

The Geneva City Council
Journal of Proceedings
Regular City Council Meeting
City of Geneva, New York

July 1, 2026 – 7:00 PM

City Hall
2nd Floor Council Chambers
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY

Presiding - Jim Cecere Mayor

I. Call to Order – Mayor, Jim Cecere

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

IV. Updates

a. Mayor's Report

Mayor Cecere shared that he met with Senator Helming last week about housing, economic development, occupancy tax, and how to get more state support. He also met with Ontario County Economic Developer Ryan Davis, County Administrator Chris DeBolt, and Board of Supervisors Chair Bill Wellman. This group discussed where the City is headed, and how the County can support the City in many areas, including economic development, with real support for initiatives, as the largest city in the county. The Mayor explained that the County is also working towards an occupancy tax, noting that he would like that to align back to the City, with the funds generated to be put towards ongoing tourism support. Mayor Cecere also raised the issue of funding lakefront repairs with the Senator and County related to damages from recent storms and flooding.

Mayor Cecere then provided an update on the City Manager recruitment process, explaining that Council will continue to pursue a City Manager form of government, while reviewing the role of City staff and council to see how it's aligned, and to improve upon it during this vacancy. He went on to explain that right now council is talking about what that will look like, and will bring the topic forward for public discussion in the near future. He shared that council is reviewing what a true role and structure for a new City Manager should look like. The Mayor then announced that he asked Assessor Rados, present at the July 21 Operations meeting, to offer an understanding of where the revaluation process is prior to certification. In closing, Mayor Cecere encouraged residents to attend Ray Ray's Community Love Day on July 11 at Clark Street Park, where Mayor Cecere will be sitting in a dunk tank along with some council members and the Chief of Police.

b. Council Reports

Councilor Petropoulos reported that the LDC shared at its meeting this morning that Porch Fest was a success. First Friday and the Art Walk will be held this Friday, downtown. He also shared that the Seneca

Sounds Festival will be held on September 12 from 3-11pm at the Cracker Factory. An additional fundraiser for that event will be held in August. Tables will be available for organizations during the Seneca Sounds festival as well. He also shared that the FLX Film Festival will be back in Geneva on Feb. 26 and 27, 2027. Councilor Petropoulos welcomed two new businesses to downtown, Ciao Warma and Naughty on the Weekend. He then shared that Norfolk Southern has begun repairing the railroad crossings downtown, currently working on the Elizabeth Blackwell crossing. They will move down to Castle Street and Lake Street later this summer. Councilor Petropoulos attended a recent Parks Collective event, and invited everyone to the lakefront on the 4th of July where the Masonic Lodge will hold historic speech readings, with a brass band.

Councilor Kaim wished all a happy 4th of July. He reviewed several meetings that he attended, including the Recreation and Ad Hoc committees. He shared that the construction of the new Dunkin' Doughnuts is coming along in Ward 6, and that there have been some problems with the gazebo at the lakefront, delaying its completion. Councilor Kaim also shared that the Masons will hold a 4th of July celebration with historic speeches and a brass band, and that he will be in the dunk tank at Clark Street Park on July 11.

Councilor Brennan had no report this month.

Councilor Gillotte shared that the BID will host First Friday on July 3 from 5-9pm where there will be live music and events at multiple locations. Ironman will be coming to Geneva on July 12, bringing athletes to the City as early as Wednesday, with several events planned for the weekend in addition to the triathlon, including an Art Walk, Fireman's Parade and Block Party, and America 250 Fireworks at 9:30pm on Saturday, July 11. The BID welcomed three new downtown business last month including Naughty on the Weekend bakery, Ciao Warma, and Cake. At its June meeting, the Police Budget Advisory Board reviewed the Department's preliminary budget presented by Chief Eveland, which includes more than \$200,000 in proposed reductions as a result of the City's directive for departments to cut spending. The Board remains deeply concerned about the continued pattern of annual cuts and the impact they are having on officer morale, recruitment, retention, and the department's ability to effectively serve our community. They are especially concerned by what the reduction will mean for the training budget and the current suspension of training opportunities, including those that have already been budgeted for. Training is not an optional expense, it is essential to officer preparedness, professionalism, accountability, and public safety. The Board is increasingly alarmed by what appears to be a continuing mindset of addressing budget challenges through cuts to public safety and other departments rather than investing in them. They believe this is inconsistent with the City's stated commitment to public safety. Asking the Police Department to continually do more with less isn't a sustainable approach and the board urges the City leadership to prioritize the resources necessary to support both our officers and the residents they serve.

Councilor Grimaldi attended the Housing Authority Meeting, calling it pretty standard, with a new member appointed to the board.

Councilor Gummoe attended an Ad Hoc Housing Committee, where the main topic was meeting with Code Enforcement. The Planning Board didn't meet, and the Green Committee did meet. However, Councilor Gummoe couldn't attend due to a conflicting meeting. Councilor Gummoe shared that Casella has been picking up trash before the 7am, causing resident complaints on West William Street, calling early pick-up an ongoing issue.

V. Proclamations

- a. Parks & Recreation Month
- b. Independence Day

VI. Public Comment

Charles King of Washington Street shared the following comments:

Happy 250th to the United States. I just turned 55, so I was 5 in 1976 for the 200th. Back then coins were very uniform, aside from the occasional wheat penny. I remember how fun it was when the bicentennial silver dollar, half dollar and quarters came out. I grew up near Philadelphia and I think it's cool that Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell are on the back of two of those 1976 coins. I'm a classically trained singer. I used to sing the National Anthem to my soccer, tee-ball, coach pitch and little league teams on opening day, Memorial Day, and other occasions when I was coaching, and I would point out that the National Anthem is a question song: it ends with a question mark. It's basically "can you still see our flag?" I used to make sure my teams could see the flag when I sang. Hopefully their generation can see the flag figuratively as well as literally. Not everyone has perfect pitch; the way to find a starting note on the National Anthem is to hum reasonably a high note for the "free" at the end and then drop the octave to "Oh say". I think it's poetic that not everyone is working with the same "free." When I say the Pledge of Allegiance, I emphasize the AND at the end, "liberty and justice for all." I think the political parties tend to see liberty and justice as differently weighted priorities, but I think we can have both, thus the emphasized "and." One of my grandfathers served in World War I back when it was popular to do so before you went to college. He met my grandmother who was four years younger than he in college, even though they were in the same year. My other grandfather was Army Corps of Engineers in World War II, helping design the giant ships that would carry tanks to Europe. My grandmothers held down the fort, sometimes through significant hardship. My dad was drafted into the Navy during Vietnam under the Berry Plan, the doctors draft. The day I was born he took his oath of office in Manhattan and then rushed home to Raritan Township in west-central Jersey in time to put Debussy's "Afternoon of a Faun" on the turntable for my birth. We spent a fair chunk of my childhood in Key West, where he helped run the Army-Navy underwater swim school, attended to wounded veterans, and helped deliver hundreds of service family babies, helping set the stage for the OBGYN portion of his rural family practice over the next 30+ years. Families affected by the draft are perhaps naturally more skeptical of government. I love my country and am a firm believer in government "of the people, by the people and for the people" to quote Honest Abe. If I hold you to a high standard it's because I want our government to function with those principles at the municipal level, too. I realize that there may be a period where, as a new City Council, you focus more on accounting than accountability, and I am trying to encourage you to recognize your government is dysfunctional and ethically hollow and to start focusing on things that happen outside this small room and at more than just this meeting with this small set of personnel. We're in grave danger of having a government that's OF the lodge halls, BY the chatbots, and FOR the government unions, rather than the people. Please strive to broaden your focus, especially as our country and its founding principles celebrate a milestone birthday.

Geoff Hellauer-Geiger thanked Council for recognizing Parks and Recreation Month. He shared that the next Meet Your Parks event will be held on Monday July 5 at Clark Street Park, and following that, July 13 at Richards Park. The Sprinke Starship has been serving ice cream at these park events. He encouraged residents to come to the parks and play. Mr. Hellauer-Geiger shared a Loomis Woods update from nearby residents who are improving the park by laying more bark chips on the trails.

Jackie Augustene of Washington Street thanked City Manager Hendrix for her service. She recalled the 555 Exchange Street building and the ongoing challenges it's presented since her time on council, noting that it sits in the Urban Design District. Ms. Augustine wondered if six Councilors making the decision with absences and recusals would have the votes to move forward with setting the Chapter 111 Public Hearing. Ms. Augustine then stressed that she doesn't want to see the City paying for demolition of a property with ongoing owner neglect issues, noting that whoever takes the building down is responsible for the design standards. She believes that rehabbing the building is the best way to go, integrating it into a housing project, perhaps. Ms. Augustine then pointed to Chapter 151, abandoned construction projects, and wondered about abandoned construction structure fines on the former Legion property at \$250 per day.

VII. Presentation

a. Geneva Parks Collective

Gabrella D'Angelo, Alex McLaughlin, Fairoo Suhita, and Aryanna Burbas presented on behalf of the Parks Collective, sharing that the Collective has worked together since January 2025 focusing on revitalization of neighborhood parks. In addition to outreach events and surveys, the group has worked on park transformations. The Parks Collective is imagining a community pool in the East Lakeview neighborhood, at Clark Street Park. Ms. D'Angelo called Seneca Lake a gem, with water playing a key role in Geneva, including the City drinking water. Water features were recalled, including ponds and fountains, and a waterfront park. The Parks Collective recalled water health and hygiene throughout Geneva's history, including Geneva Mineral Springs and Geneva Water Cure and Hygienic Institute, that shipped water all around the US. The collective shared that water recreation has been a part of Geneva's history. Beaches were reviewed, as well as pools, fountains and spray parks. It was noted that currently, there is no public pool for city residents to use, while within a 50-mile radius there are a handful of community pools.

Currently, Clark Street Park is an open field with a baseball diamond and parking lot. The East Lakeview neighborhood is isolated from Seneca Lake, as well as having the highest concentration of young people within the City. Costs of pools and their staffing and maintenance were then reviewed as well. It was noted that grants have been identified by the Parks Collective for building a pool as well as staffing and maintenance. They call the proposed community pool a driver to attract residents into the community.

Partnerships for the pool project with the YMCA, HWS and the Boys and Girls Club were suggested. The Collective then presented two pool concepts. The first was a traditional chlorine pool concept, with two pool houses, a playground, and fitness park elements. A natural pool proposal was presented next, filtered with rocks and natural plantings. This design is less expensive to maintain, and includes bathrooms, volleyball courts, and a bike track. Rather than grass, there are clover spots that are softer than natural grass in this proposal. The collective's hope is to make one of these concepts a future reality.

VIII. Discussion

a. 2027 Budget Revenue Projections

Mayor Cecere opened the budget revenue projection discussion. He thanked Assistant City Manager Youngs and Comptroller Blowers for their work, giving Council a chance to see where revenue and revenue drivers are. He acknowledged that the revenue comes from taxes and fees that allow the city to continue to offer services that residents expect.

Assistant City Manager Youngs explained that tonight, staff is only looking at revenue. Comptroller Blowers shared an outline of revenues run a little over a month ago, showing revenue running about \$400,000 better than where the city was a few months ago due to better state aid projections and grants.

He explained that revenue from grants isn't added into the budget unless it's going to be spent in that

calendar year, while with many grants the city funds projects up front, and is reimbursed afterward.

Currently there is about a 3% increase in revenues, with the tax levy remaining the same, meaning no additional tax revenue. There hasn't been much change in state aid, which is viewed as a one-time revenue for 2027. Some other revenues include day-to-day fees, and Clerk fees and licenses. Revenues by department were then reviewed. He explained that all department revenue goes into the general fund to support the general operations of the City. Water and sewer funds were then reviewed, noting that these funds generate their own revenue without overlapping.

Mayor Cecere wondered about a \$486,592 gap in the Water Fund. Assistant City Manager Youngs explained that that number may be smaller depending on the equipment needs of the department.

Comptroller Blowers explained that revenues will be updated for the July 21 meeting, and expenses will be looped in for that meeting as well. Mayor Cecere wondered where Comptroller Blowers sees an opportunity for an increase in numbers. Comptroller Blowers shared that sales tax is tracking better than projected, so there's some opportunity there. Assistant City Manager Youngs committed to reviewing fee schedules to make sure that staff time is expending to meet a service cost is covered by the fee schedules. Increased penalties for repeat offenders were then discussed by Mayor Cecere.

Councilor Kaim wondered about shared services revenue, where City employees are essentially leased out. The agreements do reference retirements and post-employment benefits. Comptroller Blowers did explain that the City will always have a little bit more liability under this model, noting that the city would give up a lot of control if they leased from other municipalities. Councilor Petropoulos is supportive of increasing fees and wondered about selling parking passes as a revenue generator. Mayor Cecere explained that a permit fee process is being looked at for long-term rentals and an occupancy tax for short-term rentals. Mayor Cecere wondered where else Council would like to see more fee collection. Councilor Kaim suggested registering bicycles, ticketing for winter parking, and parking meters. Councilor Gummo recalled an opportunity to fine for abandoned construction sites, brought up by Ms. Augustine during Public Comment. Councilor Gillotte shared that he is looking into Code Enforcement for building permits and dilapidated properties. He acknowledged staffing limitations and the courts' part in enforcement. Councilor Kaim suggested bringing in industry, which would solve revenue problems.

IX. Unfinished Business

X. New Business

- a. Approving and Authorizing Submission of a New York Main Street Grant Application for 1 Railroad Place

Action taken by Councilmember Kaim, Jr.; seconded by Councilmember Petropoulos

Moved that this resolution be approved

Motion Passed Unanimously

- b. Setting Public Hearing for 2026 CDBG Applications

Action taken by Councilmember Gillotte; seconded by Councilmember Grimaldi

Moved that this resolution be approved

Motion Passed Unanimously

- c. Setting a Public Hearing for Conveyance of City Owned Property Maryland St (90.84-1-3, 90.84-1-4, 90.84-1-5)

Action taken by Councilmember Kaim, Jr.; seconded by Councilmember Gillotte

Moved that this resolution be approved

Motion Passed Unanimously

- d. Setting a Public Hearing to Require Repair or Demolition of 555 South Exchange Street Pursuant to City Code Section 111-5(A)

City Attorney Hou presented and briefly reviewed this resolution. Councilor Petropoulos would like to hear ideas for repair and demolition and raised concerns about the neighboring building. Councilor Brennan clarified that Chapter 111 moves the deed to the City if the owner doesn't demolish the building. He further explained that the property owner is making no effort to maintain the building, and the City may be stuck with the costs. Attorney Hou explained that if no action is taken, the property will go into foreclosure and become a ward of the City, which would have to take further action. Chapter 111 is legally the only option for the City to take action at this time. The Madias property on Castle Street was briefly discussed, as a recent Chapter 111 proceeding last year that motivated property owners to take action and demolish a dangerous structure. Councilor Brennan raised concerns around the building that 555 S. Exchange is attached to. Safety concerns were discussed. Councilor Kaim wondered the extent of the street closure. Just one side of Exchange Street is blocked off in the area of the property.

Action taken by Councilmember Petropoulos; seconded by Councilmember Gummoe

Moved that this resolution be approved

Motion Passed (6-2 absent 1-abstain)

XI. Board and Commission Appointments**XII. Consideration of Meeting Minutes**

Action taken by Councilmember Gummoe; seconded by Councilmember Grimaldi

Moved that minutes from the May 27, June 3, June 16, and June 17, 2026 Council meetings be approved

Motion Passed Unanimously

- a. May 27, 2026
- b. June 3, 2026
- c. June 16, 2026
- d. June 17, 2026

XIII. Adjournment

Action taken by Councilmember Petropoulos; seconded by Councilmember Gummoe

Moved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:25PM

Motion Passed Unanimously

City Clerk

Resolution # 36-2026

Approving and Authorizing Submission of a New York Main Street Grant Application for 1 Railroad Place

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva desires to apply for financial assistance through the 2026 Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) under the New York Main Street Downtown Anchor Grant Program for 1 Railroad Place; and

WHEREAS, the New York Main Street (NYMS) Program, administered by New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), provides funding to assist with building renovations and streetscape enhancements in mixed-use commercial districts; and

WHEREAS, the application proposes funding to assist the City of Geneva to complete building renovations to its downtown “main street” building at 1 Railroad Place, a prominently located building in need of improvements to support its productive reuse and contribution to the economic vitality of the area; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project at 1 Railroad Place includes the construction of a professional office and one apartment unit on the second floor, along with façade improvements that will enhance the building’s appearance and contribute to the aesthetic and commercial appeal of the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva is committed to the revitalization and economic development of its downtown and neighborhood commercial areas, including Railroad Place; and

WHEREAS, the project aligns with the goals of the City of Geneva’s revitalization efforts and supports the continued development of mixed-use properties that provide commercial and residential opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the grant application requires that the applicant obtain the approval and endorsement of the governing body of the municipality in which the project will be located.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Geneva authorizes the submission of a New York Main Street grant application for building renovations and façade improvements at 1 Railroad Place, Geneva, NY; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager (or designated official) is hereby authorized to execute all financial and administrative processes related to the application and, if awarded, to implement the NY Main Street grant on behalf of the City.



STATE OF NEW YORK)
COUNTY OF ONTARIO) ss:

I, Nicole Tillotson, City Clerk of the City of Geneva, New York, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and complete copy of an original resolution on file in the City Clerk’s Office, which said original was adopted at a Regular Meeting of the Geneva City Council held on July 1, 2026.

Dated: July 2, 2026

Nicole Tillotson

City Clerk

Resolution # 37-2026

Setting Public Hearing for 2026 CDBG Applications

WHEREAS, the Geneva City Council supports programs and projects that align with the 2016 City of Geneva Comprehensive Plan and the 2026 Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2026 CDBG funding opportunities are currently available; and

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva desires to pursue appropriate funding for projects that implement the City's Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan, and other adopted plans and programs; and

WHEREAS, these applications require a public hearing for the purpose of hearing public comments on the City of Geneva's community development needs, and to discuss the possible submission of one or more Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for the 2026 program year; and

WHEREAS, CDBG applications will include submission to the CDBG Public Facilities Program, the Community Infrastructure Program, and the Imminent Threat Program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Geneva City Council establishes a public hearing on the 2026 CDBG funding applications for July 21, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter at the regularly scheduled Council Meeting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Clerk and Grant Coordinator are directed to publish the appropriate required notifications advertising the public hearing and application plans as required by the funding agency.



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Dated: July 2, 2026

Nicole Tillotson

City Clerk

Resolution # 38-2026

Setting a Public Hearing for Conveyance of City Owned Property Maryland St (90.84-1-3, 90.84-1-4, 90.84-1-5)

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva has identified surplus real estate that is not serving a city goal; and

WHEREAS, the Geneva City Council has deemed that the properties located at Maryland Street (90.84-1-3, 90.84-1-4, 90.84-1-5) no longer serve a public purpose and should be sold to a private party; and

WHEREAS, Flint Hall is now proposing to purchase the Property; and

WHEREAS, if a proposal is determined to be in the best interest of Geneva residents City Council anticipates a sale of this property.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that a public hearing for sale of city-owned parcels located on Maryland Street (90.84-1-3, 90.84-1-4, 90.84-1-5) will be held at the regular City Council meeting on August 5, 2026.



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Dated: July 2, 2026

Nicole Tillotson

City Clerk

Resolution # 39-2026

Setting a Public Hearing to Require Repair or Demolition of 555 South Exchange Street Pursuant to City Code Section 111-5(A)

WHEREAS, the City Code Enforcement Officer has determined that the building located at 555 South Exchange Street a dangerous and/or unsafe building and has provided the owner of said building written notice of the same pursuant to City Code Section 111-3(A); and

WHEREAS, the owner of 555 South Exchange Street has failed and refused to submit a plan for the repair or removal of the building within 90 days after service of written notice, as is otherwise required pursuant to City Code Section 111-4(A); and

WHEREAS, City Code Section 111-5(A) provides that, in the event of such failure to submit a plan, the City Council shall call a public hearing, the purpose of which shall be to require the repair or demolition of said building;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Geneva that a public hearing shall be had on the 5th day of August, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., for the purpose of determining whether City Council shall order the repair or removal of the building located at 555 South Exchange Street. In the event that City Council determines that the said building shall be repaired or demolished, it will assess all costs and expenses incurred by the City in connection with the proceedings, including legal fees, to remove or secure said building, including the cost of actual repair or removal, and said assessment shall be a lien against the land upon which the building or structure is located and shall be added to the next tax roll to be filed; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Clerk serve notice of this public hearing upon the owner of record of 555 South Exchange Street, and any other persons having an interest in said property as determined by the Code Enforcement Office. Service of said notice shall be either personally or by certified mail, addressed to the last known address, if any, of the owner, or on the owner's executors, legal representatives, agents, lessees or other persons having a vested or contingent interest in the same, as shown by the records of the Receiver of Taxes, and/or in the office of the County Clerk or County Registrar.



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