**COUNCIL WORK SESSION
4040 SOUTH BERKELEY LAKE ROAD
BERKELEY LAKE, GEORGIA 30096
DRAFT MINUTES
OCTOBER 16, 2025**

ATTENDANCE

Mayor: Lois Salter

Council Members: Barbara Geier, Scott Lee, Chip McDaniel, Resa Mechling and Rebecca Spitler

City Officials: Leigh Threadgill - City Administrator, Dick Carothers - City Attorney

Members of the Public: 7

Members of the Press: 0

WORK SESSION

Salter reviewed the agenda with the council and solicited questions regarding the items for consideration.

There was discussion regarding the December meeting and a decision to reschedule the regularly scheduled meeting to Thursday, December 11, 2025.

The work session was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Leigh Threadgill, City Clerk

City of Berkeley Lake

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - September, 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Income				
100 100 General	1,055,370.55	1,272,301.00	-216,930.45	82.95 %
320 320 SPLOST Income	388,052.63	1,895,652.00	-1,507,599.37	20.47 %
Total Income	\$1,443,423.18	\$3,167,953.00	\$ -1,724,529.82	45.56 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$1,443,423.18	\$3,167,953.00	\$ -1,724,529.82	45.56 %
Expenses				
1 Gen Govt	357,966.01	604,943.00	-246,976.99	59.17 %
2 Judicial	3,189.70	9,439.00	-6,249.30	33.79 %
230 ARP Act Expenses 230		0.00	0.00	
3 Public Safety	108,651.60	171,968.00	-63,316.40	63.18 %
4 Public Works	169,894.16	170,240.00	-345.84	99.80 %
6 Culture and Recreation	9,740.39	21,990.00	-12,249.61	44.29 %
7 Housing and Development	85,714.75	238,578.00	-152,863.25	35.93 %
9000.61.1100 Xfer Out - Reserve Fund		55,142.00	-55,142.00	
SPLOST Expenses	533,374.28	1,895,653.00	-1,362,278.72	28.14 %
Total Expenses	\$1,268,530.89	\$3,167,953.00	\$ -1,899,422.11	40.04 %
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$174,892.29	\$0.00	\$174,892.29	0.00%
NET INCOME	\$174,892.29	\$0.00	\$174,892.29	0.00%

City of Berkeley Lake

Income & Expense

September 2025

	TOTAL
Income	
100 100 General	56,045.16
320 320 SPLOST Income	45,499.85
Total Income	\$101,545.01
GROSS PROFIT	\$101,545.01
Expenses	
1 Gen Govt	38,919.59
2 Judicial	235.00
3 Public Safety	12,171.59
4 Public Works	7,846.52
6 Culture and Recreation	583.25
7 Housing and Development	12,379.80
SPLOST Expenses	241,319.75
Total Expenses	\$313,455.50
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ -211,910.49
NET INCOME	\$ -211,910.49

City of Berkeley Lake

Balance Sheet

As of September 30, 2025

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Debt Service Fund	0.00
General Fund	4,714,891.79
SPLOST Fund	1,445,703.03
Suspense 1.11.1000	0.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$6,160,594.82
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Rec 1.11.1900.1	23,766.57
Total Accounts Receivable	\$23,766.57
Other Current Assets	
1.11.27 Grant Receivable	0.00
Accounts Rec - SPLOST 1.11.2000	86,909.64
AccountsRec-OtherTax1.11.1900.2	0.00
Franchise Tax Rec 1.11.1550	108,000.00
Interest Receivable 1.11.1400	0.00
Prepaid Expense 1.11.3600	1,504.99
Prepaid items 1.11.3800	4,212.00
Taxes Receivable 1.11.1600	406,978.03
Undeposited Funds 1.11.1114	350.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$607,954.66
Total Current Assets	\$6,792,316.05
Fixed Assets	
Building & Improvements 1.11.7400	1,770,036.08
Computer Equipment 1.11.6700	48,172.61
Furniture & Fixtures 8.11.7700	71,493.47
Land 8.11.7100	9,392,320.74
Machinery & Equipment 1.11.6500	173,026.24
Total Fixed Assets	\$11,455,049.14
Other Assets	
Accum amort - bond cost	0.00
Amt avail 4 debt svc 9.11.9100	0.00
Bond issuance cost	0.00
Loan Receivable - Facilities	0.00
Loan Receivable - Paving	0.00
To be prov 4 debt 1.11.7500	0.00
Total Other Assets	\$0.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$18,247,365.19

City of Berkeley Lake

Balance Sheet

As of September 30, 2025

	TOTAL
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable 1.12.1100	247,628.31
Operating AP	0.00
SPL2005 Admin Facil- City H-AP*	0.00
SPLOST account - Suntrust-AP*	0.00
Total Accounts Payable	\$247,628.31
Credit Cards	
Anderson Credit Card (8186)	30.85
BOZEMAN, MARTY (0241)	0.00
Hiller Credit Card (8402)	27.00
Hunter Credit Card (0891)	687.75
Threadgill Credit Card (3322)	648.95
Wilhite Credit Card (1132)	0.00
Total Credit Cards	\$1,394.55
Other Current Liabilities	
*Sales Tax Payable	0.00
1.12.28 Bonds payable - current	0.00
Accounts Payable Accruals-L*	0.00
Accounts payable-L 1.12.1100.2	0.00
Accrued Expenses 1.12.1150	0.00
Accrued Interest Payable	0.00
Accrued Salaries 1.12.1200	0.00
Accrued SPLOST Expenses 2.12.1250	0.00
Deferred revenue 1.12.2500	15,744.81
Direct Deposit Payable	-0.01
MyGov	0.00
Payroll Liabilities	66.10
PR Tax Payable - Fed 1.12.1300	0.00
PR Tax Payable - State 1.12.1310	0.00
PTO Accrual	16,060.88
Regulatory Fees Payable	22,550.54
Retainage Payable	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$54,422.32
Total Current Liabilities	\$303,445.18

City of Berkeley Lake

Balance Sheet

As of September 30, 2025

	TOTAL
Long-Term Liabilities	
Gen Oblig Bond Payable 1.12.3000	0.00
GOB Payable - 2009 1.12.3000.2	0.00
GOB Payable - 2011 1.12.3000.3	0.00
GOB Payable - 2012 1.12.3000.4	0.00
SPLOST Loan Payable - Paving	0.00
SPLOST Loan Payable Facilities	0.00
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$303,445.18
Equity	
Fund Bal Unrsvd 1.13.4220	4,714,891.79
Investmt in fixedassets 1.13.4K	11,327,229.85
Opening Bal Equity	0.00
Reserve for prepaids 1.13.4125	5,716.99
Reserved for Debt Service	0.00
Restricted for Debt Svc 1.13.4105	0.00
Restricted4CapitalProj 1.13.4155	1,445,703.03
Retained Earnings 1.13.3000	275,486.06
Net Income	174,892.29
Total Equity	\$17,943,920.01
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$18,247,365.19

City of Berkeley Lake - 2026 Proposed Budget Highlights

Please be advised of the following items of note regarding the proposed 2026 budget:

Revenues

- 1) The proposed budget anticipates no increase in the real property tax millage rate for 2026 over the rollback rate for 2025.
- 2) *Georgia Power franchise tax* has been increased by \$24,562 or 15% due to 2024 revenue received in February 2025.
- 3) Occupation Tax has been reduced by \$5,875 or 16% due to the loss of several businesses.
- 4) Prior year reserves are being proposed for use to dredge the pond at the city's greenspace and 443 Lakeshore Drive and for road maintenance funded by the GDOT Local Maintenance Improvement Grant.

Expenses

- 1) A total of ~\$18,500 in *Contingency* funds has been distributed across several departments.
- 2) For the third year the *Housing and Development* expenses have included funds for the code update project, though the FY 2026 budget proposes \$80,000, which represents a 20% reduction for the professional services expense category to finish the contract and reduces the total *Housing and Development* budget by 5.9%.
- 3) *Public Works* costs have increased 222% due to the following:
 - a. 443 Lakeshore Drive pond dredging at an estimate of \$350,000
 - b. increased costs associated with roadside clean-up (\$5,700 or 114%)
 - c. outsourcing the MS4 report (\$5,000 or 100%) and other EPD-compliance tasks to the City Engineer (\$10,000 or 67%).
- 4) The *Culture and Recreation* line is increasing 9% due to anticipated maintenance costs to the playground.
- 5) The *General Government* line includes salaries for the City Administrator and Assistant to the City Administrator. However, duties of these staff are spread across the following departments: public works, housing and development, judicial and public safety.



	2025 Budget	2025 Forecast	2026 Budget	2026 vs 2025 Budget
100 General	1,272,301	1,478,887	1,282,429	0.8%
100 Reserves	-	24,807	305,427	
320 SPLOST	504,106	527,090	520,479	3.2%
320 Reserves	1,391,546	1,391,546	1,605,264	15.4%
Total Revenue	3,167,953	3,422,330	3,713,599	17.2%
General Government	604,942	488,196	607,034	0.3%
Judicial	9,439	5,905	9,449	0.1%
Public Safety	171,964	158,403	175,422	2.0%
Public Works	170,240	192,456	547,645	221.7%
Culture & Recreation	21,990	19,837	23,915	8.8%
Housing & Development	238,578	119,562	224,391	-5.9%
General Expenses	1,217,153	984,359	1,587,855	30.5%
SPLOST Public Works	1,333,929	314,182	1,538,435	15.3%
SPLOST Admin Facilities	358,811	42,000	335,821	-6.4%
SPLOST Public Safety	157,044	-	191,678	22.1%
SPLOST Rec Facilities	33,869	-	47,809	41.2%
SPLOST Expenses	1,883,653	356,182	2,113,743	12.2%
Total Expenses	3,100,806	1,340,541	3,701,598	19.4%
Addition to General Reserves	55,148	519,335	0	-100.0%
Addition to SPLOST Reserves	11,999	1,562,454	12,000	

ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2026; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Be it ordained by the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Berkeley Lake that the 2026 Budget shall be appropriated as follows:

<u>Revenues</u>		
General		1,587,856
SPLOST		<u>2,125,743</u>
Total Revenues		\$3,713,599
<u>Expenditures</u>		
General Government		607,034
Judicial		9,449
Public Safety		175,422
Public Works		547,645
Culture & Recreation		23,915
Housing & Development		224,391
Additions to General Reserves		0
SPLOST – Public Works		1,538,435
SPLOST – Admin Facilities		335,821
SPLOST – Public Safety		191,678
SPLOST – Rec Facilities		47,809
SPLOST – Addition to Reserves		<u>12,000</u>
Total Expenditures		\$3,713,599

All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are repealed to the extent of any such conflict. This ordinance shall be effective upon adoption by the Council of the City of Berkeley Lake.

So ordained, this ____th day of December 2025.

ATTEST :

Lois D. Salter, Mayor

Leigh Threadgill, City Clerk

First Read: October 16, 2025
Second Read/Hearing: November 20, 2025
Adoption:

MEMO

To: Mayor and Council

From: Leigh Threadgill

Date: November 13, 2025

Re: Chapter 46, Section 2 – Weapons Discharge Regulations

In response to citizen concerns regarding negative impacts of deer and to ensure compliance with state law, staff has prepared an amendment to the city code to replace the current weapons discharge regulations and replace them with verbiage found in the Peachtree Corners code of ordinances. Currently, the Berkeley Lake Code of Ordinances rules related to the discharge of weapons are as follows:

Sec. 46-2. – Discharging firearms, slingshots, bows, airguns, and similar devices.

- (a) It shall be unlawful for any person in the city to discharge any gun, pistol, rifle, revolver, cannon, or firearm of any type or shoot a slingshot, bow and arrow, crossbow or blow gun within 300 yards of any street, alley, or building, or at any point upon the land of another person without the express consent of the owner or occupant thereof; or to discharge at any time any airgun, paint ball gun, air pistol, air rifle, BB gun or toy gun which projects any pellet, dart, hard-tipped arrow, bean, pea, BB, rock, gel cap, paint ball or other hard substance a distance of more than twenty-five (25) feet with sufficient force to break, crack or tag windows or otherwise damage property, or inflict injury upon persons or animals.
- (b) This section may not be construed to prohibit any officer of the law from discharging a firearm in the performance of his duty, nor to prohibit any citizen from discharging a firearm when lawfully defending person or property or destroying a dangerous animal.

The proposed amendment will replace the above verbiage, including section title, with the following:

46-2 Discharge of Weapons.

- (a) It shall be unlawful to discharge any firearm within the City of Berkeley Lake. This section shall not be construed to prohibit any officer of the law from discharging a firearm in the performance of his/her duty, or to prohibit any citizen from discharging a weapon when lawfully defending persons or property (including without limitation domesticated pets), or destroying a dangerous wild animal. This section shall not apply to bb guns or air pellet rifles or authorized indoor shooting ranges. The term “indoor shooting range” is defined as a room, place, or enclosure where the discharge of firearms is permitted to practice marksmanship.

- (b) It shall be unlawful to discharge any bow or crossbow within the City of Berkeley Lake. This section shall not apply to persons discharging a bow or crossbow on that person's own property or with written permission of the owner(s) of any property where such discharge of any bow or crossbow will occur. Discharging any bow or crossbow upon the property of another, or causing an arrow or bolt to cross the property line of another, without first obtaining written permission of such property owner(s) shall be considered a violation of this section.

This change is necessary to ensure consistency with state law. Ultimately, hunting regulation resides with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

ORDINANCE NO. 25-260

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY LAKE TO AMEND CHAPTER 46. “OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS,” BY AMENDING SECTION 46-2, “DISCHARGING FIREARMS, SLINGSHOTS, BOWS, AIRGUNS, AND SIMILAR DEVICES”; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO PROVIDE FOR THE REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

SECTION I.

IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED, by the governing authority of the City of Berkeley Lake that Chapter 46 of the Code of Ordinances, entitled “Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions,” shall be amended as follows:

Subsection 46-2 shall be amended by deleting the title and text thereof in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

46-2 Discharge of Weapons.

- (a) It shall be unlawful to discharge any firearm within the City of Berkeley Lake. This section shall not be construed to prohibit any officer of the law from discharging a firearm in the performance of his/her duty, or to prohibit any citizen from discharging a weapon when lawfully defending persons or property (including without limitation domesticated pets), or destroying a dangerous wild animal. This section shall not apply to bb guns or air pellet rifles or authorized indoor shooting ranges. The term “indoor shooting range” is defined as a room, place, or enclosure where the discharge of firearms is permitted to practice marksmanship.
- (b) It shall be unlawful to discharge any bow or crossbow within the City of Berkeley Lake. This section shall not apply to persons discharging a bow or crossbow on that person’s own property or with written permission of the owner(s) of any property where such discharge of any bow or crossbow will occur. Discharging any bow or crossbow upon the property of another, or causing an arrow or bolt to cross the property line of another, without first obtaining written permission of such property owner(s) shall be considered a violation of this section.

SECTION 2:

Should any article, section, subsection, paragraph, clause, phrase or provision of this ordinance be adjudged invalid or held unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect or invalidate the remaining portions of this ordinance.

SECTION 3:

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4.

This ordinance shall be effective upon adoption.

Passed and adopted by the Mayor and Council on this _____ day of _____ 2025

LOIS D. SALTER
Mayor

ATTEST:

LEIGH THREADGILL
City Clerk

1st Reading: November 20, 2025

2nd Reading: December 11, 2025

Council Adoption:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF BERKELEY LAKE TO RATIFY THE
RESULTS OF THE NOVEMBER 4, 2025, GENERAL
MUNICIPAL ELECTION FOR THE OFFICES OF
THREE AT-LARGE COUNCIL MEMBER POSTS.**

WHEREAS, under the Charter of the City of Berkeley Lake, the Georgia Election Code, and the Constitution of the State of Georgia of 1983, as amended, elections for certain municipal offices whose terms expire December 31, 2025, are required to be held; and

WHEREAS, under the Georgia Election Code, the City Council of the City of Berkeley Lake shall perform all the duties imposed upon it by the Georgia Election Code; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley Lake's qualifying period for municipal offices which were to expire was held from August 18, 2025 through and including August 20, 2025; and

WHEREAS, five candidates qualified for Council Member at Large, one candidate qualified for the unexpired term of Council Member at Large, and one candidate qualified as a write-in for Council Member at Large, and the election was held on November 4, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Bill Lyons, Skipper Dahlstrom and Chip McDaniel received the three highest numbers of votes for Council Member at Large, and Bill Lacy received the highest number of votes for the unexpired term of Council Member at Large; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent certified the election results pursuant to the Georgia Municipal Election Code.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE MAYOR
AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY LAKE AS FOLLOWS:**

Declaration of Results. That under and by virtue of the Charter of the City of Berkeley Lake, Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, the following candidates were elected:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| a) Skipper Dahlstrom | Council Member at Large |
| b) Bill Lyons | Council Member at Large |
| c) Chip McDaniel | Council Member at Large |
| d) Bill Lacy | Unexpired term of Council Member at Large |

Mayor Lois Salter

CERTIFICATION

I, Leigh Threadgill, Election Superintendent of the City of Berkeley Lake, certify that the foregoing facts and result are true and correct for all purposes under the Georgia Election Code.

This _____ day of November 2025.