



February 6, 2012

The money is here! We have received an initial check from FEMA through GEMA of \$723,000! That is to get us started, and it's more than we have already spent. From this point on they'll begin to reimburse us as bills are presented to them. When we send enough bills to justify the amount already received and more, then we'll start to receive additional reimbursements. Tom Rozier and I met this past week with GEMA folks so they could explain the bureaucracy of FEMA funding and documentation. That, of course, will not be an easy process, but Tom has kept great records so far, and will continue to do whatever is necessary. We also met with our City Engineer and the lowest bid contractor – J. M. Wilkerson Construction Co. of Marietta. Council member Bob Smith participated in this meeting and will be providing some valuable leadership and oversight throughout the dam repair project. He has relevant experience on similar large building projects and is the council liaison to our citizen Finance Committee. After our City Attorney and the City Council all studied and approved the contract, I signed it; so we're ready to go. We have given the contractor his formal Notice to Proceed.

Here's what to expect as we begin the dam repair: We will begin by cutting a "notch" in the dam through which to move water within new siphons placed at a lower level than the current ones. Within the next week the contractor will install silt fencing on both the downstream and upstream side of dam to contain excavated material from the cut, and deliver the excavator to the project site. Then we'll excavate the slot into the dam approximately 20' deep to elev. 960 +/- and the width of the excavator bucket. We'll install two 8" siphon drains, prime the siphons, and begin draining the lake, having backfilled the slot in the dam. We hope to drain the lake to elevation 940 prior to installing the more expensive pumping system. We anticipate that to take 3-4 weeks. The contractor is preparing a fish removal plan for our approval and will soon meet with some interested citizens about that process. It's finally happening!

The whole project is expected to take about 340 days. This spring and summer we'll be removing the current dam embankment and relocating utilities. By late summer and into the fall we'll be hauling in new soil that has been tested and approved as appropriate for dam construction. We'll be installing hydraulic structures, monitoring wells, and instrumentation. We'll be raising and repaving the road, and building a sidewalk along it. The whole project will be

studied and monitored throughout by several separate engineering groups, so that we will not be relying on any one group of experts. We are building this thing to last! I will keep you informed as we go along.

I am very excited about the prospect of beginning a **community market** in Berkeley Lake. I met recently with a group of people who are just as excited and willing to commit their time to help it become a reality. Cary Thornton is leading this group which includes David Lee, Carol Seitz, and Laraine Downey. The idea is that vendors of local and natural foods, flowers, etc. would set up booths at the Chapel weekly between May and November. We also talked about booths for local artists and book exchange or sales. If you're interested in helping, please contact carythornton@gmail.com.

I think I need to clarify that in Berkeley Lake your taxes pay for **two public safety services**. Your county taxes pay for police who provide everything from SWAT to Persons/Property Investigation, etc. with officer response to calls at any hour of any day. Your taxes would go up a lot for the city to provide all that. Your city taxes pay for patrols as a deterrent, because it's much better to prevent crime than just to deal with it afterwards. The county police have stated publicly that they do not have the manpower to provide regular routine neighborhood patrol, which has been shown to be effective in preventing crime. Our officers are a visible deterrent presence and an extra set of trained eyes on your property, which is not insignificant. They get to know us and notice when something is out of the ordinary. We have also always urged our citizens to be sharp observers of our neighborhoods. We recently had someone illegally dumping stuff on our city roadside, but fortunately their tag number was recorded by an alert citizen. That helps a lot! You can reach our patrol officers by calling their Berkeley Lake mobile phone at (770) 780-2456, but in an emergency, always call 911 first. If you call the Gwinnett Police to report a crime, please also let our patrol officers know so they can follow up. Ideally we want to protect ourselves in 3 overlapping layers: neighbors watching over each other, security patrols that know our neighborhood well, and police that respond at any time to crime or suspicious activity.

Thanks to all the citizen volunteers who agreed to serve on a committee this year to help our city. [You can see who they are on our website.](#) Thanks also to Dan Huntington and Jeff Cooper who were willing to continue on our Planning and Zoning Commission.

Lois D. Salter
Mayor

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