

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

August 6, 2025 – 7:00 PM
City Hall – 2nd Floor Council Chambers
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Pealer; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos

MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 6:00 to discuss litigation and the employment of a particular person.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-4 absent)

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Gillotte

MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 6:50pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Whitfield (arrived at 6:40pm), Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte (arrived at 6:29pm), Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Lavin

Absent: Clr. Moracco, Clr. Brennan

3. PRESENTATION – 2026 Budget Process

City Manager Hendrix opened by explaining that there is not currently a 2026 budget or budget draft. The budget will be presented to Council in September. She reviewed the City's mission statement, values, and the timeline for budget work so far. Between February and May Council met to establish priorities. Department budgets were submitted to the Comptroller and City Manager in June. The City Manager explained that all departments were asked to reduce spending by 5%, and that the City Manager's proposed budget will be presented to Council on September 9th. The formal public hearing will occur at the October regular council meeting, and the budget must be adopted by October 31, 2025. City Manager Hendrix explained that Council did not set a 2026 target increase or decrease as a whole body, so she is looking at maintaining cost control and staying on top of infrastructure as key budget priorities.

Comptroller Blowers reviewed sales tax trends, which have remained stable over the past few years, and are currently meeting 2025 projections. He then reviewed cost drivers, the two biggest being personnel and debt, while sharing that a health insurance increase of 19% is expected. Comptroller Blowers explained focus on long term planning to stabilize and address deferred maintenance. He then reviewed the 2025 Capital plan, and

estimated a 2026 general fund debt payment of \$2.3M. The City also expects an energy increase of 30% in 2026.

Councilor Pealer wondered what percentage of labor costs are related to healthcare. Comptroller Blowers will calculate that number, put it in dollar amounts and get it to Council.

2025 staffing was reviewed, to show 126.5 FTE's, down 14 FTE's from 1999. City Manager Hendrix shared that the interactive chart will be available on the website.

Comptroller Blowers reviewed Revenue Drivers including State funding, Sales tax forecasting, and fees, fines and other revenues.

City Manager Hendrix explained the City's move towards a priority-based budget approach, utilizing metrics. Historic tax rates were reviewed, as well as tax levy and general fund budget. She also reviewed water and sewer fund budgets from 2016-2025, explaining that there hasn't been much growth in the budgets since 2016. She then reviewed property assessment including supply and demand, assessments in 2025, commercial properties depreciating, and valuation for the City, which was up 26% from the 2024 assessed value. The median home value is now \$143,550. Comparisons to similar municipalities was reviewed.

Comptroller Blowers explained the impact of a 10% addition or reduction to the Tax Levy in 2025 costs. A \$200,000 home would experience a \$243.20 reduction in taxes with a 10% levy decrease, while a 10% increase would cost \$243.20 on property tax bills. Mayor Valentino wondered what the STAR exemption program would do to these numbers. STAR exemptions are taxed at the same rate, at a lower valuation on school taxes only.

Councilor Pealer noted the tax rate over the past 10 years.

Comptroller Blowers reviewed decisions ahead including infrastructure investments; road maintenance programming, sewer and water infrastructure investment, televising and repairing water and sewer lines, water treatment regulatory changes, and waste water treatment plant expansion. He explained the benefit of maintaining infrastructure, leading to less emergency repairs. He then reviewed facilities maintenance including City Hall, DPW space, the Welcome Center, Public Safety Buildings, Parks, and the Rec Complex. City Manager Hendrix shared vehicle replacement needs, pumps at water and waste water treatment plants, safety equipment replacement schedules for the Fire Department, staff experience and expertise including succession planning, and technology.

The budget calendar was reviewed to include the 2026 budget presentation to Council on September 9, and ending with final budget adoption by October 31, 2025.

4. PRESENTATION – E Bike Safety

Chief Eveland explained problems faced by municipalities in New York related to e-bikes and e-scooters. This mode of transportation has become problematic due to the excessive speeds some are capable of reaching. The Chief reviewed definitions of e-bikes and e-scooters, noting that these bikes and scooters are quiet and fast, causing safety issues. Chief Eveland explained that he'd like to use targeted enforcement of e-bikes and e-scooters that are operating where prohibited by law.

Councilor Pealer thanked Chief Eveland for addressing this, noting that it's a parent's responsibility to monitor these bikes and scooters. He recalled moped bikes requiring license plates, and wondered if an e-bike needs to be registered. Chief Eveland explained that in NYS e-bikes aren't registered. He further explained that e-bikes and e-scooters aren't permitted to be on roads with speed limits of 35 mph or higher, and that enforcement is being encouraged. Councilor Pealer would like to see an educational pamphlet to share with the community on the topic.

Councilor Gillotte shared that he has noticed a lot of close calls related to kids on e-bikes and e-scooters.

Councilor Petropoulos wondered if there is a law about wearing headphones while riding e bike and e scooters. Councilor Pealer wondered about motor vehicle operation with headphones. Chief Eveland said that's illegal to have earbuds in both ears while operating an e-bike or e-scooter, but one is allowable.

5. DISCUSSION – Zero Based Budgeting

Councilor Grimaldi explained that the city has done zero based budgeting in the past, but can't pull together for 2026. He recommends looking at it, to present to the City Manager for the 2027 budget. He explained that last time the city used this budget process it took 8 months to prepare the budget, and recommends utilizing a zero-based budget once every ten years.

City Manager Hendrix wondered if Council wants to do line by line zero based budgeting, noting that staff already does some of this.

Councilor Grimaldi explained that it starts with staff going through line by line. For example, road work being carried over from year to year, and this type of budget process would clear up the rollover of funds.

Councilor Pealer wondered if this is a philosophy or approach? Councilor Grimaldi said it is, to an extent, and it adds accountability. Mayor Valentino explained that it's a very detailed endeavor. Councilor Pealer asked for an example of a municipality that has done this, and he'd like to see those outcomes.

Councilor Gillotte wanted to be clear and to communicate to residents the pros and cons of any budget conversation. He explained that any cuts, any decision will have pros and cons and it's important to let residents know why streets are or aren't being repaired, and the need to be fair to the whole city.

Councilor Lavin explained that zero-based budgeting is often done in other governments, and that he'd like to see smarter, more aggressive scrutiny. He then pointed out talent in the community that could help council.

Mayor Valentino explained that his experience with zero based budgeting calling it digestible, while noting that in a municipality it's more difficult due to so many different and volatile funding streams, making the entire project more difficult.

City Manager Hendrix reminded council that another resource is staff who have expertise and access to resources for municipal budgeting.

6. SUPERVISOR UPDATE

Supervisor Kennedy provided a follow-up to the quarter two City/County Administration meeting on June 7th.

Topics covered in that meeting included EMS and Fire coordination between the City and Town, mutual assistance for EMS/Fire, and water systems and the complex arrangements there.

Supervisor Kennedy shared that the Partnership for Ontario County operates an EPIC location, and is looking at the former Clark Optical building in the city for relocation of the EPIC team.

He raised concern regarding the media headline this week about electrical grid shortcomings for utility coverage, causing concerns related to the housing crisis, while causing project delays and upcharges, as well as the urgent need of achieving a critical path for transformer and substation construction.

Supervisor Kennedy offered kudos to Council for being a Pro Housing Community. Related to housing he made the county is aware of situations resulting from the Geneva Garden Apartments sale to HWS. He explained that supportive intervention is being provided to residents there.

The Ontario County budget workshop will be held on September 16 for those interested in attending or following along. Supervisor Kennedy shared that he will be attending the NYSAC Fall Conference.

In closing Supervisor Kennedy offered kudos to city residents acting as bottleneck detectives related to the Madia's building.

7. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi

MOVED THAT the minutes of the July 2, 2025 and July 9, 2025 City Council meetings be approved.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Phillip Fleming is a resident affected by the Geneva Garden Apartment sale to Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Mr. Fleming explained that the level of stress for Garden Apartment residents is very high. He shared that some community members have stepped up to help displaced residents, noting that a few households have found new places to live. Mr. Fleming is putting out a call to action to the community to really be there for the residents as they figure out where they want to live, how they'll pay for whatever housing is available. He explained that resources can include emotional support, and help moving. In closing he issued a call to action for financial, emotional, and economical support for these residents, who deserve community social supports that the City or County can offer.

Cy Smith offered the following comments to Council related to the 2026 budget:

The proposed 7.5% increase in real property taxes in 2026 is excessive. The City Manager has prepared a Draft Budget with a 7.5% increase in real property taxes for 2026. This increase would be almost three times larger than the current inflation rate of 2.6% and follows last year's 5% increase which was twice last year's inflation rate.

Our Proposal. First, limit the 2026 tax levy increase to inflation (2.6%) based on cost savings. We suggest some potential savings below. Second, adopt Zero Based Budgeting for future budgets. ZBB works better in controlling costs than the current incremental budgeting process which starts with existing expenditures. Priority Based Budgeting proposed by the City Manager starts with the desired project and then tries to justify the cost. We anticipate that ZBB will lead to significant cost reductions by eliminating projects which do not meet cost benefit standards. Third, explore additional sources of revenue. We suggest some potential revenue sources below.

Reduce expenditures by not undertaking projects and services unless they make long-term economic sense. Some projects and services that were removed from the 2025 budget reappear in the 2026 draft budget. Some of these expenditures, such as the \$200,000 pilot project for Lakefront Drive vegetation control which is a one-year temporary band-aid and not a permanent solution, do not make economic sense and should not be undertaken. The Lakefront Drive vegetation has limited visual impact and might be replaced with pavers or some other form of masonry that does not require major maintenance. Consider recruiting garden club volunteers to maintain the small downtown vegetation parcels.

The proposed 2026 vehicles should be financed with installment purchase leases. The Draft Budget includes over \$400,000 for various cars, trucks, vans and other vehicles. The Draft Budget does not show how the City intends to pay for these vehicles. They should be financed with installment purchase leases or equivalents and not with upfront cash. The repayment terms of the leases should match the economic lives of the vehicles. In the event a CBDG grant is not obtained, the potential costs of a fire truck may be eligible for financing for the unexpected funds of the marina bonds if the economic life of the fire truck aligns with the bonds. Bond council should be consulted.

Consider tweaking the Long Pier stabilization project to qualify for existing grant money. Our experience suggests that minor modifications adding to the stabilization project plus a little political elbow grease in Albany might result in freeing up some of the DRI grant funds.

Reduce labor costs; Improve workers' productivity and efficiency using new technology such as artificial intelligence. Hiring a new assistant city manager in connection with eliminating two positions is a solid step in lowering labor costs and improving workforce efficiency. New positions should not be approved for funding unless it is demonstrated to the City Council that the current workforce is operating at the highest productivity level and the additional work to be done can only be done by a new hire. The

city should also consider hiring part-time workers such as retired professionals or students, especially those who are skilled in using new technology. Another benefit of hiring part-time workers is that the City can avoid incurring long-term costs for healthcare and retirement benefits, which is one of the major costs the City incurs each year.

Consider Increasing revenues from sources other than real property taxation. After the real property tax, the next two largest sources of revenue are the sales tax and the state/federal aid, the annual amount of which received by the City is largely beyond the City's control. The remaining sources of revenue, consisting of fees, permits, licenses, *etc.*, contribute minimally to the General Fund. But every dollar helps; thus, the city may wish to consider whether any of these revenues may be reasonably increased.

Consider a non-resident overnight parking permit. Many jurisdictions have imposed restrictions or licenses dealing with overnight non-resident parking. In Geneva the principal long term overnight non-resident parkers are College's students. A permit fee, \$30 a month for example, which would apply to both on-street and on-street parking could yield much needed revenues. In the case of on - street parking, the parking provider would be required to collect the permit fee and remit it to the city.

Adopt rates and charges that fairly reimburse the City's General Fund for costs related to the Water and Sewer Systems. The recent hiring of a consulting engineer by the City, the Town of Geneva and other municipalities to conduct a rate study for services provided by the City's Water and Sewer System is a very positive step. The WSS is an effective revenue producing enterprise run by the City. The City provides financial benefits and assumes financial risks when it provides water and sewer service to the Town of Geneva and other municipal entities for which the City is entitled to a margin or it's capital costs and operating and maintenance costs. The City finances WSS capital improvements by issuing tax-supported general obligation bonds and obtains favorable interest rates because of its prudent financial practices. The Town provides no credit support of the City bonds. The financial benefit to the Town is that it does not have to create, operate and maintain a full-blown system nor to issue debt to finance the system. The financial risk to the City is that if the Town withdraws from the arrangement and determines to provide water and sewer service through other means the City would be left with an oversized system and debt load. Negotiation of a binding intermunicipal agreement would mitigate but not eliminate the risk. Provision of these benefits and assumption of these risks is a cost to the City that justifies a commonly accepted margin of 20% for out of system sales. To the extent that prior litigation questions recovery of these costs through a margin (i.e., the margin represents a cost and is not a profit) it is inconsistent with New York law and, if necessary, new litigation should be instituted. The City Attorney should be consulted.

There is an additional cost to the city: the city has a declining population and has experienced limited industrial and commercial growth. If the WSS were serving only the City, its capital costs would be relatively low because capital expenditures would be made only as equipment reached the end of its useful life. Because the Town is experiencing both population and industrial and commercial growth, the WSS must make additional capital expenditures to serve that growth. The accelerated capital expenditures compared to the WSS replacement capital expenditures result in a higher overall capital cost.

The City has broad discretion under State law to set water and sewer service rates so long as such rates are fair and reasonable; rates determined by the consulting engineer which take into account these factors and provide a margin on out-of-system sales would be fair and reasonable. As long as the WSS is being properly maintained the City may transfer this margin to its General Fund.

There is another matter which needs to be considered in the rate study: The rate to the Colleges. In order to serve the Colleges, the WSS must have the capacity to serve the resident students but they are present only eight or nine months of the year. The rate study should assure that the Colleges minimum payments during the "off" months fully covers the capital costs of the WSS. The rate study should be expeditiously completed to enable the setting of rates and margin transfers to the General Fund for the 2027 budget year.

Ward 5 resident Wendy Marsh provided the following comment, read by Clerk Tillotson:

Dear Mayor Valentino and Councilmembers -

I am very sorry to say that I will miss being at the City Council meeting tomorrow due to a competing work obligation, so please accept this email as my monthly public comment. I want to ensure City Council is aware of the potential impacts on the police, fire and other support services should the proposed supportive housing project be located in our business district.

A similar supportive housing / affordable housing project was recently placed into service last year in the center of downtown in the City of Ithaca. It is located in the Ithaca BID in the Commons and called the Asteri Ithaca Residential Tower. While it is larger than that proposed by Lakeview, it is the same funding - supportive housing and affordable units. The Asteri Tower became occupied in 2024 and resulted in 731 police calls according to the "Ithaca Police Community Dashboard" in its first year of operation. To date, there have been 935 calls to date in 2025, according to the Ithaca Police Community Dashboard.

I ask that you take the time to listen to the concerns of that community recently voiced at the Tompkins County IDA meeting on July 9, 2025. The situation is so problematic in downtown Ithaca that the Tompkins County IDA held its meeting with all the stakeholders to see if the situation can be addressed.

The Geneva IDA was told today that they are not to consider the financial impacts to the City of Geneva's police, fire and ambulance services. The experts indicated to the IDA board that the Planning Board would be compiling the financial costs. I am copying the chair of the Planning Board to ensure he is aware of the fact that the IDA was told the Planning Board would be looking into this financial aspect.

I must note that the experts telling the IDA to "Stay in their Lane" and that they couldn't consider the costs associated with police, fire, ambulance, and potential negative impacts to local business, seem a bit odd given the fact that the experts also told the IDA it should rely upon the MRB financial analysis using an income level of \$40K - \$50K for 53 of the units, and \$50K to \$70K for 21 of the units without any support that other Lakeview supportive housing projects have occupants in those income levels.

I ask that City Council members take the time to learn from the City of Ithaca's situation to better understand the impacts on the downtown business community, and ensure budgets are prepared accordingly for our police, fire and ambulance should this project be approved.

Below is the link to the full IDA meeting.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/ZK0LgT7VKZ8?si=3KyXldQfg3L3sP4I>

The Ithaca Voice also did a pod cast summarizing that IDA meeting that came out July 18th, a link to which is below if you are looking for the short version.

<https://ithacavoice.org/2025/07/backstory-inflamed-tensions-over-supportive-housing-fire-the-roots-of-grassroots>

Thank you for your service to Geneva.

Wendy Marsh

Anne Hoyt of the Green Committee asked Council to change a section of city code adopted in 1968, prohibiting gardens within 25 feet of the curb on any property. She explained that current code prohibits planting more than 10% wildflowers and shrubs, noting that many properties are in violation of this code. Ms. Hoyt explained that the goal of residents installing rain gardens on their property, particularly in areas with street flooding, is to prevent runoff from driveways and buildings compounding flooding during rain events. The City of Rochester code was reviewed and doesn't include cultivated flowers for distances from curb. Ms. Hoyt also voices her support of the Resource Recovery Park, and encouraged City Council to fund it in the 2026 budget.

9. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Goal 1: Ensure Fiscal and Organizational Stewardship of City Resources

City Staff Vacancies

As of July 16, 2025, the cost savings of at least \$200,000 via rolling hiring freeze has been achieved as of July 1, 2025.

Current vacancies include:

- Police Officer which can be filled/recruited when an Academy is available for a new officer or via a lateral transfer
- Sergeant which can be filled once a list is established and at the Chief's discretion
- Community Vitality Coordinator (name still pending); this is with Ontario County and upon their approval of title the recruitment will begin.

Current recruitments:

- Laborer to MEO: Interviews have been held, and a decision is in progress.
- Assistant City Manager: First review of applications occurred on July 18. Interviews are currently in process.

Welcoming Jeremiah Gardiner as our new part-time parking enforcement officer.

- **Goal 2: Promote Economic Development within the City**

Short Term Rentals

We have received permitting fees and applications from 76 short-term rentals within the City of Geneva, and 41 of those have successfully passed safety inspections conducted by the Code Enforcement team. However, there are still 33 known STR properties that have not yet submitted their required applications.

Code Enforcement Officers have begun follow-up inspections and documentation of non-compliant properties.

Where violations persist, we will work with City Legal to initiate formal enforcement actions, which can include daily fines for non-compliance.

585 S. Exchange Street Parcel

The project planning team continues to meet monthly on this parcel's development towards housing and potentially childcare. Below are a few key highlights:

- The incorporation of Lakefront Childcare may no longer be an option as the Child Care license has been suspended.
- Home and Community Renewal Tax Credit Funding deadlines have been announced for 2025 and are September 11, 2025. For a project to apply they need to have site control, designs, SEQRA approvals, engineering, planning board approval, and more. After discussing this with the team we determined that this project will not be ready for HCR funding in 2025, meaning we will apply in 2026.
- The team is working on finalizing the preferred developer agreement and continues to work on behalf of the City in good faith.
- A fall gathering with the community is being planned to discuss the project in more detail.

Private Property Transactions and Development Questions

The City of Geneva (and any City in New York State) cannot legally prevent a private property owner from selling to a for-profit or non-profit organization, as private property rights are protected under state and federal law. However, the City does have the ability to regulate how the property is used through zoning, land use laws, and permitting processes.

Residents can find the City of Geneva's zoning laws and maps on the official City website under the "Chapter 350 Zoning Code Update 2023" section, which includes the full zoning ordinance and an interactive zoning map. The Development Services/Code Enforcement department also provides zoning resources and guidance. For detailed legal language, the municipal code is available through eCode360. The Geneva Planning Board reviews zoning issues, and their meetings are open to the public with posted agendas. Residents are encouraged to use these tools to understand how zoning may affect property use or development within the city.

Goal 3: Increase and Sustain Intergovernmental Relations with City Partners

Sewer and Water Fee and Rate Review

The City has contracted with GHD Engineering, Architecture & Construction Services to study the water and sewer rates and fees. The Town of Geneva has committed to financially supporting a portion of the costs associated with GHD completing the study. Additionally, the Town of Fayette, who has met with Mayor Valentino, and I have proposed an Intermunicipal agreement which would also pay for some of the study so that they can work with the City to utilize the City sewer facility.

The plan remains to have several options available for consideration of the 2026 budget.

Fire Departments Shared Services Meetings

The City Fire Department, Mayor, and I met with Chiefs from the surrounding jurisdictions, Ontario County, and Town supervisors to discuss improving our services as we continue to work together. Our focus at the July meeting was training, grant funding, and communications improvements. We also reviewed further the tools and equipment housed at each department that can be utilized by multiple agencies.

Goal 4: Develop and Implement Strategies to Create and Continue Dynamic Communications Regarding City Actions

Community Conversations

Our next community conversation will be on August 14th at 3pm with Clerk Tillotson and IT Director Premyslovsky joining in. We will be at the Welcome Center, outside if the weather allows.

In addition to the Community Conversation a special Budget Community Forum is being planned for August 18 at 5pm, location TBD.

Goal 5: Enhance the Quality of Life for City Residents

Help Keep Our Parks Safe and Clean

The City of Geneva is asking all residents and visitors to help us take care of our shared public spaces. Recent damage to the resurfaced basketball courts at Nieder Park is a reminder of how important it is to treat our parks with care and respect.

Please remember:

- Do not drive vehicles through park grounds or on sports courts.
- Avoid any activity that could damage park surfaces, equipment, or property.
- Report suspicious behavior to the Geneva Police Department at 315-828-6771. Tips can remain anonymous.

Let's work together to keep our parks safe, clean, and welcoming for everyone.

Resource Recovery Park

The Resource Recovery Park remains open on Thursdays and Saturdays from 8:30am – 4:30pm.

The park is NOT open on holidays. Reminders will be sent so community members are aware of City holidays.

Residents should avoid dumping when staff are not on-site. Below are photographs of the park on a recent holiday.

Teen Police Academy

Our Teen Academy was very successful this year. We had 17 participants who will graduate on August 7, 2025.

10. ORDINANCE – Second reading of an Ordinance Addressing Aggressive Panhandling

Chief Eveland presented the second reading of the following ordinance:

Be it **ENACTED AND ORDAINED**, by the Geneva City Council, as follows:

Chapter 256, Article III

- A. Legislative intent. This Ordinance should be adopted in order to protect persons from threatening, intimidating or harassing behavior, to keep public places safe and attractive for use by all members of

the community and to maintain and preserve public places where all of the community can interact in a peaceful manner. This ordinance is also intended to provide for the free flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on streets and sidewalks in the City, to promote tourism and business and preserve the quality of urban life. The Council finds that aggressive acts associated with solicitation tend to interfere with the free flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic and intimidate persons in public places, and in addition, can lead to disruption and disorder in public places. Aggressive acts can also cause persons to avoid public places and lead to declining patronage of commercial establishments and tourism. The Council further finds that solicitation in certain public places is inconsistent with the use of those places, is inherently intimidating, targets persons who are captive audiences or constitutes an invasion of privacy as persons are not able to simply move on if they do not wish to speak to the person soliciting. Solicitation in proximity to bank entrances or check-cashing businesses or automated teller machines is inherently intimidating and should be restricted. By this legislation, the Council intends to promote the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and visitors to the City.

- B. Definitions. Whenever the following words and phrases are used in this section, they shall have the following meanings:

AGGRESSIVE MANNER

1. Intentionally or recklessly making any physical contact with or touching another person in the course of the solicitation, or approaching within an arm's length of the person, except with the person's consent;
2. Following the person being solicited, if that conduct is:
 - a. Intended to or is likely to cause a reasonable person to fear imminent bodily harm or the commission of a criminal act upon property in the person's possession; or
 - b. Is intended to or is reasonably likely to intimidate the person being solicited into responding affirmatively to the solicitation;
3. Continuing to solicit within five feet of the person being solicited after the person has made a negative response, if continuing the solicitation is:
 - a. Intended to or is likely to cause a reasonable person to fear imminent bodily harm or the commission of a criminal act upon property in the person's possession; or
 - b. Is intended to or is likely to intimidate the person being solicited into responding affirmatively to the solicitation;
4. Intentionally or recklessly blocking the safe or free passage of the person being solicited or requiring the person, or the driver of a vehicle, to take evasive action to avoid physical contact with the person making the solicitation;
5. Intentionally or recklessly using words:
 - a. Intended to or likely to cause a reasonable person to fear imminent bodily harm or the commission of a criminal act upon property in the person's possession; or
 - b. Intended or likely to intimidate the person into responding affirmatively to the solicitation; or
6. Approaching the person being solicited in a manner that is:
 - a. Intended to or is likely to cause a reasonable person to fear imminent bodily harm or the commission of a criminal act upon property in the person's possession; or
 - b. Intended to or is likely to intimidate the person being solicited into responding affirmatively to the solicitation.

AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE

A device, linked to a financial institution's account records, which is able to carry out transactions, including but not limited to account transfers, deposits, cash withdrawals, balance inquiries, and mortgage and loan payments.

BANKING ORGANIZATION

All banks, trust companies, private bankers, savings banks, industrial banks, safe deposit companies, savings and loan associations, credit unions and investment companies as defined in § 2 of the New York State Banking Law.

LICENSED CASHER OF CHECKS

Any individual, partnership, unincorporated association or corporation duly licensed by the New York State Superintendent of Banks to engage in business pursuant to the provisions of Article IX-A of the New York State Banking Law.

PARKING LOT

A municipal parking lot as defined in Chapter 243 of the Municipal Code.

PUBLIC PLACE

Any area or building owned, leased, operated or controlled by or on behalf of any government, municipality, public authority or public corporation in the City which is generally accessible by the public, including but not limited to any street, including the sidewalk portion thereof, bridge, tunnel, park, playground, recreation area, cemetery, school or school grounds, building, facility, driveway, parking lot, and the doorways and entrances to buildings and dwellings.

SOLICIT

Shall include, without limitation, the spoken, written, or printed word or such other acts or bodily gestures as are conducted in furtherance of the purposes of immediately obtaining money or any other thing of value

- C. No person shall solicit in an aggressive manner in a public place.
- D. No person shall solicit within 20 feet of an automated teller machine or an entrance or exit of an automated teller machine during the time the automated teller machine is available for customers' use; or within 20 feet of an entrance or exit to a banking organization or a licensed casher of checks during its business hours.
- E. No person shall solicit when either the person soliciting or the person being solicited is in a bus shelter or at a bus stop.
- F. No person shall solicit in a parking lot.
- G. No person shall solicit in any portion of a tunnel or covered walkway.
- H. No person on a sidewalk or alongside a roadway shall solicit from any occupant of a motor vehicle that is on a street or other public place.
- I. Penalties. A violation of this section shall be a "violation" as that term is defined in the Penal Law. A person convicted of violating this section shall be subject to a fine as set forth in the fee and fine schedule set by the City staff (Or adopted by a resolution of the City Council) and may, for a second conviction within 12 months of a preceding conviction, be imprisoned for a term not to exceed 15 days. In lieu of a fine, the court may impose an appropriate alternative sentence; provided, however, that an alternative sentence shall not be an unconditional discharge.
- J. Severability. If any provision of this section is declared invalid or unconstitutional for any reason, the remaining provisions shall be severable and shall continue in full force and effect.

Alternate for I.

Penalties. A violation of this section shall be a "violation" as that term is defined in the Penal Law. A person convicted of violating this section shall be fined not less than \$50 nor more than \$500, and, in addition, for a second conviction within 12 months of a preceding conviction, may be imprisoned for a term not longer than 15 days. In lieu of a fine, the court may impose an appropriate alternative sentence; provided, however, that an alternative sentence shall not be an unconditional discharge.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Gillotte

MOVED THAT this Ordinance be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

11. RESOLUTION – Declaring the City of Geneva Lead Agency for Proposed Improvements to the Recreation Complex Located at 666 Exchange Street
City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva is proposing improvements to the existing Recreation Complex located at 666 Exchange Street, which may include, but are not limited to, upgrades to building infrastructure, mechanical systems, energy efficiency enhancements, site accessibility improvements, and other facility-related renovations; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project is classified as an Unlisted Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with SEQRA regulations, a Lead Agency must be designated to conduct the environmental review of the proposed project; and

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva, as the project sponsor and as a local government with primary jurisdiction over the property and associated approvals, is the most appropriate agency to serve as Lead Agency for the SEQRA review of this action;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Geneva hereby declares itself Lead Agency for the environmental review of the proposed improvements to the Recreation Complex located at 666 Exchange Street under the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Geneva shall undertake the necessary environmental review in accordance with SEQRA regulations, and will coordinate with all involved and interested agencies as required.

Councilor Pealer looked for clarification, asking if this resolution is only identifying the city as lead agency, not putting SEQR through. Attorney Hou explained that this is an unlisted action. Nothing has been identified, no project, no plan at this time. City Manager Hendrix further explained that this resolution starts the process, designates us as lead agency for grant access.

Councilor Grimaldi noted that he didn't realize the city can do a SEQR without a project. Attorney Hu explained that the SEQR is for grant application, this action will allow the city to pursue grant funds for the project.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gillotte; seconded by Clr. Pealer

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

12. ORDINANCE – First Reading of an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 273-33, Alternative Dumping and Storing Violation Procedures

Superintendent Braman presented the first reading of the following ordinance:

§ 273-23 Alternative Dumping and Storing Violation Procedures.

[Added 11-7-2018 by Ord. No. 3-2018^[1]]

A.

Procedure upon report of a violation of § 273-11. In addition to the penalties set forth in § 273-22, the procedures set forth in Subsections B through E or in Subsection F of this section of the City Code may be followed by the Director of Public Works, at his option, upon receiving a report of violation of § 273-11.

B.

In the case of a report of a violation of § 273-11 made for the first time, the Director of Public Works may issue a notice of violation to the property owner of record or the person responsible for the violation, advising him or her or it that, if the violation of § 273-11 is not corrected within five days of the date of service of the notice of

violation, the City will cause the items dumped and/or stored to be removed and taken to the appropriate landfill; that the actual costs of picking up and disposing such items will be billed to the property owner plus a 50% Administrative Fee and that, upon his or her failure to pay such costs, they shall be added to the next real property tax bill of such property owner.

C.

The notice of violation provided for in Subsection B above shall be served by ordinary, first-class mail and, in the case of a property owner or the person responsible for the violation having an out-of-Town address, the Zoning Officer shall add three days to the notice's five-day period before enforcing the within provisions.

D.

In the case of a property owner or a person responsible for the violation of § 273-11, who has received a notice of violation provided for in Subsection B above, additional written notice need not be given by the Zoning Officer for subsequently reported violations of this section involving the same circumstances.

E.

Upon the expiration of the notice period provided for in Subsections B and C above or upon notification of a subsequent violation of § 273-11, pursuant to Subsection D above, if the property owner or the person responsible for the violation of § 273-11 has failed to take remedial action and the violation continues, the Director of Public Works shall assign City workers or contract with private individuals to correct the violation of § 273-11, and, upon the completion of such corrective work, the Director of Public Works shall promptly bill the property owner or the person responsible for the violation of § 273-11 for the actual cost of the corrective work plus a 50% Administrative Fee, at his or her address as shown on the tax rolls or his or her or its last known address. Any charges remaining unpaid at the time City tax notices are prepared shall be added as charges on such City tax notices sent to the property owner. The City may bring a civil action to recover such charges against the person responsible for the violation of § 273-11 if he or she or it is not the owner of the property where the violation occurred.

F.

As an alternative to the procedures set forth in Subsections B through E above, the Director of Public Works may impose a charge of \$10 for each day the violation of § 273-11 continues after the expiration of the notice period provided for in Subsections B and C above or upon notification of a subsequent violation of § 273-11, pursuant to Subsection D above. The Director of Public Works may impose a \$10 per-day charge for each violation and subsequent violation. The Director of Public Works shall promptly serve the property owner or person responsible violation of § 273-11 with a notice of charge by mail at his or her address as shown on the tax rolls or his or her last known address. The Director of Public Works shall continue to issue notices of charges to the property owner or person responsible for the violation of § 273-11 on a weekly basis. Any amounts remaining unpaid at the time City tax notices are prepared are to be added as charges on such City tax notices. The City may bring a civil action to recover such charges against the person responsible for the violation of § 273-11 if he or she or it is not the owner of the property where the violation occurred.

G.

The property owner, the person responsible, or the person assessed with a violation of § 273-11 under this section of the Code may submit one appeal to the Office of the City Manager of the notice of violation referred to in Subsections A through E or the initial notice of charge described in Subsection F. Such appeal must be in writing and filed within 20 days of the mailing of the initial notice of correction or notice of charge. The City Manager shall determine the appeal within 15 days of filing.

Superintendent Braman explained that the proposed change will add a 50% administrative fee. He shared that by the time a complaint is investigated to include taking photos, invoicing and sending letters, this update will cover city staff time, and bring it in line with mowing ordinances.

Councilor Petropoulos recalled a Ward 5 property with overstuffed garbage toes, and the waiting involved for a remedy. He thinks this administrative fee will add incentive to comply.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Pealer; seconded by Clr. Gillotte

MOVED THAT the first reading of this Ordinance be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

13. ORDINANCE – First Reading Sump Pump

Superintendent Braman presented the first reading of the following ordinance:

Chapter 277. Sanitary Sewers

Article II. Use of Public Sewers Required

§ 277-4. Use of natural outlet prohibited.

It shall be unlawful to discharge to any natural outlet, either directly or through any storm sewer, within the City, or in any area under the jurisdiction of said City, any sanitary sewage, industrial wastes, or other polluted waters, except where suitable treatment has been provided in accordance with subsequent provisions of this chapter. Use of separate storm sewers and sanitary sewers is mandatory, and no combined sewers will be allowed.

§ 277-4.

1. CONNECTION OF SUMP PUMPS OR RAINWATER DRAINAGE TO THE SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM IS PROHIBITED.

No Sump Pump or other device which discharges drainage resulting from rainwater, springs, wells, or other ground water, including but not limited to downspouts, shall be connected to the City of Geneva sanitary sewer system.

2. SUMP PUMP INSPECTIONS AND CERTIFICATES.

A. INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATE REQUIRED UPON SALE

A. Inspection and Certificate Required Upon Sale. No owner shall sell a residential or nonresidential building in the City of Geneva without first obtaining from the City of Geneva Engineering Dept. a certificate stating that no sump pump or other device which discharges drainage resulting from rainwater, springs, wells or other ground water is connected to the sanitary sewer system in violation of **Section A** of this Ordinance. No purchaser shall purchase property unless the seller has obtained the required certificate of sump pump compliance prior to closing.

(i) Application for Certificate Upon Sale Procedures: Certificates of Sump Pump Compliance shall be issued in accordance with the following procedures:

(ii) Application Fee: Applications for certificates of sump pump compliance upon Sale, Lease, Rental, or Change in Occupancy shall be filed with the City Of Geneva Engineering Dept. by the seller of the property or the landlord as the case may be. Said Application must be filed at least ten (10) business days prior to the change in ownership and/or occupancy. Applications shall be submitted on the form supplied by the Engineering Department and shall be accompanied by a fee in the amount of

\$50.

(3) Inspection: Upon receipt of a completed Application for Certificate Upon Sale, Lease, Rental, or Change in Occupancy, the City Of Geneva inspector shall, conduct an inspection of the property to determine compliance with the standards set forth in this Ordinance.

(4) Notice of Violation; time to Remediate: If a violation is discovered during the inspection, the property owner shall be mailed a Notice of Violation within five (5) business days of the inspection which shall clearly describe the violation and the remedial action needed for compliance, and which shall provide 21 calendar days for the sump pump connection to be brought into compliance.

(5) Penalties for Failure to Obtain Certificate or to Timely Remediate Violation: Any person who fails to apply for and obtain a Certificate of Sump Pump Compliance as required by this Ordinance shall be subject to the penalties set forth in this Ordinance. Any person who timely applies for a Certificate, is found to be in violation, and fails to remediate the violation within 21 calendar days, shall be subject to the penalties set forth in Section 4 of this Ordinance. If a seller of a property fails to comply with this or any section of this Ordinance, the seller and the new owner after the sale will be jointly and severally responsible for said compliance and all resulting penalties.

B. INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATE REQUIRED UPON THE ENGINEER OR DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS CERTIFYING THAT THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL EVIDENCE OF AN ILLICIT CONNECTION TO THE SANITARY SEWER.

If at any time the Engineer or Director of Public Works believes there is substantial evidence that a sump pump (or other device which discharges drainage resulting from rainwater, springs, wells, or other ground water, including but not limited to downspouts) has been connected to the sanitary sewer system, the Engineer or Director of Public Works shall direct that the property in question be subject to immediate Inspection by the Engineer, Code Enforcement Office or the Authority having jurisdiction.

(i) Notice of Inspection: Upon the filing of the Certification referenced in Section (B) above, the Engineer, Code Enforcement Officer or designee shall cause a Notice to be sent via Certified Mail to the property address in question, and to the registered owner of said property on the City Of Geneva tax records, giving Notice of Inspection to take place at any time after seven (7) business days from the mailing of said Notice of Inspection.

(ii) Inspection: At any date seven (7) business or more days after the Notice of Inspection has been Mailed, the Code Enforcement Officer or the Engineer or their designee shall, conduct an inspection of the property to determine compliance with the standards set forth in this Ordinance, and shall make an Inspection Report thereon, favorable or otherwise, within five (5) business days after completing the inspection, which will be sent via regular mail and certified mail to the property owner. If the Inspection was satisfactory, a Certificate of Sump Pump Compliance shall be issued, and shall be enclosed with the mailed Inspection Report.

(iii) Notice of Violation; time to Remediate: If a violation is discovered during the

inspection, the property owner shall within five (5) business days of the inspection be sent a Notice of Violation via regular mail and certified mail or signed by the Owner, Landlord or agent of the record property identifying receipt of notice, which shall clearly describe the violation and the remedial action needed for compliance, and which shall provide fourteen (14) calendar days, for the sump pump connection to be brought into compliance, and for the Department of Engineering & Public Works to be notified of compliance, upon which a Re-Inspection of the property shall take place.

(iv) Penalties for Failure to Timely Remediate Violation and Obtain Certificate

of Compliance: Any person who fails to remedy a violation and obtain a Certificate of Sump Pump Compliance within fourteen (14) calendar days as set forth in the preceding paragraph, such person shall be subject to the penalties set forth in this Ordinance. Any person who timely applies for a Certificate, is found to be in violation, and fails to remediate the violation within 14 calendar days, shall be subject to the penalties set forth in **Section 4** of this Ordinance.

3. RIGHT OF ENTRY AND RIGHT TO INSPECT

(a) The City of Geneva reserves the right to use whatever tests are available to determine the existence of illicit connections to the sanitary sewer system. The City of Geneva also reserves the right to inspect properties in order to enforce these prohibitions. If Tests or Inspections are conducted which might cause some inconvenience or discomfort if an illicit connection exists, it shall be recognized that any such inconvenience or discomfort, or other effect of the Test or Inspection, is of less value and importance than the effects of such illicit connection on the health, comfort and welfare of the residents of the City Of Geneva and, consequently, there shall be no cause for action against the City Of Geneva in law or in equity.

(b) No Person shall obstruct, hinder, delay or interfere with by force or otherwise, the Director of Public Works, the Code Enforcement Officer, or their designees in their exercise of any power or discharge of any function or duty under the provisions of this Ordinance

(c) No person shall provide any false statement, false report, false document, false plans, or false specifications to the, the Engineer, Code Enforcement Officer, or their designees to obstruct, hinder, delay or interfere with the provisions of this Ordinance.

4. PENALTIES FOR OFFENSES

(a) Any owner of a property found to have violated this Ordinance or to have caused, constructed, installed, permitted the construction or installation of an illicit connection to the sanitary sewer system of any Sump Pump or other device which discharges drainage resulting from rainwater, springs, wells, or other ground water, including but not limited to downspouts, shall be subject to the fines and penalties set forth in this section.

(b) The minimum fine shall be \$100 per day for each Violation, and an additional \$100 per day for each day that an unlawful discharge continues, beyond the time limit provided for remediation in the Notice of Violation served by the City of Geneva pursuant to Section 2(A)(4) or 2(B)(3) of this Ordinance. Each day a violation continues beyond the time limit to remediate shall be deemed a separate offense, and each day in which a Notice of

Violation continues to be unabated shall constitute an additional one hundred dollar (\$100) a day penalty until the violation(s) has been abated.

(c) In addition, any person who makes or causes such discharges or constructs or permits any illicit connection shall be liable to the City of Geneva for expense, loss or damage incurred by the City of Geneva as a result of such violation.

(d) Lien to be Placed on the Property. All charges, prices, costs, expenses, rents, interest or penalties, or any of them, as established herein, shall be and remain a Lien attaching to the property, the same as all other taxes and municipal charges upon real estate under the laws of the State of New York, for the collection of taxes and other municipal liens upon real estate.

(e) Penalties for Continuing Violations. Upon any repeated violation of any section of this Ordinance, the City of Geneva reserves the right to bring charges against the Violator in Municipal Court, asking the Court to impose any penalties authorized

(f) Requests for additional time to complete work: The reviewing body may grant an extension for any condition in Subsection D upon written request by the applicant. The applicant shall include in such request the desired time period for the extension, not to exceed 60 days, and the reasoning for requesting the extension. If an extension is granted as described above, but the work is still not complete by the end of said extension, and substantial progress toward completion of the work is made, the Code Enforcement Office shall administratively grant an additional extension of no more than 30 days, on the following conditions:

(i) "Substantial progress" shall be defined as the completion of no less than 75% of the work to be done.

(ii) The owner shall agree to an administrative penalty to be assessed by the City of Geneva Engineering Department, in the event that work is not completed within the 30 days, said penalty not to exceed \$100 for each day that the work remains incomplete.

Superintendent Braman explained that this new ordinance is similar to the point of sale sidewalk ordinance, and will bring sump pump discharge up to code at the time of sale. He explained that when sump pumps discharge into the sanitary sewer waste water treatment is affected, and the system then treats storm water. This proposed ordinance is a recommendation that came out of the Storm Water Task Force, and will help to alleviate storm water coming into treatment plants, and save money on operating and equipment costs over time. Councilor Pealer thanked Superintendent Braman for getting this Ordinance on the books. Councilor Petropoulos wondered roughly how much water sump pumps pump into the sanitary sewer. Mayor Valentino explained that significant infiltration and inflow occurs, and the more that is reduced the more capacity there is for waste. Superintendent Braman explained that DPW allots money towards I & I by slip lining sanitary manes. He called this an important task not meant to be a penalty, and something that is important that many municipalities utilize. Councilor Grimaldi wondered if there was already a similar ordinance on the books. Superintendent Braman explained that there isn't, not related to sump pumps. Councilor Grimaldi wondered if floor drains do the same thing. Superintendent Braman explained that they do, and are connected to sanitary sewer. Discussion followed around the challenge of sump pumps impacting neighbors, Superintendent Braman acknowledged that there can be impact with the compactness of many city lots. He offered solutions including dry wells in back yards for sump pump discharge, splash blocks, or discharge into driveways. Councilor Grimaldi wondered what the inspection fee will be, Superintendent Braman explained that the fee will be \$50. Councilor Pealer expressed

his support for the ordinance, noting that restrictions can be revisited at a later date, and raised concerns with discharge leading to streets icing over in the winter.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Pealer; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi

MOVED THAT the first reading of this Ordinance be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

14. RESOLUTION – Directing the City Manager to Build a \$900,000 fund in the 2026 Budget for Levy Reduction

Councilor Lavin presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the certified 2025 property tax levy for the City of Geneva is \$8,850,317; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is committed to reducing the financial burden on taxpayers while maintaining essential public services; and

WHEREAS, proactive financial planning allows for transparency and thoughtful decision-making during the annual budget process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Geneva, NY that the City Manager is directed to prepare the proposed 2026 budget with a property tax levy not to exceed \$7,950,317.

The specific combination of expenditure reductions and revenue enhancements needed to meet this target shall be identified during the 2026 budget development process, with final decisions to be made by the City Council through regular budget deliberations.

This resolution reflects the Council's intent to pursue meaningful levy reduction while upholding the City's commitment to financial sustainability and high-quality public service delivery.

Councilor Lavin opened by explaining that he wants to talk about budgeting, political documents, and policy expressing the way Council is going to spend. He reviewed the suggested boost or savings if the levy goes up or down by 10%, and expressed concerns for assessments and taxes associated with increased assessments to seniors. He also expressed concerns about investors buying homes and turning them into mini hotels. Councilor Lavin suggested that the city is only a year or two away of not being able to afford police and fire services, and is asking for a change in the way Council looks at things, putting urgency out there for revenue improvements. He suggested that taxes are making Geneva an unsustainable city. Councilor Lavin suggested that on a \$30 million budget, to come up with \$900,000 is to signal that Council is urgently seeking revenue, pushing for aggressive discussions for water, fire, and police. He explained that he'd like to see Geneva be a leader in the region for the kinds of reductions that need to happen elsewhere (county, and school taxes). He explained that he'd like to see aggressive water and sewer rate cuts for residents of the city. Councilor Gillotte explained that he wants Councilor Lavin to list what he'd cut for \$900,000, but hears that Councilor Lavin wants the City Manager to do it, stating that he's not good at it. Councilor Lavin expressed that he wants to signal now to the community that Council is here to help them. He explained that rather than driving seniors and poor out of town Council should pursue what he's proposing now, and send message to City Manager that the City needs to reduce taxes, bring them into line with other places around Geneva.

Councilor Gillotte explained that if he were to pass away, he hopes his wife would sell the house and move on, not try to stay in a home too big for one person that she may not be able to afford herself. He shared that he's heard needs from department heads related to the budget, but didn't hear requests for excessive purchases, just what staff need to do their jobs. Councilor Gillotte recalled the budget priority exercise, looking at legal fees, contract negotiations, and healthcare costs all increasing. He recalled that water and sewer funds can't be used in the general fund, as these separate areas of funding that can't mix. He reminded Council that grants can only use the money for what the grant was designated for, noting that Council can't just use pier money for something else. City

Manager Hendrix shared that she is still working still working with the state on the pier grant, there is a very small possibility to use those funds for something else, but it has to be used in that area. Councilor Gillotte recalled pros and cons to every budget and stressed how important it is for residents to understand what Council is doing. He further stated that you can't convince him that by cutting taxes landlords will improve properties or give money back to tenants. In closing Councilor Gillotte said he's open to conversations.

Mayor Valentino offered clarification, noting that Councilor Lavin's resolution proposes \$900,000 reduction from last year's levy. Councilor Lavin explained that of the \$30m budget, he's looking for a \$900,000 impact to the general fund.

Councilor Petropoulos explained that he concurs with Councilor Gillotte, if Council proceeds with this resolution, Council will take the most from vulnerable residents, like seniors on fixed incomes, while landlords will pocket the money, and soon enough Council will be forced to raise taxes 20%, and stated that he doesn't see a plan here. If there are things Council can cut, he'd like to talk about it in budget sessions. He explained that in order to consider supporting this budget cut directive, he would need to know what Councilor Lavin is proposing to cut.

Councilor Pealer shared that he doesn't think this has to be political. Rather, it can be data driven, mathematical. He acknowledged that keeping the budget at the rate of inflation is hard. He recalled that the 2025 budget was a heated compromise, and that historically city budgets start with an average rate budget and go up each year.

Councilor Pealer shared resident feedback that they're tired of the taxes, water, and sewer fees yoyo. He reminded Council that in order to be smart budget stewards, they compromised for 5.9% last year, recalling the hard work to get that place. Based on current budget, he sees the realized decrease as a reduction of \$1.2 Million when adjusting for inflation. In his opinion, it's not fair to throw out an 11% decrease and tell the City Manager to "make it work." He reiterated that Council shouldn't make this political, or the city will wind up with the giant spike in taxes next council. He wondered, "How do we be average?" He's in favor of consistency, people like that.

Mayor Valentino thanked Council for lots of good comments, and explained that he doesn't want to be repetitive. For him, having been on council for quite some time, 24 years, he's seen a lot go on in City of Geneva. The thing Mayor Valentino really enjoy is seeing how the city has progressed into a beautiful city. He explained that the economic change has made the city very attractive, houses sell quickly. Mayor Valentino doesn't want to increase expenses, he'd like to remain consciously positive, and find a way to keep this city a great place to work, play and invest. Mayor Valentino agreed with Councilor Lavin, the city should chase revenues, noting that it won't happen overnight, but there are ways to accomplish that.

Councilor Lavin explained that he brought this resolution up now because Council will go through a budget process, and can discuss it. He explained that he brings it up so councilors can have their voices heard and tell the public what they're doing. He explained that any budget reduction is a result of assessment, that has changed the rate, not the city's spending levels. He expressed concern about still have a high tax burden per capita. He asked Council to look at what's happening to their constituents, what kind of city they want. Councilor Lavin wondered if Council wants to drive out current residents, and wants Council to understand how this budget drives these trends. Councilor Pealer referred back to the math, noting that even though the city has a high tax rate, it has a declining high handicap. He sees a high tax rate getting smaller, while other cities are approaching Geneva's rates, closing the gap. Councilor Pealer reminded council that it's important to know that if they keep that mission of average, they will slowly work on this. He also encouraged council not ignore the tax rates being level the past 10 years.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Lavin; seconded by Clr. Whitfield

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

ROLL CALL VOTE:
Aye - Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Lavin
Nay - Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer, Mayor Valentino

MOTION DEFEATED (2-5-2 absent)

15. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Pealer; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi

MOVED THAT that James Babbs be appointed to fill the vacancy of Ontario County Supervisor representing Wards 3 & 4.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Lavin; seconded by Mayor Valentino

MOVED THAT this appointment be tabled

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye - Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Lavin, Mayor Valentino

Nay - Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer

MOTION TABLED (5-2-2 absent)

16. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Lavin commented that HWS paid a lot of money for the Garen Apartments and will renovate them, and wondered if anyone else would have made this investment. He noted that the OEO site, Jacksn Street, and the Finger Lakes Times property projects all give the city flexibility for population desperate for housing right now. He then recalled a speed test on South Main Street a while ago, and noticed the other day that cars are much too fast. He would like to see a study where people don't know they're being clocked. Councilor Lavin complemented a Lochland Road parcel the owner wants to develop, seeing it as a good thing for Geneva. He acknowledged that it will mean change for neighbor, but the development of this lot will be good for Geneva. Councilor Lavin shared that IDA has a lot on its plate with the GEDC, they are facing real decisions about how to use the space. He complemented new tenants coming to Town and Country Plaza. He then shared a donation of \$550 from Tom Burrall in firewood sales, bringing his total donation to \$17,232. He also shared that the Shade Tree Committee's nursery at the Waste Water Treatment Plant has 100 trees ready to transplant.

Councilor Pealer had no planning board report. He offered a big thank you to Chief Parrotta, Chief Eveland, and the PBA and for the Youth Academy, calling it a really cool program. He also shared that Geneva Night Out was a great way to engage the community, and have fun. Councilor Pealer thanked the Ontario County Sheriff and Mercey Flight for attending. He then shared that he hopes recreation complex improvements include air handling, as it gets hot in there. In closing Councilor Pealer hopes that the Police Department and Recreation put on bike rodeo in the fall.

Councilor Grimaldi attended Housing Authority Board meeting. He shared that GHA can't cover all 54 families coming out of Geneva Graden Apartments, they may be able to place 15-20. The Housing Authority is wrapping up a lot of repairs and upgrades to their units. Councilor Grimaldi complemented DPW, as they did a great job on Brook St. Park.

Councilor Gillotte shared that the Police Budget Advisory Board didn't meet in July, and they are trying to fill one position. Interviews will be held this week for the BID Executive Director role, as Catherine Price has moved on. The final music Monday will be held on August 11, the On the Canals grant is offering free historic bike tours that include bike rentals and ice cream, and free native plant tours are happening in August and September; see the BID website for more information. Geneva Grows native information is available at the Farmers Market and BID through October. Glorious Garlic Festival was a success, and Wheels on the Lake is coming in September.

Councilor Petropoulos shared that the LDC didn't meet today. He met recently with the Parks Collective, and looked around Richards Park. They are having a work party there this Saturday 9-12. Met with Gwen VanLincoln

and Allana Overstreet to discuss Geneva Housing Center, and encouraged them to present. Councilor Petropoulos shared that he is involved with Partnership as veteran consultant for a grant. He shared that National Night Out was a good event. Assemblyman Gallahan was touring businesses in Geneva recently; Councilor Petropoulos offered a shout out to his office for grant information they shared on decorative lighting and poles. He's also looking at grants for park equipment. Councilor Petropoulos will be attending the Police Youth Academy graduation tomorrow, and the Scott Bissell Memorial Block Party this Saturday on Colt Street.

Councilor Whitfield shared that the Green Committee is asking for code change, as it's currently unlawful to cultivate more than 10% of lot or land to add wildflowers or shrubs nearer than 25 feet of a right of way. These restrictions limit rain gardens. The Green Committee suggests copying city of Rochester code which allows for 10 inches of growth height so long as the vegetation is not weeds, trees or shrubs. The Transfer Station has been operating since May 1 where annual household recycling passes are \$20, and trash punch cards can be purchased for \$75. He shared that these services are being used by a diverse mix of people. The Green Committee is urging the City to continue supporting this service. ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constraint Employed) data has been compiled around the working poor. Councilor Whitfield shared that members of the community are working with Garden Apartment residents during their sudden hardship. He raised concerns that this has already caused some families to move out of the community. He also explained that HWS is helping displaced residents, and raised concerns about pushing people out of the city, especially kids.

Mayor Valentino complimented the BID hanging flower baskets, which look great downtown. Mayor Valentino shared that he and Councilor Petropoulos were fortunate enough to hold finish tape at Musselman Triathlon, noting that the winner was competing in his first triathlon ever. He also recalled major swimmer challenges on race day, complementing those working on the Water Safety Team with 3-3.5-foot waves. He called the triathlon a great economic opportunity to community. The Mayor voiced disappointment with the Board of Elections related to a phone inquiry that wasn't returned. Mayor Valentino shared that Council is negotiating the City Manager's contract, and he is hopeful that they can retain her. Mayor Valentino was recently invited to be on WXXI Connections, where Seneca Lake and Geneva highlighted.

17. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Ctr. Petropoulos; seconded by Ctr. Gillotte
MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:30pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

Nicole Tillotson
City Clerk