

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

OCTOBER 21, 2025 – 6:00 PM
City Hall – 2nd Floor Council Chambers
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, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Brennan

Absent:

2. AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA

ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Valentino; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos

MOVED THAT the agenda be amended to set a public hearing for the NYS Grant funding under the federal Community Development Block Grant Program, to assist Liquid Orchard, Inc.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. RESOLUTION – Establishing a Public Hearing for the NYS Grant Funding Under the Federal Community Development Block Grant Program and Specifically for CDBG-Economic Development Grant to Assist Liquid Orchard, Inc.

Assistant City Manager Youngs presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Geneva City Council supports programs and projects that align with the 2016 City of Geneva Comprehensive Plan, and

WHEREAS, the City intends to apply to New York State for funding under the federal Community Development Block Grant Program in 2025; and

WHEREAS, applications include submission on behalf of Liquid Orchard, Inc. for assistance in establishing a facility for the production of fruit and vegetable beverages at the Cornell Agriculture Technology Park (Tech Farm) in the City of Geneva; and

WHEREAS, the City may apply for funding for the following programs and activities: Infrastructure, Public Facilities, Community Planning, Microenterprise, Housing, Small Business and Economic Development activities; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing is held as part of the process to solicit public input with respect to potential applications and program activities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Geneva City Council establishes a public hearing for November 5, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. to hear public feedback on the intent to apply to New York State for funding under the federal Community Development Block Grant Program in 2025 for Liquid Orchard, Inc. and additional program activities.

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. DISCUSSION – 2026 Budget

Mayor Valentino reviewed the motion to table Councilor Grimaldi's amendment to the 2026 budget eliminating \$15,350,000 in bonding. Councilor Grimaldi rescinded the tabled resolution.

Mayor Valentino then opened up the floor for discussion, and motions.

After some council and staff discussion on the matter, Councilor Whitfield made a motion to rescind three amendments to the 2026 budget approved on October 7 to amend the 2026 General Fund Budget by \$130,000 to allocate one-time funding from the general fund reserve fund to the Department of Public Works for \$65,000 for one F150 truck and to the Recreation Department for \$65,000 for one Recreation Truck; allocation of one-time funding of \$120,000 from the water fund reserve fund to the Water Department for two trucks for water department; and to amend the 2026 General Fund Budget by \$65,000 to allocate one-time funding from the general fund reserve fund to the Police Dept for one marked vehicle. There was no second offered for his motion.

Councilor Petropoulos made a motion to amend the 2026 General Fund Budget by \$150,000 from tax levy to the Police Department to support the hiring of one full time Police Officer.

Councilor Pealer wondered about the Mayor's motions impact on levy, staff advised that they are coming from Fund Balance. It was noted that Councilor Petropoulos did increase tax levy with his motions. Discussion followed around total impact on the tax rate. Councilor Pealer wondered if a new Police Officer is brought in, will \$150,000 be the total all in cost for the year. City Manager Hendrix explained the cost for an officer, whether new or lateral coming out to \$150,000 annually. Councilor Petropoulos clarified that council is refunding one of the two positions dissolved in 2021, giving the Police Chief greater flexibility in policing. Councilor Brennan asked for clarification around Police Officers on leave for various reasons. Chief Eveland explained that if the two lateral transfers with contingent offers pan out, they will be down one position after Sergeant promotion. On paper there are six officers not working currently due to training new officers, 207c, and various injuries. Councilor Grimaldi wondered what the process is to bring them back, City Manager Hendrix explained that there is a vacant position on the books now that can be refunded. Discussion followed around reinstating the position and the total package cost of a new police officer. City Manager Hendrix reminded Council that there will be a new Police contract next year, so pay is an estimation. Councilor Pealer wondered about charge backs for details in the community. Comptroller Blowers confirmed that there are charge backs for community event details, and Comptroller Blowers explained that it goes back into the general fund, like any reimbursement, further explaining that the City knows the revenue coming into the police department, and can make adjustments on the expense side of the police budget. Discussion followed. Councilor Grimaldi wondered what the impact to the Police Department will be with an additional officer. Chief Eveland explained that he sees the light at the end of the tunnel with two in training and one coming off FTO in December. He'd also like to put one in the Academy in January, a second would be helpful, as he is anticipating six retirements in the next 2-3 years. He explained the importance of training for succession planning. Councilor Pealer wondered if the Geneva Police Department is on average across the state with absentee rates. Chief Eveland said they are in line with averages related to administrative absences and injuries statewide.

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

**MOVED TO amend the 2026 General Fund Budget and allocate on- going funding of
\$150,000 from tax levy to the police department to support the hiring of
1 FTE police officer**

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Aye -	Clr. Moracco, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Brennan, Mayor Valentino
Nay -	Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Brennan

MOTION CARRIED (6-3)

Councilor Petropoulos made a motion to amend the 2026 General Fund Budget and allocate on-going funding of \$75,000 from the tax levy to the City Manager's Office to hire a multiple dependent grant writer position to provide additional resources to the organizations, with costs to be split evenly across the General Fund, Sewer Fund and Water Fund at \$25,000 per budget.

Councilor Grimaldi wondered if it's feasible to hire a grant writer at that cost. City Manager Hendrix explained that there are ongoing funds for grant writing that can be added (\$25,000) and noted that the position likely will be a first quarter hire, but not January. Councilor Petropoulos asked how helpful this position would be for the greater good of the City. City Manager Hendrix deferred to Chief Parrotta, Chief Eveland, and Director Venuti on how beneficial the position will be. Chief Parrotta reviewed some grants in the works, and the grant opportunities that the City misses because there isn't time or knowledge to do research and apply. Chief Eveland seconded this, noting that if you're not actively searching, you will miss a lot of opportunities. Director Venuti shared that there is a considerable amount of public works grant funding that the City is missing out on. Councilor Pealer wondered if CDBG grants will be gone in 2026. City Manager Hendrix explained that some of that funding will be gone, but some will remain, noting that as grants come across City desks, staff apply, or monitor for next year. Councilor Pealer sees the landscape of grants changing, and suggested a fund balance allocation and outsource the service, engaging a success-oriented grant writer. City Manager Hendrix explained that outsourcing costs \$3,000-\$25,000 per grant. Assistant City Manager Youngs expanded that staff still coordinates internally, and a consistent grant writer builds a level of knowledge that reduces initial burden as they become more practiced. She shared that funders will seek a consistent grant writer out, if they are known in the grant world. Discussion followed. Councilor Lavin wondered why the City Manager didn't put this request in the budget. City Manager Hendrix explained that she was keeping the budget at 2% growth, so she held it back. She is supportive of the position. Discussion followed. Councilor Petropoulos agreed that Council didn't give the City Manager any viable budget direction, and commended her on the budget she presented, and sees what's presented now keeps the City moving forward without costing too much. Councilor Moracco wondered how tough it will be to find a grant writer and how would performance be measured. Councilor Whitfield asked department heads what sort of success they've experienced writing on their own. Chief Parrotta explained the challenges and heavy lift of grant writing and missing opportunities. He also explained that grant writing can pay for itself, as many grants cover administrative costs. City Manager Hendrix shared that successful grants are usually written with outside support, certain community members writing for the City.

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

MOVED TO amend the 2026 General Fund Budget and allocate on- going funding of \$75,000 from tax levy to the City Manager's Office to hire a multiple departmental grant writer position to provide additional resources to the organization with costs to be split evenly across the Water, Sewer and General Funds at \$25,000 per budget

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Aye - Clr. Moracco, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Mayor Valentino

Nay - Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Brennan,

MOTION DEFEATED (4-5)

Councilor Petropoulos made a motion to amend the 2026 General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund budgets and allocate ongoing funding of \$75,000 from tax levy to Public Works for a full-time electrician to support City operations. Costs are to be split equally between General Fund, Water Fund, and Sewer Fund at \$25,000 per budget.

Director Venuti explained that for safety reasons alone two people on an electrical job makes sense, noting that a lot of this work is contracted out. Councilor Moracco wondered what decrease would occur in contracted electrical services with the addition of this position. Director Venuti estimates about 25%. Discussion followed around costs and savings of the proposed position. Councilor Brennan raised concerns about adding more and more money into the budget. Councilor Grimaldi raised concerns about not funding infrastructure maintenance causing liability. Councilor Petropoulos explained that the cost to an average home to fund this position would be \$0.38 per month. He explained that he wants to see the City build, and become more attractive, explaining that his three motions are meant to improve the City, and everyone in the room will get value out of his motions. Councilor Lavin lamented that he'd like to vote for the grant writer, but in the macro, Geneva is a City with houses falling down, houses that can't be built, seniors moving

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Geneva, New York, that the General Fund budget as presently presented be and it hereby is adopted, and that a copy of the General Fund budget as hereby adopted be set forth in full in the minutes of this meeting, and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the several sums in the General Fund budget for the year 2026 as appropriations for expenditures, in the total amount of **\$22,949,255** be and the same hereby are appropriated in the amounts provided for in the attached Chart of Accounts.

ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Valentino; seconded by Clr. Gillotte

MOVED THAT the resolution be approved

ROLL CALL VOTE: **Aye - Clr. Moracco, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer, Mayor Valentino**

Nay - Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Brennan

MOTION CARRIED (6-3)

7. **RESOLUTION** – Approving Water Fund Budget for the Year 2026 and Appropriating monies Therefore

Mayor Valentino presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Water Fund Budget of the City of Geneva for the year 2026 has been submitted to the City Council for its approval; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the Water Fund Budget as presently presented should be adopted.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Geneva, New York, that the Water Fund Budget as presently presented be and it hereby is adopted, and that a copy of the Water Fund Budget as hereby adopted be set forth in the minutes of this meeting; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the several sums in the Water Fund Budget for the year 2026 as appropriations for expenditures, in the total amount of **\$4,102,144** be and the same hereby are appropriated in the amounts and for the several purposes therein specified in the attached Chart of Accounts.

ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Valentino; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi

MOVED THAT the resolution be approved

ROLL CALL VOTE: **Aye - Clr. Moracco, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer, Mayor Valentino**

Nay - Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Brennan

MOTION CARRIED (6-3)

8. **RESOLUTION** – Approving Sewer Fund Budget for the Year 2026 and Appropriating Monies Therefore

Mayor Valentino presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Sewer Fund Budget of the City of Geneva for the year 2026 has been submitted to the City Council for its approval; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the Sewer Fund Budget as presently presented should be adopted.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Geneva, New York, that the Sewer Fund Budget as presently presented be and it hereby is adopted, and that a copy of the Sewer Fund Budget as hereby adopted be set forth in the minutes of this meeting; and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the several sums in the Sewer Fund Budget for the year 2026 as appropriations for expenditures, in the total amount of **\$5,931,854** and the same hereby are appropriated in the amounts and for the several purposes therein specified in the attached Chart of Accounts.

ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Valentino; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos

MOVED THAT the resolution be approved

ROLL CALL VOTE: **Aye - Clr. Moracco, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Brennan, Mayor Valentino**

Nay - Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Lavin

MOTION CARRIED (7-2)

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 7:31 to discuss the employment history of a particular person or persons

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 7:41pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-2 absent)

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:41pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nicole Tilletson

City Clerk