



November 29, 2010

The City Council will meet on Tuesday, Nov. 30 at 7 PM to consider budget matters. We will be working on both an amended budget for 2010 and the new budget for 2011, so please feel free to join us for this discussion. The citizen Finance Committee, our City Treasurer and City Administrator, have worked hard with our staff and me to make some difficult recommendations which will ultimately be decided on by Council.

Many thanks to the BLOSOMS who worked so hard to present the Fall Festival for us recently under the leadership of Lane Shutt and Betty Covington. Unless people step forward to continue doing this for the community, we won't have such celebrations in the future. It seems to get harder each year to get volunteers, so I hope you'll consider where you might enjoy contributing your time. **There are many avenues to volunteer.** In December I'll be looking for new committee members for next year. If you've served on a committee this year, you have the sincere thanks of our council, your mayor, and all our citizens. Please let me know if you wish to continue. If you've not served on a committee this year, please consider the Arts Advisory Committee, The Berkeley Lake Conservancy, BLEMA (the Berkeley Lake Emergency Management Committee), the Finance Committee, or the Planning and Zoning Commission. I'm not sure what vacancies we'll have, but I'd very much like to know now of your interest and willingness. Committee service is a good way to get to know more about the city, to become better acquainted with your neighbors, and to give your valuable input in important ways. There is a good bit of information about committees on our website, and I'll be happy to answer any questions as well. I'll be hoping to hear from you.

As you may recall, Council had voted in response to a suggestion from our homeowner association presidents to pay for **an objective study by an outside agency on tax equity within our city.** Requests have gone out to the Vinson Institute of Government at UGA and others for bids to do such a study, and I will let you know more as that develops.

Council has been discussing plans for a special referendum on March 15, 2011 to put the question of a bond to finance dam repair before our citizens. The first step in that process is for Council to pass a resolution calling for a referendum. We need, of

course, to know how much money will be required, and I have been pressing our engineers to finalize plans and refine the cost estimate. The City Engineer thinks he has found another way to minimize cost which he discussed in our last meeting. We still, of course, need desperately to get an answer from FEMA, and I continue to meet with my friend who heads GEMA to further that goal. After more than a year, FEMA still has made no formal commitment to our city, but we have not given up. I will be meeting shortly with all presidents of our homeowner associations to discuss the referendum and related issues; and council will, of course, hold public hearings when more information becomes available, but we need to begin the process.

We are proceeding with plans for **paving** the most critical areas of our city as identified by a recent engineering survey of our roads. Most of this will be in Miramont which was deemed to be in most need of street repair and repaving.

The Gwinnett County Master Gardeners have approved a grant for \$250 to buy plants for our **Henderson Nature Sanctuary** near Bayway Circle. This was accomplished through the efforts of Susan Hanson, chair of our Berkeley Lake Conservancy; and she continues to lead her group in working to remove invasive plants and beautify that area. Thanks to Susan and her volunteers.

If you have not visited the **Blue Heron Gallery in City Hall**, I urge you to do so. You will enjoy the current exhibition there which features works from a variety of local artists. Thanks to Carol Seitz and her Arts Advisory Committee which organizes these shows and manages the gallery.

The following changes have been made to our **City Code of Ordinances** since the last Mayor's Message. Details are available on the website. 1) O-117-10, Amendment to Chapter 42, Article VII, Buffers, Landscapes, Trees, 2) O-118-10, Amendment to Chapter 78, Zoning, Sections 196, 240, 242, 271, 295, 298

I wish you all a joyous and meaningful holiday season with your families and friends.

Lois D. Salter
Mayor

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