

## **Agenda**

### **Regular City Council Meeting**

**City of Geneva, New York**

May 6, 2026

**City Hall**

**2nd Floor Council Chambers**

**47 Castle Street**

**Geneva, NY**

### **Executive Session Starts at 6:00 PM**

To discuss collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of civil service law, the employment history of a particular person or persons, and the proposed sale of real property.

### **Council Meeting Starts at 7:00 PM**

Listen to the City of Geneva's YouTube Channel:

[YouTube.com/@CityofGenevaNY](https://www.youtube.com/@CityofGenevaNY)

- I. **Call to Order** – Mayor, Jim Cecere
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Roll Call**
- IV. **Council Reports**
- V. **Public Comment**
- VI. **Proclamations**
  - a. Public Service Recognition Week
- VII. **Discussion**
  - a. Public Safety Overview of Operations - *Mayor Cecere*
  - b. Debt Strategy Proposal — *Mayor Cecere*
- VIII. **Reports**
  - a. Mayor's Report
  - b. City Manager's Report
  - c. Quarter 1 Financial Report - *City Manager Hendrix*
- IX. **Supervisor Update**
- X. **Presentation**
  - a. Town & County Shared Services - *City Manager Hendrix*
  - b. Lakefront Updates - *City Manager Hendrix*
  - c. Grants Update - *Assistant City Manager Youngs*

- d. Red Knights Firefighters Motorcycle Club - *Chris Tiffany*

**XI. New Business**

- a. Intermunicipal Agreement with the Town of Fayette for Sanitary Sewer Service

**XII. Board and Commission Appointments**

**XIII. Consideration of Meeting Minutes**

- a. March 28, 2026 Town Hall Meeting
- b. April 1, 2026 Regular Meeting
- c. April 21, 2026 Special Meeting
- d. April 23, 2026 Special Meeting

**XIV. Adjournment**

## Q1 2026 Grants Update

The City continues to actively leverage external funding to advance key priorities across infrastructure, planning, economic development, and public safety. In Q1 2026, we have secured approximately **\$4.35M in grant funding**, while continuing to manage a robust and growing portfolio.

### Grants Awarded in 2026 (YTD)

The table below provides a summary of grant awards received year-to-date, including associated match requirements where applicable.

Grant Program	Project / Purpose	Award Amount	City Match	Other Match
<b>Climate Smart Communities</b>	Castle Creek Daylighting Feasibility	\$60,000	\$15,000	—
<b>Smart Growth Planning</b>	Comprehensive Plan Development	\$99,000	\$11,000	—
<b>CDBG Public Facilities</b>	Fire Truck	\$1,000,000	\$105,000	—
<b>CDBG Planning</b>	Inflow & Infiltration (I&I) Study	\$50,000	\$0	—
<b>CDBG Small Business</b>	Liquid Orchard	\$100,000	—	\$100,000
<b>HCR Target Area Grant (TAG)</b>	City-owned Parcel & Housing Readiness Assessment	\$250,000	\$5,268	—
<b>DHSES / FEMA</b>	DPW-related Recovery / Resilience	\$171,554.87	\$57,184.95	—
<b>CDBG MAP*</b>	Small Business Support	\$180,000	\$0	\$15,000
<b>SWIFR*</b>	Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling	\$2,438,210	—	—

<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$4,348,764.87</b>		
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\*Award letter ONLY

### **Applications Pending / Under Review**

The City has several applications currently under review, representing additional potential investment in recreation, infrastructure, and tourism:

- **NYS DOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** – \$2,000,000 for the continuation of the rail-trail greenway project, including installation of two pedestrian bridges
- **NYS Open Space Conservation Grant Program** - \$200,000 to support the strategic acquisition of one key parcel along Castle Creek, advancing long-term goals for flood mitigation, water quality improvement and downtown climate resilience.
- **Greater Rochester Health Foundation Responsive Grants Program** – \$524,860 to develop a Rapid Response Repair Fund to address urgent conditions such as mold and water intrusion community outreach/education and legal support to reduce fear and improve housing stability.
- **NYS Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund** - \$46,544.48 to support the review, index, storage and organization of City records.
- **NYS Municipal Parks and Recreation (MPR)** – \$487,125 for installation of new playground at Richards Park – did not receive.

If awarded, these projects would further advance housing, downtown revitalization, transportation improvements, and tourism-related economic activity.

### **Opportunities in Progress**

Staff are actively preparing for upcoming funding opportunities, including:

- **NYS PLAYS (Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Program)** – playground equipment Richards
- **NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA)** - a key annual funding opportunity that supports a wide range of priority initiatives, including economic development, infrastructure, and community revitalization
- **Additional annual Public Safety Grants**

### **Active Grant Portfolio & Key Project Highlights**

In addition to new awards, the City continues to manage a substantial and active grant portfolio from prior years. These projects represent significant ongoing implementation work across departments, including compliance, reporting, procurement, and coordination.

Key highlights include:

- **Restore NY (Round 6, 8 and 9) and ATAD County Infrastructure Funding**, supporting major redevelopment and infrastructure investments
- **CHIPS Funding**, advancing annual roadway and infrastructure improvements
- **Farmers Market Resiliency Grant**, supporting local food systems and community programming
- **Public Safety Grants** (e.g., Stop DWI, Traffic Services, Child Passenger Safety), supporting ongoing enforcement and safety initiatives
- **HCR Housing Rehabilitation**, advancing housing rehabilitation projects across the City

In addition, we are actively advancing our Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Marina Project for the reduced-scope project focused on dock replacement and long pier stabilization. A contractor has been selected, and we anticipate a contract this month. This project remains a key component of our broader waterfront and downtown investment strategy.

### **Looking Ahead (Q2 and Beyond)**

Staff will continue to:

- Advance implementation of awarded projects (Over \$7.3M since January 2025)
- Manage compliance and reporting requirements across the portfolio (including projects dating back to 2016, totaling over \$10M).
- Strategically pursue additional funding aligned with Council priorities

As a reminder, while grant funding provides significant financial leverage, it also requires ongoing staff capacity to successfully administer and deliver these projects.



## Geneva City Council Agenda Item Briefing

**To:** Geneva City Council

**From:** Amie Hendrix, City Manager

**Meeting Date:** May 6, 2026

**Item Title:** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF GENEVA AND THE TOWN OF FAYETTE FOR SANITARY SEWER SERVICE TO TOWN OF FAYETTE SEWER DISTRICT NO. 1

### **Action Required:**

Approval of a resolution authorizes the City Manager and City Attorney to move forward with an Intermunicipal Agreement (“IMA”) to set forth the framework under which the City would accept and treat flows originating from the Town of Fayette’s Sewer District No. 1, subject to available capacity, regulatory compliance, and the City’s engineering standards.

### **Summary of Action:**

The Town of Fayette has established Sewer District No. 1, which is currently pending approval by the New York State Comptroller. To provide sanitary sewer service to properties within that district, the Town has requested to connect to and discharge into the City of Geneva’s municipal sanitary sewer system for conveyance to the City’s wastewater treatment facility.

Article 5-G of the New York General Municipal Law authorizes municipalities to enter into intermunicipal agreements for the joint provision of services such as wastewater treatment. The attached Intermunicipal Agreement (“IMA”) sets forth the framework under which the City would accept and treat flows originating from the Town’s Sewer District No. 1, subject to available capacity, regulatory compliance, and the City’s engineering standards.

### **KEY TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT**

- Term: Twenty (20) years, subject to earlier termination for material breach after notice and an opportunity to cure

**Office of the City Manager**

Amie M. Hendrix

CITY HALL- 47 CASTLE STREET- GENEVA, NEW YORK 14456

(315) 789-2603 - FAX (315) 789-0604 - ahendrix@geneva.ny.us - www.cityofgenevany.com

- Infrastructure: The Town is solely responsible for the design, construction, and installation of all collection-system infrastructure up to a connection point mutually agreed upon and approved by the City's Department of Public Works.
- Operation & Maintenance: The Town operates and maintains all facilities up to the connection point; the City operates and maintains its system and treatment facilities.
- Capacity: Acceptance of flow is subject to available capacity and an allocated maximum average daily and peak flow consistent with the City's NYSDEC permits.
- Connection Approvals: The Town may not issue connection permits within Sewer District No. 1 without prior written approval from the City, which will respond within thirty (30) days.
- Pretreatment & Enforcement: All Town users must comply with Chapter 277 of the City Code; the City retains direct enforcement authority over Town users to the same extent as City users. Industrial and high-strength dischargers must enter into separate agreements with the City.
- Indemnification & Insurance: The Town indemnifies the City for claims arising from the Town's system, except to the extent caused by the City's negligence; both parties maintain appropriate liability coverage.
- Approvals Required: Geneva City Council, Fayette Town Board, and any required NYSDEC or other regulatory approvals.

**Alternatives:**

- Authorize a narrower structure instead. Council could decline this framework but invite the Town to propose an alternative for example, a treatment-only wholesale arrangement (City treats, Town handles all collection and enforcement).
- Reject. Decline the IMA entirely. The Town would need to pursue another path such as its own treatment facility, an agreement with a different host municipality, or alternative on-site systems for the district.

**Financial Impact:**

None under an IMA, however the rates charged to the Town for treatment of wastewater conveyed from Sewer District No. 1 are to be established through a separate extension agreement between the parties, as may be amended from time to time. Contract fees, rates, and the associated extension agreement will be brought before Council for review and approval prior to execution. Authorization of this IMA establishes only the operational, regulatory, and legal framework for the connection; it does not commit the City to any specific rate, charge, or financial term.

**INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE TOWN OF FAYETTE AND THE CITY OF GENEVA**

This Intermunicipal Agreement ("Agreement") is made this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026, by and between the **Town of Fayette**, a municipal corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, with offices located at 1439 Yellow Tavern Road, Waterloo, NY 13148 ("Town"), and the **City of Geneva**, a municipal corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, with offices located at 47 Castle St., Geneva, NY 14456 ("City").

**RECITALS**

WHEREAS, the Town has established **Sewer District No. 1** pending NYS Comptroller approval pursuant to the New York Town Law; and

WHEREAS, the Town desires to provide sanitary sewer service to properties within Sewer District No. 1; and

WHEREAS, the City owns and operates a municipal sanitary sewer system and wastewater treatment facilities; and

WHEREAS, the City has capacity within its sewer system and treatment facilities to accept wastewater from the Town, subject to the terms and conditions herein; and

WHEREAS, the parties are authorized to enter into this Agreement pursuant to **Article 5-G of the New York General Municipal Law**;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein, the parties agree as follows:

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**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish the terms under which the Town, on behalf of Sewer District No. 1, shall connect to and discharge sanitary sewage into the City's sewer system for treatment.

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**2. CONNECTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**2.1 Construction**

The Town shall be responsible for the design, construction, and installation of all sewer infrastructure necessary to convey wastewater from Sewer District No. 1 to the designated connection point within the City's sewer system.

**2.2 Connection Point**

The connection point shall be mutually agreed upon by the parties and approved by the City's Department of Public Works.

**2.3 Standards**

All construction shall comply with:

- Applicable federal, state, and local laws;
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) requirements;
- City engineering standards and specifications.

**2.4 Connection Applications and Approvals**

The Town shall notify the City of all applications for connection to the Town's sewage collection system.

The Town shall not issue any connection permits pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Town Code without the prior written approval of the City.

Upon receipt of notice of an application for connection, the City shall review the same and shall issue a written determination approving or denying the application within thirty (30) days of receipt of such notice.

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**3. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

**3.1 Town Responsibilities**

The Town shall operate, maintain, repair, and replace all sewer facilities within Sewer District No. 1 up to the connection point.

**3.2 City Responsibilities**

The City shall operate and maintain its sewer system and wastewater treatment facilities.

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**4. SEWER SERVICE AND CAPACITY**

**4.1 Acceptance of Flow**

The City agrees to accept and treat wastewater from Sewer District No. 1, subject to available capacity and compliance with this Agreement.

**4.2 Capacity Allocation**

The Town shall be allocated a maximum average daily flow and peak flow as determined by the City and consistent with NYSDEC permits.

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## **5. USER CHARGES AND FEES**

### **5.1 Sewer Rents and Rates**

The rates charged to the Town for the treatment of wastewater conveyed from Sewer District No. 1 shall be as set forth in any applicable extension agreements between the parties, as the same may be amended from time to time.

### **5.2 Billing**

The City may bill the Town directly, and the Town shall be responsible for collecting charges from users within Sewer District No. 1.

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## **6. PRETREATMENT AND DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS**

### **6.1 Compliance with City Code**

The Town shall require all users within Sewer District No. 1 to comply with all applicable provisions of **Chapter 277 of the City Code of the City of Geneva**, as the same may be amended from time to time.

### **6.2 Enforcement by City**

The City shall retain the authority to enforce the applicable provisions of Chapter 277 of the City Code against all users located within Sewer District No. 1 ("Town Users"), to the same extent as if such users were located within the City.

### **6.3 Industrial and High-Strength Waste**

The City shall require any Town Users discharging industrial waste, extra-strength waste, or large volumes of wastewater, as defined in Chapter 277 of the City Code, to enter into a separate agreement with the City governing such discharge. The Town shall require, as a condition of permitting connection to the Town's wastewater collection system, that any such users enter into the required agreement with the City and comply with all applicable provisions of Chapter 277.

### **6.4 Prohibited Discharges**

The Town shall ensure that no prohibited substances enter the City's system.

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## **7. INDEMNIFICATION**

The Town shall indemnify and hold harmless the City from any claims arising from the Town's sewer system or discharges, except to the extent caused by the City's negligence.

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## **8. INSURANCE**

Each party shall maintain appropriate insurance coverage, including general liability insurance, in amounts reasonably acceptable to the other party.

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## **9. TERM AND TERMINATION**

### **9.1 Term**

This Agreement shall remain in effect for a term of twenty (20) years, unless sooner terminated.

### **9.2 Termination**

Either party may terminate this Agreement upon material breach by the other party, after providing written notice and a reasonable opportunity to cure.

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## **10. MODIFICATIONS**

This Agreement may be amended only by written agreement of both parties, subject to approval by their respective governing bodies.

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## **11. APPROVALS**

This Agreement shall be subject to:

- Approval by the Town Board of the Town of Fayette;
  - Approval by the City Council of the City of Geneva;
  - Any required approvals by the NYSDEC or other regulatory agencies.
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## **12. NOTICES**

All notices shall be in writing and delivered to the parties at the addresses set forth hereinabove.

**13. GOVERNING LAW**

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of New York.

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**14. ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding between the parties.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the date first written above.

TOWN OF FAYETTE

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF GENEVA

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLUTION # 25-2026**  
**AUTHORIZING AN INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF GENEVA AND THE TOWN OF FAYETTE FOR SANITARY SEWER SERVICE TO TOWN OF FAYETTE SEWER DISTRICT NO. 1**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Fayette has established Sewer District No. 1, pending approval by the New York State Comptroller, pursuant to the New York Town Law, and desires to provide sanitary sewer service to properties within said district; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva owns and operates a municipal sanitary sewer system and wastewater treatment facilities and has capacity within those facilities to accept wastewater from the Town, subject to the terms and conditions of the proposed Intermunicipal Agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, Article 5-G of the New York General Municipal Law authorizes municipal corporations to enter into agreements for the joint or cooperative performance of municipal functions, including the conveyance and treatment of wastewater; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Manager has presented to this Council a proposed Intermunicipal Agreement between the City of Geneva and the Town of Fayette establishing the operational, regulatory, and legal framework under which the City will accept and treat wastewater conveyed from Sewer District No. 1, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 5 of the proposed Agreement provides that the rates charged to the Town for the treatment of wastewater shall be as set forth in a separate extension agreement between the parties, as the same may be amended from time to time; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has reviewed the proposed Agreement and finds that its execution is in the best interests of the City and its residents, provided that the financial terms governing user charges are subject to subsequent Council approval; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Geneva that the Intermunicipal Agreement between the City of Geneva and the Town of Fayette, in substantially the form attached hereto, is hereby approved; and **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Intermunicipal Agreement on behalf of the City of Geneva, together with such non-substantive modifications as may be approved by the City Manager upon the advice of the City Attorney; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** no rate, fee, sewer rent, or extension agreement establishing user charges payable by the Town of Fayette or by users within Sewer District No. 1 shall take effect under the Agreement until the same has been presented to and approved by this City Council by separate resolution; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the City Manager is further authorized to take such additional administrative actions as may be reasonably necessary to implement the Agreement, including coordination with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and other regulatory agencies.

# THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

### TOWN HALL MEETING

March 28, 2026 – 10:00AM

Geneva YMCA  
399 W. William Street  
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Jim Cecere, Mayor

#### 1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Kaim, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Gummo, Clr. Grimaldi

Absent: Clr. Whitfield

#### 2. PRESENTATION – Strategic Plan 2026-2027

Mayor Cecere opened by thanking the YMCA for hosting, and providing a brief introduction of the Strategic Plan.

#### 3. DISCUSSION

Councilors Kaim and Gummo reviewed the Housing and Development portion of the plan. Comments from attendees included the need for single family homes, to put down roots and the regional lack of availability of these homes. Concerns were also raised about flooding, too many rentals, seasonal issues like snow and ice on sidewalks, and the number of houses in the city that are dilapidated in neighborhoods while neighbors near homes in disrepair are paying high property taxes. Mayor Cecere shared that 51% of units in Geneva are not owner occupied, and wondered if the City should issue rental licenses and charge a fee. Most in the room agreed that rental suitability certificates should be issued to rent any units. Discussion followed around this potentially driving empty units, as it wouldn't incentivize landlords to make units livable. Discussion then turned to higher rent apartments, and attracting higher earners to live in the City. Discussion followed about increasing Code Enforcement staff and local banks offering lower interest loan for property upkeep. Councilor Gummo summarized that council is hearing about quality of existing homes and rental code enforcement.

Councilors Lavin and Grimaldi reviewed the Budget and Finance portion of the plan. Councilor Lavin explained that the City carries too much debt, and has reduced services and staff while having the highest taxes in the County. He also raised concerns about the city's investments that others are benefiting from. Concerns raised from participants included the Finance Ad Hoc committee and its current focus on debt. Discussion followed around higher assessments, especially for homes that are surrounded by condemned homes. Councilor Grimaldi explained the challenges of having an Assessor that doesn't live in the City, and the snapshot that assessments are in an ever-changing market.

Councilors Petropoulos and Gillotte reviewed the Downtown Revitalization portion of the plan. Councilor Petropoulos wondered if those in attendance supported converting empty buildings into apartments, with positive response from participants. He wondered what would bring people to downtown more often. Responses included grocery stores, pharmacy, laundry, dress and clothing shops. Comments followed around online shopping replacing some retail, and how to incentivize stores to come into the City. Discussion then followed around opening businesses downtown, and

how to encourage Genevans to integrate into downtown and open businesses. Barriers discussed including residents' income levels leading businesses to focus on the tourism economy. Mayor Cecere wondered how the City looks at economic development, using agencies while economic development is buried in the Assistant City Manager role. He stressed the importance of making sure agencies like the IDA, LDC, and BID having the right focus. He then wondered if disincentives and penalties should be used to ensure store fronts are utilized, and the importance of a strategy to ensure the city attracts visitors to appropriate areas and earns tax dollars from tourism. Discussion followed. Some in attendance agreed that tracking the vacancy rate would be helpful, all were in favor of adding housing units downtown while most were not in support of more government funded housing. Mayor Cecere stressed the importance of tax generating homes given the City's tax position. Discussion then followed around healthcare being the largest employer in the county wondering if the City meets with healthcare representatives that employ the highest and lowest earners in the County. Mayor Cecere shared that he will be forming the Geneva Leadership Council that will include representatives from HWS, Finger Lakes Health, and Cornell to talk about where the city is today, and where to go in the future.

Councilors Gillotte and Brennan reviewed the infrastructure portion of the plan. Councilor Gillotte shared that there have been 19 water main breaks in the first 60 days of the year, with an annual average of 39 breaks. Costs include overtime, materials, and impacts of staff who still have to report for regularly scheduled shifts when being called out after hours to respond to breaks. He explained that breaks are a result of aging infrastructure that is sensitive to the vibration of vehicles, etc. Councilor Brennan asked attendees what the most important infrastructure issues are in their neighborhoods. Flooding and sidewalks were priorities mentioned. Discussion followed around municipal plowing of sidewalks and the complaint-based sidewalk repair system. Transportation like taxis and RTS bus lack of accessibility were discussed, as well as sunken man hole covers and putting electric underground during street reconstruction. Mayor Cecere called infrastructure a tier 1 priority and the primary focus of council for the next year or two. He acknowledged housing needs and the empty space in the City, PILOTs for big projects, and suggested that single family housing should get a similar incentive. Mayor Cecere also spoke in support of a rental licensing program and using a portion of the fees to fund code enforcement positions, and using the rest for a home ownership fund incentivizing building new homes with personal PILOTs. Discussion followed. Councilor Lavin added that the LDC and IDA are fixated on an old vision of Geneva with downtown as its center, while he sees Hamilton Street as where economic development should happen. Discussion followed around attracting jobs like light manufacturing.

Mayor Cecere and Councilor Kaim reviewed the Recreation and Youth portion of the plan. Mayor Cecere shared that the City's recreation space includes the Recreation Complex, built in the 1970's, and 13 parks. He wondered how many youth programs are in the City between HWS, the YMCA, and Boys and Girls Club. Discussion followed around changes in recreation over the past 20 years and how to reflect today's ways kids do things, when everything is organized and kids don't just go out, the accessibility of programs, and access to and maintenance of the Recreation Complex. Mayor Cecere committed to putting together a committee to partner with HWS and other stakeholders to raise money to redesign, redevelop, or change the complex into something new and different, a downtown attraction for all residents.

In closing Mayor Cecere shared that the Strategic Plan will include goals with metric. He asked attendees if they feel that the City is on the right track, the majority said it is.

#### 4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:01pm

*Nicole Tillotson*  
City Clerk

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL  
JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

April 1, 2026 – 7:00 PM  
City Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Council Chambers  
47 Castle Street  
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Jim Cecere, Mayor

1. ATTORNEY CLIENT MEETING
2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

**MOVED THAT Council move to executive session at 6:38 to discuss the employment of a particular person or persons.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gillotte; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi**

**MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 6:59pm**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Kaim, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Gummoe, Clr. Grimaldi

Absent: Clr. Whitfield

4. PUBLIC HEARING - 2026 Strategic Plan

Mayor Cecere opened the public hearing at 7:05pm

Charles King, of Washington Street, shared the following comment with Council:

My first comment on the Strategic Plan is its lack of environmental focus. The health of the lake, forever chemicals in fish, non-invasive plants for landscaping, and trees we're maintaining to keep the city from getting too hot in summer are all things that the people of Geneva care about. If you see your role as more of one that delegates and appreciates the Green Committee, the Weeders, the Recreation Board, and the Shade Tree Committee, you should still put that in your Strategic Plan. With conversations around the sunlighting of Castle Creek, it might be useful to form a committee to investigate the health of Castle Creek. Address questions like: Is the sluiceway at Cornell good or bad for the creek? Are bacteria levels in Brook Street Park appropriate for kids to play there? Etc.

My second comment has to do with, again, Boards and Commissions. You are continuing the practice of previous Councils when it comes to blindly appointing warm bodies to boards. Your meeting last month involved an emphasis on the transactional aspects of governance, what's being bought and sold, but the formational aspects of government, who's actually being chosen to make important decisions, was handled as an afterthought. I realize you inherited a neglected mess, but you are not yet being careful with how you bestow power. You are doing little to make sure Boards are being trained, supported by staff, or informed as to their purposes, and you are doing nothing to prevent

concentrations of power and conflicts of interest between powerful boards. This has been a major problem with Geneva's dysfunction in the past and one that is going to take more and more work because it's been neglected. I'm sorry, but you aren't yet doing your most important job, which is to constitute a government that conforms to state and local standards.

The Strategic Plan and updated Comp Plan have no value if you do not hold staff liaisons and Boards responsible for reading and implementing them. When the Planning Board was reviewing Dunkin Donuts at North and Exchange two years ago, the Director of Planning, who was for some reason not staff liaison to the Planning Board, wrote an email detailing several ways that the Dunkin site would need to be changed in order to comply with the Comp Plan. I presented research that drew from the Comp Plan, state SEQR standards, the Active Transportation Plan's review of unsafe intersections, the Brownstone Survey, the 1960s zoning and the 2023 zoning which had just been passed, and detailed ways in which the Dunkin plan was out of compliance with all of those documents. Then another member of the Planning Board held up Dunkin Donuts' pedestrian survey, which had been done on the coldest day of the year in mid-January, and which only showed a handful of pedestrians crossing North and Exchange during walking-to-school hours. He said "You've done your research and I've done my research. Are you saying that your research is better than my research?" When there is no standard for anything but blindly believing big developers and no compliance with City Documents, we have no negotiating power.

There are two Comprehensive Plans. One is the written one. One is the unwritten one which is just gut instincts and trusting the billion-dollar companies to swoop in and save Geneva. You can vote on whatever you like here, but with no plan to educate relevant staff and boards, there is would be no implementation. This is a warning.

Kathryn Slining-Haynes, of Ward 1 shared her surprise at Council's lack of preparation on new issues, noting that Council is made up of people that represent only a portion of Geneva. She wondered what the comfort level is for all residents to approach them. Ms. Slining-Haynes shared that she looked up zero based economic development review, calling it time consuming with no real benefits. She urged council to take code enforcement seriously, as apartment renters shouldn't have to live in substandard housing, noting that poor stewardship of residential and commercial property is contrary to tourism goals. Ms. Slining-Haynes wondered if Short Term Rental permitting is being enforced. She then reminded Council that the Comprehensive Plan did involve community participation, and challenged council to develop an inclusive process. In closing She voices support for the reconstituting of the Human Rights Commission, calling it important if allowed the respect it deserves.

Jackie Augustine, of Washington St. explained that she liked the idea of focus and narrowing some pieces of the comprehensive plan, and noted that she's having a hard time seeing deliverables. Ms. Augustine then explained that Comprehensive Plans are quasi legal documents that guide everything the City does, while this Strategic Plan sounds like things that are on Council's minds, noting that she'd rather see a working group or a list of tasks, and in closing asked what will get done as a result of this plan.

Barb Roach-Rokow, of South Main Street shared that the City's number one priority should be economic development, as a city with limited resources, noting that there is lots of competition with the whole county having a housing problem. She raised concerns about the school district and lots of housing competition.

With no one else requesting to speak, Mayor Cecere closed the public hearing at 7:15pm

## 5. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Lavin shared that he would limit his comments to the South Main Street discussion later on the agenda.

Councilor Gummoie shared that the Green Committee met and continue to look at ways to improve composting at the Resource Recovery Park, farming works, and adding volunteers during peak hours.

Councilor Grimaldi had no report, as the Geneva Housing Authority did meet, but he was unable to attend.

Councilor Gillotte shared that the Police Budget Advisory Board will meet next week, and that the new BID office opened last week, stop by and see them anytime. The BID hanging baskets sale is coming up soon, and they are putting summer programming together.

Councilor Brennan had no report.

Councilor Kaim shared that the Recreation Advisory Board will be meeting next month.

Councilor Petropoulos shared that the LDC received the HWS Bond fee, the LDC will be presenting at the next Downtown Ad Hoc Committee meeting. A Cook Properties update was provided at the LDC meeting as well. The Colt Street easter egg hunt will take place at the Alliance Community Church on Saturday. Councilor Petropoulos attended Officer Arroyo's retirement ceremony. He shared a state initiative to have 30% of law enforcement officers be female by 2030. BID will present at the Downtown Ad Hoc Committee on Monday night. In closing Councilor Petropoulos shared that he will be working to get the downtown neighborhood back in order, and is looking for signs.

## 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Charles King, of Washington Street shared the following comment with Council:

It was nice to see City Council at Bozzuto Center for Entrepreneurship last year to discuss the OEO property. Hobart and William Smith Colleges are not your enemy, Council. I've watched your 2026 meetings including mid-month strategy sessions and I'm struck by the extent to which some of you criticize Hobart and William Smith Colleges, which some of you refer to as simply "Hobart"—not exactly convincing the city that you care about women, by the way.

Council is responsible for the content of the Comprehensive Plan. If you don't want HWS to have quote-unquote "undue influence" over writing the Comprehensive Plan—which I think is a misrepresentation of 2016—you can always provide your own ideas and expertise. It's your document; take responsibility for it.

Blaming HWS students for unsafe conditions on South Main is absurd.

You're not at war with HWS. My wife is a math professor at HWS; I have driven her to work on many cold days. For 24 years, her office was in Lansing Hall and I'd drive on South Main to take her to work. That is a very narrow and fast road. I never see kids on cell phones crossing South Main. The problem with the "personal responsibility" narrative is that it can be used to justify the most unsafe situations. During the Dunkin Donuts conversation I mentioned earlier, someone argued that personal responsibility was all it took to address any degree of danger for children crossing to get to school at North & Exchange. He said, "I've played Frogger; I understand not to get squashed." The frog in Frogger always gets squashed in the end; Terrified Frog vs. 16 Wheeler is maybe not a good metaphor for a safe streets policy.

"It takes two people to cause an accident," one of you said in a recent South Main conversation. I wonder if our lived experience actually jives with that idea. If someone is backing into your parked car right now, is that partly your fault? Pedestrians are doing their best to navigate an unsafe road, and you are responsible for changing that unsafe road. Stop preemptively victim blaming and address the actual problem.

You have a fresh start, new elected leadership. It's not necessary to continue propaganda that everyone at HWS is an extremist to justify do-nothing or right-reaching policies. The Fallacy of Composition is what's at play if you argue that HWS equals extremism because of a few individuals. Most professors are overworked teachers trying to catch up on grading and committee work, mainstream democrats, dictionary capitalists (though not modern crony capitalists) who believe in free and fair elections, property rights, inheritance, and well-regulated free markets. Others are conservative, some are libertarians, some have served in the Peace Corps, some have taught at military academies. They are an asset, not a liability.

HWS bought Garden Apartments, reducing apartment housing for the City of Geneva. I and others called upon them to do a land swap and sell land around Staples Plaza to the city to develop new housing. What incentive does HWS have to be partners with you if you take an adversarial stance?

City Council has been sitting on ten-plus years of data describing South Main as unsafe. You can either politicize and do nothing or you can brainstorm, lead and govern.

Steve Salmon, of South Main Street, spoke in favor of crosswalk blinkers, sharing a variety of reactions from drivers that he's experienced while crossing South Main Street. He raised concerns about implementing alternate side parking all winter long, due to concerns about elderly and limited mobility people having to park far away from their homes all winter with parking reduced by 50% all the time, rather than just during snow events.

Alexander Kelley recalled a few matters he brought to council at last month's meeting, calling the Washington Street parking lot unresolved with a property owner still claiming part of the lot as his property, noting that the city might put no parking in some spaces. He recalled a Finger Lakes Times article from 2017 about the Innovation Kitchen at the GEDC that was created to be available to entrepreneurs 24/7, as part of a food and beverage district initiative. Mr. Kelley explained that the kitchen is out of reach for entrepreneurs now, and that he will be looking at the deal to make sure it is available to the community.

Jerry Buckley, of South Main Street and the Historic Districts Commission, called returning to alternate side of the street parking all winter a bad idea that won't die, recalling residents moving cars back and forth for 120 days prior to the notification system, and explaining that the notification system is working well. Due to improved communications residents are made aware that if there is a snow emergency alternate parking is in effect, and he noted that HWS does a good job of pushing the information out to students as well. He agreed that increasing fines is also a good deterrent, and wondered what problem council is trying to solve by reverting back to alternate parking all winter, moving cars for 120 days no matter the weather, your age or mobility, saying that doesn't make sense anymore. He called reversion back to alternate parking all winter not resident friendly, and not tourist friendly. He recommended attaching a QR code to the City's website for those who question if there is a current snow emergency.

Eileen Buckley-McDougal disagreed with going back to moving cars all winter, calling it not just inconvenient or unfriendly, but hostile to move cars every day for the chance that it might snow. She agreed signage can be confusing, and sees a need to embrace the notification system with signage improvements. She recommended rather than going back to the old way, tweak the new way and make it work better, because as the city tries to increase housing, it needs to accommodate people parking.

Barb Roach-Rokow, of South Main Street believes that the alternate parking system works wonderfully. She understands frustrations with DPW, noting that she's lived on South Main Street since 1993, recalling the nightmare finding parking was the old way. She also noted that it's hard to tow during a snow storm, and that reverting back to the old way would place an enormous burden on residents. She also called flashing lights on South Main Street cross walks a good idea to alert drivers to pedestrians.

Jackie Augustine, of Washington Street, echoed what everyone else said about alternate winter parking, recalling plowing issues that existed with the old system as well. She encouraged the City to make people aware, and incentivize compliance. Ms. Augustine recalled years of efforts to reduce speed limits on South Main Street, and being restricted by State Vehicle and Traffic Law until 2023 when legislation was passed allowing cities to reduce speed limits to 25mph on state routes. She shared information about state bill 3882A and encouraged advocacy by letter writing, as this bill would exempt cities outside of New York City from expensive engineering studies that are required under current law to drop the speed limit to 25mph.

7. PROCLAMATIONS

- A. Arbor Day
- B. Fair Housing Month

8. DISCUSSION - Update and Recommendations of the Finance Ad Hoc Committee

Mayor Cecere was pleased to share that the committee has reached and achieved a draft debt strategy for the City that will be released to City Council at their next meeting, setting realistic budget parameters. Mayor Cecere explained that Council wants to manage debt in the City today and going forward with debt management and transparency on an ongoing basis.

Councilor Lavin shared that he is extremely impressed after two years of not confronting the effect of taxes that are need to support things. He doesn't see limitation, rather speed bumps to understanding the impact of spending, and believes that this will help with discussions with towns that get the City's services that they don't pay for including emergency aid. Councilor Gillotte explained that it's important for the public to understand this different approach and what Council is trying to do, controlling debt. He looks forward to addressing specific areas of the budget, and a commitment to move forward as quickly as possible with intelligent decisions.

## 9. South Main Street Traffic Calming and Noise

Councilor Lavin shared that he has lived on South Main Street for several years, and as a graduate of HWS understands campus. He explained that South Main Street has events, attractions, and garbage trucks that can't turn without violating the center yellow line. He also explained that parking isn't necessary for the length of South Main Street, as there is campus parking nearby. Councilor Brennan suggested a 25mph speed limit, and removing parking along overlook, as well as recommending more speeding enforcement. Councilor Brennan recalled watching a truck rip a rear-view mirror off of a vehicle parked legally while kids were waiting to cross the street. He called the situation serious enough to address now even though it's a state road, and recommends that the City take action now, rather than wait two years for the state. He believes that if South Main Street, Cemetery Hollow and Lockland Road are paroled for noise, trucks will go elsewhere.

Councilor Petropoulos shared that he likes flashing signs at crosswalks on South Main Street, and reducing the speed limit 25 mph. He also recommended having State Police patrol, rather than having GPD sit there all day enforcing noise ordinances.

Councilor Brennan explained that he originally said no to flashing lights, but has changed his mind. He also noted that the points system changed, making speeding a 4-point violation. People will be speeding a great deal more with a 25mph limit. He also agrees with decreasing parking to make cross walks more visible, thus making flashing lights more doable. Councilor Gillotte agreed that people need to pay attention while crossing the street, and sees a need to visually draw attention of drivers to pedestrians, calling enforcement key to the plan.

Councilor Gummoe agreed that removing parking spaces near pedestrian crossings is a good idea, but recalled a study showing that people will drive the implied speed limit, and making the street wider with no parking will increase speeding. Councilor Lavin suggested adding a Police Officer and make them earn their salary by stopping people on that route, as an additional solution.

Mayor Cecere recalled flashing crossing signs introduced by Director Venuti earlier this year, noting that he has grant funding to pay for flashing lights at crosswalks. There is no resolution needed, just direction to Director Venuti.

Reviewing the three South Main Street concerns of trucks, speed, noise, Mayor Cecere noted that statutes related to noise in the city are not widely enforced. He would like to revisit that and include enforcement of noise on Hamilton and South Main Street. Councilor Lavin committed to putting a resolution together.

Councilor Kaim wondered if the City uses CHIPS funding for flashing lights at crosswalks, would it be precluded from using that funding stream on South Main Street for 10 years? City Manager Hendrix explained that the City can't use CHIPS funding for the same improvements within a ten-year period, but this wouldn't preclude other projects on the same section of road.

## 10. DISCUSSION - Winter Parking

Councilor Kaim opened the Winter Parking discussion noting that he appreciates the input on the topic. He explained that he'd like to update regulations where the teeth were taken out of enforcement, from December 1 – April 1 annually. He explained that the announcement-based system was introduced in a period of mild winters, causing DPW challenges with cars blocking streets during snow events. He also explained that some people's phones don't scan QR codes, should that signage be added to parking signs. Councilor Kaim recalled complaints he's received from community members including school bus drivers, businesses, and parents concerned about cars parked on top of mounds of snow, and families that can't have visitors because disabled cars parked on the street limit plowing in some areas, including on South Main Street. He explained that downtown businesses suffer the loss in parking spots when plows can't clear them due to parked cars, recalling streets staying clear under the old system, explaining that the best way to fix that is to go back to the way it was before the notification system.

Councilor Gillotte explained that the size of streets can be an issue as well, as smaller streets are a challenge to plow. He wondered if there is a way to look at areas, rather than an umbrella policy since different areas have different winter parking and plowing issues and needs.

Councilor Lavin suggested that the City contract for towing, like Rochester does, explaining that for \$250 people who park illegally in the winter can go pay to get their cars back. He explained that the streets need to be cleared, and that towing companies would love the business. Councilor Kaim explained that there is still a towing list, and they'd be happy to get the call, recommending a policy of giving warnings in the beginning, then increasing penalties so people police themselves.

Councilor Petropoulos explained that it's pretty clear when people need to move their cars, and likes the idea of updated signs, voicing confidence that people can figure it out. He mulled over enforcement downtown, but not in neighborhoods.

Councilor Gummo identified an inefficiency problem, people are not adhering to the rules, and explained that he doesn't agree with the proposed solution. To remedy the communication issues, he agrees with improving signage, while the failure of the old system is compliance issued for 120 days, while current compliance is for roughly 10 days. Councilor Gummo wondered what the trend has been over time, if the problem is growing or shrinking.

Councilor Kaim doesn't see the number of snow emergencies changing the road from being hard to being passable, and sees a lot of problems showing themselves after four years.

Mayor Cecere wondered how many snow emergency days there have been, if it's an issue, and if there are specific areas to target. He tasked each ward representative to present with specific accommodations that should be made.

## 11. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Cecere introduced the Housing Ad Hoc Committee, explaining that it relates to the Strategic Plan that will focus on home ownership, affordability, rentals, and a rental subsidy process. The committee will be looking at ways to incentivize housing for those purchasing homes in the City of Geneva, and revitalizing existing homes through a program funded by fees, paying for itself. This committee will launch next month with a more formal release.

Mayor Cecere also explained that he is reviewing current Council meeting structure, and will have a more formalized two meeting per month process over the next couple of months.

## 12. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Councilor Gillotte wondered if there was an update on the Madias's parcel. City Manager Hendrix explained that the parcel's parking lot is being used as a staging area for the Castle Street reconstruction project, and the property owner is stabilizing the remaining building. He also wondered what the status of the Dunkin' project is, City Manager Hendrix explained that there is a permit in place, and no other update.

This month we're coming out of winter operations and heading into a very busy spring and summer season, while continuing the longer-term work that's shaping Geneva's future. That includes progress on housing, infrastructure investments, and improving how we communicate and connect with our residents.

At the same time, a lot of what our team does every day doesn't always make headlines and it truly matters. Whether it's responding to a resident concern, working through a code issue, or making sure services are delivered consistently, that steady, behind-the-scenes work is what keeps everything moving forward. The first full week of May is Public Service Recognition week, and we are actively making plans to celebrate our work force.

It's also important to acknowledge that municipal work takes time. We're part of a 128-year-old organization, and many of the challenges we're addressing didn't happen overnight. Because of that, our focus continues to be on making thoughtful, responsible decisions that move the City forward in a way that's sustainable.

I want to thank City Council for the work that has gone into the Council's Strategic Plan, particularly for listening to residents and working to incorporate community priorities. I also appreciate the recognition of the current work underway and the realities of staff capacity that are reflected in the plan. As we continue moving forward, I look forward to staff members having opportunities to provide additional context and operational insight to help further inform and strengthen that work.

This evening, I'll walk through a few key updates, and we'll be sharing more detailed information later this week on the City Manager's page of the website for anyone who wants to take a closer look.

### **Financial & Organizational Progress**

We continue to strengthen our financial position while improving transparency and planning. The annual audit is underway, enhanced reporting tools are being developed, and early conversations on the 2027 budget are beginning. We're also managing increased administrative demand, including a rise in FOIL requests.

### **Housing & Neighborhoods**

Housing remains a central priority. Multiple development projects are advancing, along with partnerships like Habitat for Humanity. We've also launched a housing rehabilitation program to improve existing homes with two homes currently receiving funding for general repairs, while continuing code enforcement efforts that support neighborhood stability.

### **Infrastructure Investments**

The Castle Street Reconstruction Project continues to move forward, alongside upgrades to water and wastewater systems. These investments are critical to long-term reliability and resilience. More information on the Castle Street progress can be found on your desks and will be included with the meeting minutes.

### **Economic Development**

We're seeing steady momentum through waterfront improvement bids, new business investment at the Tech Farm through grants awarded to Liquid Orchard, and continued coordination with regional and State partners to support economic growth.

### **Public Safety & Community Life**


Service demand remains steady across the community with over 7,000 calls for service to the Police Department through February. At the same time, we're transitioning into spring recreation programming, with strong interest in youth activities and summer camps. Soccer registrations are now live.


Last night (March 31), City staff responded to a significant regional storm event, with DPW crews working overnight to address flooding on Route 14 and Acti-Flo staff managing elevated wastewater flows that reached system capacity. Crews continue to respond to drainage calls this morning, while the Fire Department handled six water-related calls in the past 24 hours. Saturated ground and remaining frost have limited absorption, contributing to localized flooding as forecasted. Staff will continue monitoring conditions and responding as needed, and I appreciate the professionalism of all teams during this event.

### **Community Announcements & Key Dates**

#### **Community Conversations Relaunch**

 April 23, 2026


 8:30 AM

 (Location to be announced)

→ Informal opportunity for residents to connect, ask questions, and share feedback for the City Manager and Assistant City Manager

## Castle Street Project Information Meeting

 April 16, 2026


 5:30–6:30 PM

 City Hall

→ Updates on construction progress and upcoming impacts with the Department of Public Works.

## Seasonal Services

### Curbside Yard Debris Collection

 April 6 – June 19, 2026

→ Weekly pickup service resumes for spring cleanup.

### Recreation Programming Transition

→ Ice rink is in process of being converted to turf for spring and summer activities including soccer, lacrosse, and camps.

### Summer Camp Registration

→ Opens on April 9 with registrations online and at the Recreation Complex.

### City Meetings

- April 1 – Council Meeting (7:00 PM)
- April 21 – Work Session: 2027 Budget Preparation (6:00 PM)
- May 6 – Council Meeting (7:00 PM)
- May 19 – Work Session (6:00 PM)
- June 3 – Council Meeting (7:00 PM)
- June 16 – Work Session (6:00 PM)

As always, I want to thank our staff across all departments, as well as City Council and our community, for your continued support and engagement.

## 13. PRESENTATION - Finance and Assessors Office Briefing

**Department Overview:** The Comptroller's Office or Finance Department is responsible for accurately forecasting and tracking all financial transactions occurring as a result of City operations. The Department consists of multiple functional areas, including real property tax, accounts payable and receivable, purchasing, general ledger management, and budget management. The Department is also responsible for facilitation of the annual external financial audit, which provides a snapshot of the City's financial performance over the previous operating year.

The Assessor's Department reports directly to the City Comptroller and is responsible for the development of the annual property valuation roll, which provides a basis for property and sales tax collections. The Assessor position and tax clerk are shared employees with the City of Canandaigua. The City of Geneva has 1 FTE among these two positions.

**Number of Staff:** There are four full-time staff members in the Comptroller's Office, the Comptroller, Deputy Comptroller, and two clerks. The Assessor position and a tax clerk are shared employees with the City of Canandaigua. The City of Geneva has one full-time equivalent in staffing that supports Assessment services in the city.

**2026 Work Program Goals:** By Q3 2026, the Finance Department and City Manager will work with council to adopt a City Council-approved Five-Year Financial Plan. By December 31, 2026, the Assessor will maintain equitable property assessments by completing required valuation maintenance activities and ensuring assessment ratios remain within New York State compliance thresholds. This department will implement policy changes for citywide timekeeping system for 100% of departments, and update procurement policies to ensure improved fiscal transparency, compliance, and long-term financial stability.

### Five-Year Financial Plan

Develop and maintain a rolling five-year financial plan to support fiscal stability, long-term planning, and informed policy decisions. This will be developed in concurrence with the annual budget process and in alignment with adopted strategies from council following the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendations.

### Labor Contract Negotiations Support

Provide financial analysis and administrative support for collective bargaining agreements, including CSEA Foremen and CSEA MEA contracts. Labor negotiations with CSEA Foremen continue from 2025 and the unit is currently without a contract. The CSEA MEA contract negotiation will begin in Q2 of 2026.

**Citywide Timekeeping System Implementation**

Implement a standard timekeeping system for all City staff to improve accuracy, compliance, and reporting. The first step in this process is to standardize our work week so that the system implementation can go smoothly. The standardization will begin with policy decisions related to collective bargaining. These discussions will begin in Q3 of 2026.

**Procurement Policy Update**

Update the City's procurement policy and support adoption by City Council to ensure compliance, transparency, and best practices. The procurement policy will be updated and brought to council by Q3 2026.

**Citywide Property Revaluation**

Ensure property valuations remain equitable, accurate, and compliant through ongoing revaluation efforts. The property revaluation began in 2025 and will be completed in Q1 of 2026 to be submitted to the County and State in Q2 of 2026. The new assessed values of homes will take effect in 2026.

14. RESOLUTION – Adoption of the 2026 Strategic Plan

Mayor Cecere presented the following Resolution:

**WHEREAS**, The City Council of the City of Geneva wishes to create a Strategic Plan to establish a clear disciplined framework to guide the Council's legislative, oversight, and policy-setting work over the next two years; and  
**WHEREAS**, The City Council of the City of Geneva held a Strategy Session and a public hearing that resulted in the creation of a document entitled City of Geneva City Council Strategic Plan (2026-2027); and  
**WHEREAS**, The City Council of the City of Geneva wishes to move from reactive decision-making toward a focused, transparent, and results-driven governing approach. The document is designed to clarify City Council priorities, improve coordination between City Council, City Staff, and partner agencies, strengthen fiscal responsibility and long-term sustainability, and build public trust through accountability and measurable progress; now therefore be it  
**RESOLVED**, by the City Council of the City of Geneva, New York that the documents entitled City of Geneva City Council Strategic Plan (2026-2027) is hereby adopted.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Brennan; seconded by Clr. Lavin**

**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**

**ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Cecere; seconded by Clr. Kaim**

**MOVED THAT that the Strategic Plan (2026-2027) be amended to include KPI's and Outcomes**

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Kaim; seconded by Clr. Gummoe**

**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved as amended**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

15. RESOLUTION – Declaring Certain Property as Surplus

City Manager Hendrix presented the following Resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva maintains an inventory of equipment and supplies for the provision of certain municipal services; and

**WHEREAS**, the attached schedule of equipment and supplies no longer contributes value to the City's operations; and

**WHEREAS**, the equipment and supplies in the attached schedule may either be sold or traded to derive any final value to the City.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Geneva City Council, hereby and in due form, does direct the City Manager to dispose of the equipment in the attached schedule. The proceeds of any sale shall be applied to the Equipment Amortization Fund.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Brennan; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos**  
**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

16. RESOLUTION – Adopting the City of Geneva Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the use of artificial intelligence technologies is increasingly integrated into administrative and operational functions within government; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva recognizes both the opportunities and risks associated with AI, including impacts on data privacy, accuracy, legal compliance, sustainability, and public trust; and

**WHEREAS**, the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy has been developed to establish clear standards for the responsible, ethical, and secure use of AI tools by City personnel; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy formalizes current and anticipated practices by defining permitted uses, prohibitions, data protection requirements, and expectations for transparency and accountability; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy ensures that AI tools support, but do not replace, human judgment and that all work products remain under the responsibility of City representatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy has been reviewed by staff, management, and appropriate stakeholders in accordance with the City's policy development procedures;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Geneva City Council hereby adopts the City of Geneva Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this policy shall be incorporated into the City's Administrative Policy Manual and serve as guidance for the appropriate use of technology in City operations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all City personnel shall adhere to the standards and requirements set forth in the policy.

Councilor Gummoe thanked the City Manager for being ahead of the game nationally having this policy in place, and encouraged review every six months. City Manager Hendrix agreed that it will be reviewed regularly.

Mayor Cecere wondered how compliance would be monitored. City Manager Hendrix explained that there are tools to monitor and check for AI. Discussion followed around compliance and consequences for non-compliance.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gummoe; seconded by Clr. Brennan**  
**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

17. RESOLUTION – Adopting the City of Geneva Customer Experience Policy

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, effective and consistent customer service is essential to maintaining public trust, transparency, and accountability in municipal operations; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva delivers services across multiple departments and locations, requiring clear and consistent service standards for all personnel; and

**WHEREAS**, the Customer Experience Policy has been developed to formalize current practices, establish clear expectations for delivery of service, and ensure residents, businesses, and visitors understand how to access City services and what level of responsiveness they may expect; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy provides operational guidance related to communication standards, response timelines, service access, and complaint resolution consistent with modern municipal practices; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy has been reviewed by staff, management, and appropriate stakeholders in accordance with the City's policy development procedures;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Geneva City Council hereby adopts the City of Geneva Customer Experience Policy; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this policy shall be incorporated into the City's Administrative Policy Manual and serve as a guiding framework for City operations and service delivery; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all City representatives shall comply with the standards established therein.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr; Petropoulos, seconded by Clr. Gummoe**

**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**

**MOTION CARRIED (8-1 absent)**

18. RESOLUTION – Adopting a Fair Housing Officer in Compliance with Fair Housing and Pro-Housing Community Policies

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity administers federal laws and established national policies to assure that all Americans have equal access to the housing of their choice, and;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva wishes to have a officer who will implement and enforce the Fair Housing Act, and;

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Geneva, New York recommends the appointment of the Assistant City Manager as the Fair Housing Officer for the City of Geneva.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Geneva, New York that the Assistant City Manager be assigned to oversee that fair housing regulations are followed and act as the primary point of contact for all fair housing related issues.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gummoe; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi**

**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

19. RESOLUTION – Approving the Application for the 2026 Open Space Conservation Grant Program for 24 Colt Street, Geneva, NY

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, City of Geneva desires to apply for \$201,192.50 in financial assistance through the 2026 DEC Open Space Conservation Grant Program, performance payments grant, involving interim payment from DEC for the City to use as upfront land and closing costs and a contract term of three years; and

**WHEREAS**, the bid proposes funding for acquisition of land to for the purposes of protection from development and for public benefit of all New Yorkers; and

**WHEREAS**, the property located at 24 Colt Street, Geneva, NY 14456, Ontario County, is available for fee title acquisition and the landowner wishes to sell the land to the municipality for the purpose of establishing a community open space; and

**WHEREAS**, the DEC will hold 10% of the total land cost in retainage at the closing until recorded deed and final title insurance is received by DEC; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Geneva approves and endorses the bid for the 2026 DEC Open Space Conservation Grant Program and, recognizing this is a performance-based payments grant that may require minimum amounts of funding upfront, an order of operation for closing requirements and that the City understands that if the total project funds exceed the DEC funds, the municipality will supply the balance of funds from the general fund.

**RESOLVED** this 1<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2026 - I, Nicole Tillotson, do hereby certify that resolution 2-2026 was passed at a meeting of the City Council held on April 1, 2026, and is incorporated in the original minutes of said meeting and that said resolution has not been altered, amended, or revoked and is in full force and effect.

Councilor Brennan wondered how many homeowners responded to the City's inquiry, there were three. Councilor Gummoe wondered how many times the City can apply for this funding, Assistant City Manager Youngs explained that there are no limitations, and that the resolution is before Council tonight because the application deadline is April 15 this year. Discussion followed around demolition of this home if funding is awarded, with concern raised by Mayor Cecere about taking a house off of tax rolls. City Manager Hendrix explained that this will be a 20–30-year process, and without grant funding the City would need to set up a fund to purchase property sitting on top of Castle Creek, for its eventual daylighting. Discussion followed around strategy, properties impacted by storm damage, and the Storm Water Task Force recommendations.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Lavin; seconded by Clr. Gummoe**

**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**           Aye -       Clr. Brennan, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gilotte, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Grimaldi  
                                  Nay -       Mayor Cecere  
                                  Abstain -   Clr. Kaim, Clr. Gummoe

**MOTION CARRIED (5-1-2-1 absent)**

20. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Lavin; seconded by Clr. Gummoe**

**MOVED THAT the minutes of the February 17, March 4, and March 17 Council Meetings be approved**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

21. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Brennan**

**MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:17pm**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

*Nicole Tillotson*

City Clerk

# THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

### REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

April 21, 2026 – 6:00 PM  
City Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Council Chambers  
47 Castle Street  
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Jim Cecere, Mayor

#### 1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Kaim, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Gummo, Clr. Grimaldi

Absent: Clr. Whitfield

#### 2. DISCUSSION – 2027 Budget Priorities

City Manager Hendrix shared planning parameters around the 2027 budget. She opened by reviewing the 2026 adopted budget, and projections for 2027. Mission, Vision and Values were reviewed, as the foundation of everything the City does. Strategic priorities were then reviewed, from the recently adopted Strategic Plan. City Manager Hendrix recalled statistics from Census data about who the City serves, who lives here, and noted that Seniors are a growing percentage of the population. Workforce Projections between 2015 – 2030 were also reviewed. City Manager Hendrix then shared the legal framework of the budget process, noting that only one budget can be presented to Council, and reviewed the charter mandated budget timeline.

The Mayor's Services Priority Framework was reviewed to include Tier 1: Public Safety, Tier 2: Essential Infrastructure and Services, Tier 3: Legally Mandated functions, and Tier 4: Discretionary Services. Deliverables Framework was touched on next.

The 2026 Adopted Budget was reviewed as a financial snapshot, as well as the City's fund structures. Revenue and expenditures were reviewed next starting with the General Fund, where City Manager Hendrix noted that revenue is very property tax heavy. Cost drivers were also reviewed, noting that employee costs are key cost drivers across all funds.

Tax levy, rate and property tax impact were reviewed next, followed by fund balance and debt position.

Financial Projections were brought forward next, with the City Manager noting that the numbers will be more honed in by September. She next went over challenges in estimating some cost assumptions. City Manager Hendrix shared the 2027 fiscal challenge of an estimated 20% projected cost increase, which she reviewed in some detail. Gap closing revenue and fee potential and opportunities were presented as well as cost containment strategies.

Five areas of Council direction for the 2027 budget were shared including what Council's acceptable tax levy increase will be, which budget scenario of those presented does council prefer as a starting point, are there specific programs or services Council wishes to protect or prioritize, does Council affirm the Mayor's Guiding Principles as formal policy direction, and what is Council's timeline and priority expectation for receiving the required deliverables outlined by the Mayor?

Mayor Cecere thanked the City Manager, Comptroller and staff for this very thorough first look at 2027 budgeting. He sees prioritization and everything being on the table. He asked each councilor to present initial thoughts and reaction on data presented.

Councilor Lavin sees this as the crisis he's been expecting for some time, noting the potential for layoffs and cutting of services. He would like to confront this on the cost and revenue side of the budget.

Councilor Gummoe agrees with Councilor Lavin, noting concern with the gap widening over time, noting that he'd like to solve for controlling the gap over time, due to run away costs that are out of Council's control.

Councilor Grimaldi thinks that Council needs to look outside the box, and at services residents actually see.

Councilor Gillotte complimented the strong start to budget discussions, and hopes people realize the challenges this budget presents. He acknowledged that it will cost more to operate the City, and looks forward to resident feedback.

Councilor Brennan recommended using this document moving forward, and for council to discuss the points that were laid out for them so well, seeing the challenges of municipalities in upstate New York.

Councilor Kaim agreed that hard decisions will need to be made, keeping tax payers in mind as well as what's best for everybody, recommending being fiscally conservative.

Councilor Petropoulos complimented the City Manager on the presentation. He encouraged residents to reach out to councilmembers, to share their priorities and what they want. He's also ready to listen to what the Finance Ad Hoc Committee recommends, looking and moving forward.

Mayor Cecere explained the structural gap he sees, and encourages Council to have the patience to avoid drastic scenarios.

City Manager Hendrix asked residents and councilmembers to reach out to her to discuss budget considerations.

### 3. DISCUSSION – Debt Strategy Proposal

Mayor Cecere opened by thanking the Finance Ad Hoc Committee and staff for their work around debt strategy. He reviewed the Committee Charter to assess debt, cash, define KPI's, establish strategies and recommend governance and strategy to City Council, highlighting why this work matters. He shared that 48% of assessed property value in the city is tax exempt, the City's AA- credit rating, continued investment and transparency. Regarding the City's tax base, he noted that 62% is a more typical taxable property level in a municipality, leaving Geneva with less flexibility and more sensitivity to debt. Mayor Cecere reviewed the urgent risk of Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) exposure. He then reviewed the KPI Traffic Light Dashboard explaining the green, yellow and red statuses of categories. He called the City's leverage manageable, but tightening, heading to a less manageable debt situation with affordability tightening and enterprise funds needing some strengthening. Mayor Cecere then reviewed five governing principals to bring the City to sustainability including stability first, liquidity before pay-go, debt discipline, phased transition, governance and oversight that translate into measurable targets. Debt affordability targets were then reviewed, followed by budget policy framework, fund balance targets and pay-go capital strategy. Mayor Cecere then shared 2027 transition targets and five-year goals with a phased approach. He then reviewed City Council, City Manager and Comptroller governance, roles and responsibilities, staff deliverables and pre condition for a final vote. He then reviewed the framework of the recommended two step adoption process. Mayor Cecere then asked Council for their initial thoughts.

Concolor Petropoulos called this plan realistic, disciplined, and doesn't leave room for agenda-based comments.

Councilor Kaim thanked the committee for their work, and agreed with what they are doing, going in the right direction.

Councilor Brennan called this a beautiful piece of work in a very digestible form.

Councilor Gillotte calls this a lot of work to get going, and keep going. He recommended scheduling meetings with time to check in.

Councilor Grimaldi calls this a good start.

Councilor Gummoe thanked the committee and the councilmembers who sit on the committee. He appreciates that measuring and tracking, and wondered where KPI's will be accessible. Mayor Cecere expects to utilize AI to keep stats updated, live and fresh.

Councilor Lavin complimented the committee, their background and work. He noted that the conditions in Geneva are leaning towards collaboration and understanding. He then shared the change in the cost of living in the Town of Geneva. He then explored some challenges around sharing water, sewer and fire services with neighboring municipalities.

4. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr; Gillotte, seconded by Clr. Lavin**

**MOVED THAT Brandon Philips be appointed to the LDC Board, and Megan Houppert be appointed to the IDA Board.**

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Lavin, seconded by Clr. Kaim**

**MOVED THAT the appointment of Megan Houppert to the IDA Board be tabled, thus tabling the block of appointments**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:                   Aye -    Clr. Brennan, Clr. Kaim, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Lavin, Mayor Cecere**

**Nay -    Clr. Gummoe**

**MOTION CARRIED (7-1-1 absent)**

Councilor Lavin raised concerns about the IDA, explaining that he wants to table appointments to that board until they come to Council and explain their process. Mayor Cecere explained that the IDA will be presenting to the Downtown and Economic Development Committee, which will give Council more information. Councilor Gummoe wondered why the LDC is materially different from the IDA, raising concerns about getting volunteers to sit on boards and commissions. Assistant City Manager Youngs shared that the opportunity was offered for the Council Liaison to participate in the interview of the IDA board candidate. Mayor Cecere recommended actioning the IDA appointment in the near future, and City Manager Hendrix shared that the LDC and IDA boards both have vacancies, and from time-to-time experience issues with quorum due to vacancies.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Grimaldi; seconded by Clr. Gillotte**

**MOVED THAT Brandon Phillips be appointed to the LDC Board**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

5. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Lavin**

**MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:17pm**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

*Nicole Tillotson*  
City Clerk

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

April 23, 2026 – 6:00 PM  
City Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
47 Castle Street  
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Jim Cecere, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Kaim, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Gummo, Clr. Grimaldi

Absent: Clr. Whitfield

2. AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA

Mayor Cecere amended the agenda to add a resolution urging New York State to fully fund any Tier 6 pension enhancements, and a resolution establishing interim budget control measures for the development of the 2027 budget.

3. RESOLUTION – Urging New York State to Fully Fund Any Tier 6 Pension Enhancements, Including Ongoing Annual Cost Increases, and Avoid Cost Shifts to Local Property Taxpayers

Mayor Cecere presented the following Resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva participates in the New York State and Local Retirement System, which provides retirement benefits to eligible municipal employees; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of New York is currently considering modifications to Tier 6 pension benefits that would increase retirement benefits and/or reduce employee contributions; and

**WHEREAS**, any enhancement to pension benefits, absent State funding, would result in increased employer contribution rates borne by local governments, including the City of Geneva; and

**WHEREAS**, pension costs are dynamic and may increase annually based on actuarial assumptions, investment performance, and workforce changes; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva relies heavily on property tax revenues, which are constrained by statutory tax caps and a limited taxable base; and

**WHEREAS**, increased pension costs would place additional pressure on property tax rates, delivery of core municipal services, and long-term fiscal stability; and

**WHEREAS**, unfunded or underfunded State mandates shift financial burdens from the State to local taxpayers, undermining local fiscal control and long-term planning; and

**WHEREAS**, municipalities require predictability, transparency, and stability in budgeting, especially with respect to long-term obligations such as pensions;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Geneva hereby Opposes any Tier 6 pension enhancements that are not fully funded by the State of New York; and further

**RESOLVED**, Urges the Governor and the New York State Legislature to provide full initial funding for any enacted pension benefit increases; and further

**RESOLVED**, Urges the Governor and Legislature to provide ongoing annual State funding that fully matches any increases in employer contribution costs resulting from such reforms; and further  
**RESOLVED**, Requests establishment of a mechanism for automatic annual adjustments to State funding based on actuarially determined cost changes; and further  
**RESOLVED**, Urges avoidance of any cost shifts to local governments or property taxpayers; and further  
**RESOLVED**, Requests statutory protections ensuring that any pension enhancements are classified as State mandates with full reimbursement; and further  
**RESOLVED**, Requests that local governments be held harmless from both initial and future increases in employer contribution rates resulting from such changes; and further  
**RESOLVED**, Calls for a comprehensive review of the fiscal impact of Tier 6 reforms on municipalities statewide; and further  
**RESOLVED**, Directs the City Clerk to transmit copies of this resolution to the Governor, State Legislature representatives (Helming, Gallahan, and Jeremy Cooney), NYCOM, and NYSAC.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Lavin**  
**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 absent)**

4. RESOLUTION – Establishing Interim Budget Control Measures for the Development of the 2027 Budget

Mayor Cecere presented the following Resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva operates under a balanced budget requirement pursuant to Article V of the Geneva City Charter; and  
**WHEREAS**, the City Manager and City Comptroller have presented a 2027 baseline budget indicating a projected structural imbalance between recurring revenues and expenditures; and  
**WHEREAS**, such structural imbalance is driven in significant part by increases in employee-related costs, including wages, healthcare, and retirement obligations, as well as inflationary pressures on contractual services; and  
**WHEREAS**, the Mayor issued a 2027 Budget Development Framework on April 4, 2026, establishing guiding principles including priority-based budgeting, structural balance over one-time solutions, protection of core services, multi-year financial planning, and respect for taxpayers; and  
**WHEREAS**, the City Council, pursuant to Charter §3.2, holds legislative authority to establish policy direction for the development of the City’s budget, and the City Manager, pursuant to Charter §4.2, is responsible for executing such policy; and  
**WHEREAS**, the City Council finds it necessary to implement interim cost containment measures to stabilize expenditures while the City Manager and Comptroller complete required budget analyses, including the structural gap analysis, workforce analysis, and development of budget scenarios for 2027; and  
**WHEREAS**, such interim measures are intended to be temporary, to preserve fiscal stability, and to protect essential municipal services while ensuring compliance with all applicable laws, contracts, and collective bargaining obligations;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Geneva, New York, as follows:

**Section 1. Establishment of Interim Budget Control Measures**

The City Council hereby establishes interim budget control measures to be implemented during the development of the 2027 budget, as set forth in this Resolution.

These measures shall remain in effect until the final adoption of the 2027 Budget by the City Council, unless modified or rescinded by further action of the City Council.

**Section 2. Administrative Hiring Freeze**

The City Manager is directed to implement a temporary hiring freeze for administrative and non-essential positions funded by the General Fund, effective immediately upon administrative issuance and continuing through adoption of the 2027 budget, unless modified by further action of the City Council.

1. **Scope**

The hiring freeze shall apply to vacant positions and positions for which no final written offer of employment has been accepted as of the effective date.

2. **Exemptions**

The following positions shall be exempt from the hiring freeze, subject to review by the City Manager:

- Public safety positions, including police and fire
- Essential operational positions, including Department of Public Works, water, and sewer operations
- Positions required by law, Charter, or civil service requirements
- Grant-funded positions tied to external funding
- Seasonal or temporary positions necessary for operations
- Any position determined by the City Manager to be critical to public safety, legal compliance, revenue protection, or continuity of essential services

3. **Reporting Requirement**

The City Manager shall provide City Council with a report detailing all current vacancies, hiring status, service impacts, and recommendations for exemption, deferral, or elimination.

**Section 3. Review of Critical Staffing and Retirements**

The City Manager and City Comptroller are directed to conduct a review of staffing levels in critical departments, including police, fire, Department of Public Works, and other essential services.

Such review shall include:

- Current vacancies and projected retirements
- Overtime usage and trends
- Minimum staffing requirements
- Service delivery impacts

Findings and recommendations shall be reported to City Council.

**Section 4. City Council Compensation Review**

Corporation Counsel is hereby requested to review and advise City Council on all lawful options regarding the temporary adjustment, deferral, waiver, or escrow of City Council compensation during the 2027 budget development period.

Any action taken shall comply with the Geneva City Charter and applicable law.

**Section 5. Contractual Spending Review**

The City Manager and City Comptroller are directed to review all pending and anticipated non-grant-funded contracts, including:

- Contracts not yet executed
- Discretionary professional services and consulting agreements
- Upcoming renewals

The review shall include an assessment of legal obligation, operational necessity, and fiscal impact, with recommendations to proceed, defer, renegotiate, or cancel as appropriate.

Contracts required for public safety, legal compliance, revenue collection, or essential operations shall not be subject to deferral under this section.

**Section 6. Non-Essential Travel Suspension**

All non-essential travel funded by City operating budgets is hereby suspended pending adoption of the 2027 budget. The City Manager may approve exceptions upon written determination that such travel is required for legal, regulatory, or operational purposes, or is externally reimbursed.

**Section 7. Labor and Compensation Framework Review**

The City Manager, in consultation with Corporation Counsel and labor counsel, is directed to conduct a review of the City's labor and compensation framework, including:

- Collective bargaining agreements
- Wage and benefit trends
- Healthcare and retirement cost structure
- Non-union compensation practices

This review is intended to inform future negotiations and long-term financial planning and shall not alter or impair existing agreements or legal obligations.

### **Section 8. Implementation and Legal Compliance**

All actions taken pursuant to this Resolution shall be subject to review by Corporation Counsel to ensure compliance with applicable law, the Geneva City Charter, civil service requirements, and collective bargaining agreements.

### **Section 9. Reporting to City Council**

The City Manager shall report back to City Council with a comprehensive update on the implementation of these measures, including findings and recommendations, to support the development of the 2027 budget.

### **Section 10. Effective Date**

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

Mayor Cecere summarized the framework of the resolution that follows priority-based budgeting while protecting core services, creating discipline while creating a solution, and helping Council make informed decisions. Mayor Cecere explained that this isn't a crisis in the 2026 budget, which is strong, balanced, and noted that operations today are stable. He calls this resolution a disciplined forward-looking action given what Council learned on Tuesday, trending towards a multi-million-dollar budget gap in the next five years. The policy direction asks the City Manager to look at all administrative roles, and look at where a hiring freeze can be implemented. It does not include a freeze on essential staff or public safety, or critical functioning of the City. Secondly, he asks for a review of pending staffing changes and retirements, to pause replacing staff in order to save some money, and what the impact of service and safety may be with those proposed pauses. The resolution also asks for a review of contractors, a pause non-essential travel, and a review of current labor and cost structure that the City currently is using as it enters agreements. Mayor Cecere also proposes City Council accepting a suspension in pay to demonstrate their commitment to figuring out the 2027 budget and providing structural balance.

City Manager Hendrix provided the following comment:

Mayor, thank you for signaling the challenges ahead, as presented to you on Tuesday evening. Your April 4 framework was a thoughtful document, and it has shaped the way I will approach the 2027 budget. You and I share the same goal. We want a sustainable 2027 budget that protects services, respects taxpayers, and positions this city well for the years beyond. We may see the pace and the sequencing somewhat differently, but the destination is the same.

What I would like to do in the next few minutes is offer Council, in my role as the person who will implement whatever you adopt, a set of considerations that may be helpful as you deliberate. I offer these as a staff brief, in the spirit of making a good initiative even stronger.

One brief point on process before I turn to the substance. The Mayor's April 4 framework offered valuable guidance, and the team and I have been working in good faith to incorporate it into our 2027 budget projections and process. Under our Charter, binding direction to staff operations flows from Council acting as a body, which is why this resolution is properly before Council tonight. What follows is meant to help inform your deliberation.

#### **1. The projection provided on Tuesday and driving tonight's discussion is preliminary.**

I want to make sure Council has a clear picture of the nature of the numbers that likely prompted this memo, and I want to credit the Mayor, for being the one to surface it this evening.

That said, the 2027 baseline figures are projections only. They are built on current assumptions, roughly four months ahead of the 2027 budget presentation, and before the Q1 2026 performance review has been completed. This is a planning input as the process unfolds. It is not a statement of where the City actually stands in 2026.

Several things will refine that number between now and the budget presentation in September. Q1 and Q2 actuals. Sales tax receipts. State aid figures. Healthcare renewal data. The status of active labor negotiations. Nonrecurring expenses that will not repeat. And the full structural gap analysis called for within our budgeting framework. The projection will move as those inputs come in. It may move down. It may move up. But it will move. And I believe Council deserves the benefit of the refined numbers before committing to controls of this scope.

The underlying concern is serious, and my office and our departments are treating it that way. I would simply suggest that the pace of the response ought to match the firmness of the information.

## **2. The framework deliverables the Mayor requested are already underway.**

The Mayor's April 4 framework was comprehensive. It asked the right questions, and it asked for a set of analytical products. A baseline budget. A structural gap analysis. A departmental program inventory. Budget scenarios. A workforce and staffing analysis. Revenue and fee reviews. And multiyear financial plans. Taken together, that is a more rigorous approach to municipal budgeting than many cities of this size undertake.

That work is in progress. The preliminary baseline is part of it. The remaining components are precisely the pieces that will convert a rough projection into the calibrated, scenario driven view the framework itself called for and is a standard process for our budget deliberations.

I raise this because several of the measures in tonight's resolution substantively overlap with deliverables we are actively preparing at the Mayor's request. Council may find it useful to weigh the value of adopting those measures tonight against the value of adopting them in a few weeks, with the refined numbers in hand, at least from Q1. That is, in many ways, what the framework itself envisioned.

## **3. Much of this work is already part of daily operations.**

I would like to give Council a picture of the operational environment this resolution will enter, because it matters for how the measures will function in practice. And because I think the emphasis on cost discipline deserves an honest accounting of where it already lives.

Several of the activities described in this resolution are already standard practice. Vacancy review before filling. My office already assesses every vacancy against operational need, budget, and alternatives before authorizing a filing. Contract scrutiny at renewal is a standard practice that you will participate in with newly opened contracts. Travel approval based on necessity is already required. Overtime tracking, monitoring of budget versus actuals, and grant match review happen monthly. The Comptroller's office runs financial monitoring continuously. The 2026 adopted budget, which Council passed in November, already lays out a contingency sequence for exactly the kind of situation we are discussing tonight. It is a balanced budget with no structural deficit.

What I would like Council to take from this is simple. The operational foundation for the outcomes this resolution seeks is, to a large degree, already in place. The Mayor's framework may reinforce and sharpen that foundation. The resolution would add formalization and a reporting cadence to it, which are reasonable things to add. I would only ask Council to vote with confidence that cost discipline is a lived part of how this city runs. It is. And the Mayor's leadership has helped emphasize it.

## **4. A hiring freeze interacts with overtime in ways that can offset savings.**

The 2026 adopted budget notes that overtime spikes typically occur when staffing drops without planned schedule adjustments. That is operational reality in this city.

If Council adopts Section 2 tonight, I will implement it. I want to be transparent about the mechanics, though. A vacancy that sits unfilled does not remove the work. In several departments, that work shifts to overtime, and the fully loaded overtime cost can approach the fully loaded cost of the position itself. Without the full workforce analysis completed, I cannot tell Council tonight which vacancies fall into that category and which do not. I can say with confidence that some will.

The exemption language gives me discretion to address this case by case, and I will exercise that discretion carefully. But Council should expect net savings to come in somewhat lower than a simple estimate of vacancies multiplied by average salary would suggest.

## **5. The contract review and travel suspension have similar dynamics.**

Some of our contracts that are not grant funded generate revenue, unlock grant matches, or are tied to operations that cannot pause without consequence. Some travel supports certifications required for roles in water, wastewater, code enforcement, and public safety, where a lapsed credential costs the City more to replace than the trip itself. I will apply the exemption and approval provisions in Sections 5 and 6 rigorously. My observation for Council is simply this. The contract inventory and fee review already called for in the Mayor's framework would help us make targeted decisions up front, which tends to produce cleaner results than applying broad controls and then carving exceptions.

## **6. A procedural suggestion.**

As a staff matter, I would respectfully offer two paths for Council's consideration. I would note that both honor the framework the Mayor laid out in April.

The first option is to adopt with a reporting requirement. Council adopts the resolution tonight and asks our team to return within 30 days with the Q1 performance review, the completed workforce analysis, the three budget scenarios, and the contract inventory. We would flag at that point any provisions the refined numbers suggest Council may want to revisit, tighten, or unwind. This path moves immediately and builds the Mayor's analytical framework into the implementation.

The second option is a brief deferral. Council defers action until the May meeting. Staff complete those deliverables. Council then adopts a version of this resolution calibrated to the findings. This path lets the Mayor's framework do its full work before controls take effect, producing a more targeted final product.

Either path gets Council to the fiscal discipline the Mayor has called for. The difference is whether the specific controls are shaped by the full picture of the data up front, or whether some will need to be revisited once the data is in hand.

I want to close by returning to where I began. The Mayor has been right to work with staff and continue to push this city toward structural thinking, multi-year planning, and respect for the taxpayer. The April 4 framework is a sound foundation, our team is building on it, and I believe the end product will reflect well on this leadership when it's presented to Council later this year.

What was provided on Tuesday was a planning signal, not a picture of where Geneva is in 2026. Council has the authority to act tonight, to defer, or to adopt with conditions modifications for the current year; whichever path Council chooses, staff will bring the refined numbers, the scenarios, and the gap analysis back to this body as quickly as we responsibly can. I appreciate your patience as we continue this work every day.

And I'd like to close with a word of thanks to the Mayor, for pushing the standard higher on this budget cycle. And appreciation those who work for this city, in the Comptroller's office, in Public Works, in water and sewer, in code, in Police, Fire, Administration, in every department. They take the fiscal reality of Geneva seriously every day. They stretch dollars, scrutinize line items, and protect services. I see it, and I'm grateful for it. Whatever Council decides tonight, I'd simply ask that they be given the chance to bring their work forward so it can inform what comes next. My office remains committed to supporting Council, the Mayor, and them through every step of the 2027 budget process. Thank you.

Mayor Cecere shared that he spoke with councilors Grimaldi and Gillotte, who are absent tonight, earlier today, sharing that they offered support the frame work of the resolution.

Councilor Brennan acknowledged that the City is not in crisis, but trying to avoid an iceberg. He suggested adding language about changing some direction at a later date. Mayor Cecere explained that trended indicators show where expenses are going, noting that the 2026 budget was created using reserves to balance it. He explored the issues created by a high tax rate while costs continue to increase. He called this resolution a policy directive that gives the City Manager flexibility and can be updated. This sends a message that Council takes the 2027 budget seriously and are prepared. Councilor Petropoulos called this resolution precautionary. He touched on the mayor's suggestion that Council pause their pay during this period, and thinks it's wise to prepare for the worst, thanking Mayor and City Manager for their work. Councilor Gummoe clarified that the direction this resolution offers to the City Manager is what to look into, and impact on finances today. Mayor Cecere explained that there is a policy to implement a freeze on administrative roles, while the City Manager operates the City within the parameters of the City Charter. While the review is to look at retirements, Councilor Gummoe wondered how different that would be than what she already does while creating the budget. City Manager Hendrix explained that it's similar, and reviewed vacant positions, noting that public safety and DPW are exempt per the resolution, and there are statutory standards related to the Deputy Clerk position. The only position currently vacant that the City Manager believes would be impacted is a .5 FTE administrative aide. Councilor Lavin noted that the City Manager has to take care of today and look into the future, while he sees the organization living day to day, paycheck to paycheck. He called it a business, running the government, and that Council can change the Charter tomorrow with six votes. He explained that he'd like staff and management to be home team energetic about things the City has been giving away for years. He called on staff to have a higher awareness of the budget, calling this a shift of mindset that the city needs to go after neighbors more aggressively. Councilor Kaim appreciates the City Manger's comments supporting staff, explaining that Council

doesn't want to cut jobs, rather keep the City going forward as it is today because of what we know is coming in the future, while being prepared for unexpected things that come up in the future; not taking anything away and making sure when the City does something it's for the benefit of everyone. Mayor Cecere agreed that Council is making decisions today that they might be forced to make tomorrow. Councilor Petropoulos defended the 2026 budget, explaining the importance of maintenance and vehicle and equipment replacement. He wondered what exactly Council would be asking for review, and wondered if legal needs to review, while council waits for a month. From a financial standpoint, Mayor Cecere believes that it is incumbent upon Council to look at 2027 and beyond. He acknowledged that the budget direction is his now, and hopefully will become Council's directive for a more responsible long-term view, reshaping thinking. Councilor Gummoe confirmed 5.5 staff being reviewed, discussion followed around those positions, looking for a dollar value for the suggested pause on hiring. Mayor Cecere called this a framework of fiscal discipline that helps the City Manager help staff see where the sensitivities are.

**ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Cecere; seconded by Clr. Kaim**  
**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 absent)**

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Gummoe**  
**MOVED THAT Council move to executive session at 6:53 to discuss the proposed sale or**  
**exchange of securities held by such public body**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 absent)**

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gummoe; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos**  
**MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 8:34pm**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 absent)**

6. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gummoe; seconded by Clr. Kaim**  
**MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:34pm**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 absent)**

*Nicole Tillotson*  
City Clerk