

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 24, 2025 – 5:30 PM
City Hall – 2nd Floor Council Room
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Moracco, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer (arrived at 5:54),
Clr. Lavin, Clr. Brennan

Absent:

2. PRESENTATION – 2026 Budget Workshop

City Manager Hendrix opened the presentation noting that Council requested beginning budget discussions earlier this year.

Comptroller Blowers reviewed the General Fund Budget to include revenues and expenditures. He then went on to review the Water Fund and Sewer Fund, including both funds revenues and expenditures. Discussion occurred around Town commercial water and sewer billing. City Manager Hendrix shared that she expects preliminary information from the rate study in July. Mayor Valentino stressed that there would be no windfall here to lower taxes. Comptroller Blowers explained water plant and water maintenance budget delineations. Future water safety was discussed.

Comptroller Blowers reviewed Capital Budgeting next, explaining that planning helps manage assets and prioritize projects. He shared that funding strategies include bonds and grants.

Fund Balance was explained next, by Comptroller Blowers, as a measure of financial health for the City. He explained that the City's bond rating is pretty high, meaning there is a positive outlook, the City has good credit. Fund balance classifications were reviewed next, to include restricted, committed, assigned and unassigned. Councilor Brennan wondered if an occupancy tax was levied on short term rentals, if that revenue would have to be allocated for a specific purpose. City Manager Hendrix explained that it would have to go into a tourism funding stream. Mayor Valentino explained that it may be challenging to get a state rep to carry that type of legislation forward, as any tax increase legislation is taboo.

Comptroller Blowers then explained PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreements, then tax caps. Councilor Pealer wondered when the resolution allowing the City to exceed the property tax cap would be rescinded. Discussion followed around the why's and why not's of rescinding. Taxable assessed value was then reviewed along with the tax levy and tax rate.

The discussion then turned to forecasting the 2026 budget, taking into consideration anticipated revenue and expense changes, fixed costs, and collective bargaining agreements. Councilor Gillotte wondered if Council would meet with managers early on in the budget process. Meetings with department heads are scheduled on April 21 and April 28.

Councilor Lavin committed to more direction this year to avoid a budget coming in too high. City Manager Hendrix explained that in April departments will give Council fiscal drivers, council will then provide direction, and the City Manager will provide departments direction. Councilor Pealer shared that he'd like to see realistic budgeting for realistic budgets, noting increasing labor costs. Discussion followed around keeping a vision of what councilors want the City to look like in the future and budget towards that goal.

3. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Moracco
MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 6:57pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nicole Tillotson
City Clerk