

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

February 29, 2024 - 5:15 PM

City Hall - Second Floor Conference Room
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding - Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Petropoulos,
Clr. Gillotte (arrived at 6:17PM)
Absent: Clr. Whitfield

2. RETREAT WORKSESSION

City Manager Hendrix began by giving a brief storm response update. She said the fire department responded to about 20 calls the night prior due to the weather. Many places experienced power outages, including the wastewater and water treatment plants but the power has since been restored. Power at DPW had not yet been restored but there were generators running. She also noted that due to the wind there was a lot of trash around downtown which she saw staff continuing to clean up. As for the storm water task force there have been 9 members assigned and they will first meet the second week of March. The individuals have various levels of experience and include the following: Bryson Cochran, Jacob Fox, Julia Hoyle, Anthony Noone, Erin Norris, Judy Salotti, Jim Sibeto, Cassie Sneider, and Sara Wagner. They plan to discuss infrastructure, communications, and preparedness. She concluded by thanking all city teams that responded last night for their hard work.

Mayor Valentino thanked the city manager and staff for their work on behalf of council. He then welcomed Ian Coyle, saying he was instrumental in the search for the city manager, and appreciates his help bringing council forward through this retreat.

Ian thanked them all for the opportunity, explaining his close history with the city, and that he continues to stay in touch with current happenings. He said he's finishing his last term as county administrator in Livingston County, where he's been for 16 years, and before that served as the village manager. He explained that he grew up in Buffalo and has always loved cities. He also stated that his employment agreement allows him to both consult and teach so he has been doing that for roughly 15 years.

Mayor Valentino explained that council retreats are typically made up of multiple sessions so they're aware that this will be a process and takes time to develop strategic

goals. He asked Ian to inform them of the typical pitfalls he sees so they can avoid them and be as successful as possible. Mr. Coyle said he'd cover them and advised them that they'll need to be candid and raw in this training and the future to carry out the core public services of the city. To begin he asked for some introductions and to share why each member decided to become a part of council.

Mayor Valentino began, saying his father was on council in the 1980s, and always told him in order to make a change you must get involved. He said he loves the City of Geneva and has been blamed for having rose-colored glasses which he's worn throughout pandemics and any other issue the city ran into. He said this is because he has seen what Geneva goes through and ultimately become so his number one goal is to keep the momentum moving. He wants to see Geneva continue to shine because he sees it as a great place to live, work, play and invest. Other things that drive him are his family and hearing people speak highly of the changes and city as a whole when they come back or visit so he hopes to keep that going.

Clr. Brennan said he is here because he likes to take things apart and put them together to see how they work. He feels the city should be looked at as a business and wants to see it be the best machine it can possibly be. He is striving to be the best and most efficient council that the city has yet to see. His goals are to have the talent of the council compliment the talent of the staff and vice versa. Outside of public service Clr. Brennan said he's passionate about historic buildings and is luckily surrounded by them in this city.

Clr. Lavin explained he was a newspaper editor who worked around the country prior to settling here and running his non-profit. When he came, he felt the city was far better than the people who grew up here were aware of but the full potential is held back due to the concern for change. He feels if this resistance is addressed then they'll be able to move forward and guide the city manager properly to achieve their goals. Outside of this role he is still a writer, and enjoys learning about the origins of cities and urban planning, saying he's interested in connecting places that don't have water. He hopes to bring back the spirit of our community and use the advantages we have in front of us.

Clr. Pealer stated that he is a fourth generation Genevan, coming from local small-business owners and entrepreneurs. He explained that he got a film degree at RIT, before going to NYC where he worked for 9 years, then got married. After that they were looking to buy a house and, both being from Geneva, decided to move close to home. He said in 2018 he got his masters in non-for-profit management, which he wanted to use, so people suggested he run for council. He wanted to give back to the community that built him up and use his problem-solving and management skills to help the city. Clr. Pealer stated his goal is to change the public perception of Geneva and show people that it is a great place to live and invest in. He feels we're often the birthplace of many entities and business ideas but after starting up they leave but he would like to see them stay and thrive. His outside interests are STEM education now that he has kids since it seems education has begun to steer away from that but feels it has a very practical use.

Clr. Grimaldi said he was wrapped into becoming a councilor, but his family has always been a government family, and he still works for the Town of Middlesex. One of his goals is to reduce the debt load of the city since 1 in 5 dollars that is collected gets paid to interest payments. He understands it isn't an easy thing but feels that is too

much. As for outside interests he stated he's been collecting coins and money and is still connected with his college fraternity which he was regional manager of for many years.

Clr. Petropoulos explained he joined the ethics board in 2018, and in 2022 became a county supervisor which he enjoyed, before going back to the board of ethics. He feels he has the leadership experience and wanted to try to be a part of the solution. Prior to becoming involved he moved from NYC a decade ago and bought a historic building downtown where he continues to see growth. His interests include cartoon animation, jazz and the military which he acknowledged was an odd combination. He currently works at the school but will be retiring soon which will allow him to focus on contributing to the community. His goals are to see taxes lowered, creatively without cutting services, and overall to see more positivity. He said he likes to build bridges, rather than sit at extreme ends of the political spectrum, and he very much supports first responders. Overall, he supports one big community, just like in his masonic lodge, where they are all one regardless of beliefs. His other hobbies include model trains, 3D modeling and animation, and he hopes to get a jazz group started or just be a part of the community.

Ian thanked them and went on to note that the city has a city manager form of government which he compared to a composer-conductor relationship. In other words, the council sets the policy-making, creating a vision, mission, goals, and objectives while the city manager acts like the conductor and carries those out through implementation. He said this form of government is popular across the United States for various sized cities but slightly less common in New York compared to other states. He asked if there were any comments on this arraignment or structure.

Clr. Lavin noted that Rochester was a city-manager form of government until about 1988, and why they changed that or the struggle he has seen, is that leaving leadership to a hired person can be difficult. He explained that it may not be as natural or the person may not have roots in that community prior despite leading everyone so he feels that puts pressure on council. He also argued that 9 members is a large council, and they may be better with 4 and a mayor, to concentrate and focus the policy. His focus is to have a council who does its job otherwise it isn't fair to the manager.

Clr. Petropoulos said he likes this form of government a lot and feels they have the right number of councilors. He felt anything smaller would be too friendly whereas anything larger would lack control and efficiency. Clr. Petropoulos gave a shout-out to the city manager, saying he wasn't aware of how hard she worked. He appreciates that and hopes to see a smooth chain of command which should allow her to do the work. He said his main concern is the community members, to find out why they feel the way they do, but this form is effective and allows for communication.

Clr. Brennan explained that he had worked for the city and attended every council meeting during that time. He hopes to not be the council who tries to discuss huge issues once a month but instead finds a mechanism for good solid decision making. He would like to see issues discussed thoroughly first before it is brought to the floor to be voted on.

Ian asked if the charter explicitly prohibits standing committees? The city manager explained that while it is now, the charter can be changed, and that takes a process with public hearing and at least two council meetings. Ian then asked how, if any, they are set up on an as needed basis? The mayor explained that they've had short-term

committees or task forces that are developed to accomplish a certain task but sometimes linger longer. Clr. Lavin expressed his desire for committees, saying it provides access to management, and even his non-profit has a finance committee yet the city doesn't. He feels having a monthly sense of the finances would be beneficial and prevent a lack of focus. He added that if someone wants to bring something up you have to try and gauge the support of fellow councilors in hopes of getting it to the mayor to make it on the agenda which makes the public secondary. Instead, he feels the committees make things transparent and prevent the length of the council meetings, that become spent trying to figure out large complex subjects.

Mayor Valentino emphasized that any type of government can be effective or ineffective. He said there have been successes and failures both as a city-manager form of government and as a mayor-council form of government but it more so depends on having the right combination to achieve success. Ian agreed it is about balance and blend of officials and staff to carry to out the operations and move forward. He added that there are various setups to how the council carries out their functions, saying some charters don't use committees while others do. He said either can work so it is a preference of the council to choose a direction. City Manager Hendrix said she came from a government with 9 committees that hold 6-7-hour meetings. Ian replied that if the city were to choose that direction it sounds like they may want a small number with a purpose to prevent elongated meetings. Clr. Brennan agreed, saying the mayor, city manager, and comptroller are all professionals, so it comes down to looking at mechanisms that will allow them to be well-informed without wasting energy.

City Manager Hendrix stated when she began, she reimplemented work plans for staff that tied in with council goals. The budget builds these goals so when staff builds their budget, she has them look at their goals too for the following year. The big question is how to build the previous plans and goals together with the new ones and she feels bringing the plans together is a large space of local government. She reminded everyone that they're simultaneously running normal city operations so while a policy and procedure manual may not be exciting it helps move everything else.

Mayor Valentino said he liked the question on Ian's questionnaire that asked what you would do with a blank check and encouraged them to have specific goals. He said that all ties together in terms of being conscious of the current budget and preparing the 2025 one. Ian said it always comes to TRM which stands for time, resources, and money. In other words, how much time you have, the resources you have (in terms of staff, equipment, knowledge), and the amount of available money. So, when there is a suggested project, he recommends going through this abbreviation and seeing if it is possible.

Clr. Lavin pointed out that this may be the first time they've looked at the macro-issues in the city as a group and isn't sure if they've come to fully understand the current tax situation compared to other neighboring communities. He said they're about 35% higher than Ithaca and roughly 30% higher than Canandaigua so his answer isn't necessarily to simply cut taxes but to look at assets and pick projects with revenue goals. He feels that there are resources from the city that leak into the town so their residents are benefiting from them but not contributing to them. He wants to confront these issues, or at least discuss them prior to the next budget cycle, so revenue can be created to start bringing down the taxes. He feels it may be beneficial to force the town to consider a combined police or fire departments, which would help them reduce their

costs, and share the assets. He thinks these issues aren't confronted because they're seen as large issues but believes having a financial understanding for the city is important to make changes.

Ian agreed that those desires are fairly standard, and believes they would expect staff to understand that and welcome educating them in those areas. He feels as a council initiative, with some level of specificity, is achievable. He also recognized that any municipality is going to be challenged fiscally regardless of location. He referenced past issues with tax exemptions which led to a tax rate that was higher. Clr. Pealer asked what our tax rate is, to which City Manager Hendrix answered roughly 17.63 per thousand. Ian stated it is a fiscal reality and since it is a challenge it comes up and becomes a key focus.

Clr. Grimaldi feels the taxes are better than most places despite the critical perception, saying when he moved from Victor the taxes were thousands of dollars less. He stated, compared to places that offer similar things, our taxes are one of the lowest. He recalled doing a negotiation with the town over the water because they were paying nothing for city water going to town residents which resulted in a lawsuit. However, he isn't surprised their taxes are lower because the city provides things such as recreation and fire and police services. He stated many of the calls they go on are outside of the city due to their lack of members to respond. While they brag about low taxes, he pointed out they have water and sewer taxes too. Similarly, he said while Canandaigua is considered a high-end city, he feels they only have one nice street and the rest is filled with crime and issues. He also pointed out that their few nice buildings like the new YMCA and Wegmans are just due to big families like the Sands and Wegmans but that could've just as easily been done in Geneva.

Clr. Brennan asked if he doesn't believe our taxes are as bad as other cities, and Clr. Grimaldi responded that he doesn't believe they are but acknowledged that money has been spent poorly in the past. Ian chimed in to reiterate that a home may have a lower price tag in the city than it would elsewhere and that offsets the potential. Clr. Lavin felt that was a positive spin on a negative reality. Clr. Grimaldi gave some examples, explaining that there was recently a \$300,000 sale for a house that wasn't worth that much, and there was a major subdivision that couldn't sell because council wouldn't put a street in.

Mr. Coyle said when a budget is built you ask your departments what their needs and estimates are then after fees, revenues and state aid you'll end up with a gap. If there was no gap then there would be no tax levy but because current revenue sources don't cover that it is unreasonable to expect that. He added that the only two factors at play are the total assessed taxable value and the rate. Clr. Lavin and Pealer both suggested that other revenue replacements could contribute and Ian agreed. Clr. Lavin also noted that they haven't given their goals for revenue and taxes yet.

Mayor Valentino said he doesn't want to get distracted from the overall purpose, but rather discuss what mechanisms they plan to put in place to move the city forward. He feels starting with strategic initiatives the majority of council wishes to put in place to direct staff is where they need to start.

Ian put up their key priorities and the responses they identified were: neighborhood revitalization, infrastructure, lowering taxes, public-private partnership, recreation/youth, population growth, communication, council-staff collaboration, marketing/branding, and revenue growth.

Clr. Pealer said population and revenue growth has always been one of his priorities. In 2010 he learned from the city leadership program that a major exodus from the city and complicated revenue generation due to properties off the tax roll were major weaknesses to a city. This prompted him to ask where we can grow in these areas.

Ian brought up that another popular area was communication, which he has heard as a focus of Canandaigua and the county as well, which prompts him to look toward collaborations when numerous neighboring municipalities are all looking at advancing the same thing. He asked if there were any other items that are important to councilors that haven't been discussed yet. Mayor Valentino added that they should determine which are their highest priority because they may wish to do them all but realistically, they must determine what to focus on first and what can be accomplished. He began by saying infrastructure and revenue growth tie together and are constantly in the forefront. He believes revenue growth is key so the first thing on his plate is looking at the infrastructure challenges that have increased debt and tax rates. The next priority for him was improving communication/ marketing/ branding because he feels they're a beautiful place with lots of opportunities. He wants people to hear Geneva and think of our city rather than Switzerland and know its beauty and potential.

Clr. Brennan reiterated that he prefers to see how things work, so he would appreciate having a conversation with staff first, to see where they're concentrating and what projects they have in progress, before discussing revenue growth, taxes, public-private partnerships, and neighborhood revitalization. He explained that he doesn't truly know where the marina project or farmers market project stands currently and feels it is vital to having these conversations. He knows housing will come up, as it is a big deal everywhere, and that it will have a big effect on the city and hopes in turn we can come up with a solution that will benefit other communities with the same issues. He said while it is easy for him to name his top 3 priorities, he feels they don't matter unless they merge with current efforts. Additionally, he feels that revenue growth is a 20-year plan and thinking ahead to 2044 allows you to consider what the current assets are. In his mind, one example is the skating rink, which he believes is underutilized and could be a big revenue producer for a greater good.

Ian explained that these are to level set and show their current ideas which they will come back to later in discussions but he wants to keep them fresh in their mind. Clr. Lavin said these audacious goals can help reduce back to the basics because they would all agree that combining and reorganizing government to reduce costs would be something they'd want. He feels a goal for the community would be combining the town and city to have one management and create instant efficiency. While he knows people will say that would never happen he believes the town is facing their own challenges and they don't have the same leverage as the city. He explained, if they start saying no more water or sewer to the town without combined assets, the city could get more benefits. For example, if the town wants to put up condos at the Geneva Country Club then we could tell them that they'll create a special development zone and share the revenues, if they wish to use city water and sewer. He acknowledged that is hardball, and won't be loved by everyone, but feels they need more revenue to reduce taxes rather than increase services at this time. These goals he hopes to make clear to management so when an idea comes up for the waterfront, such as a public market that doesn't bring in revenue easily, they can know that it won't be top of their list. Clr. Lavin said he appreciates the work of the economic planner but doesn't feel it is an efficient

use of their time to find grants for projects that put the city in debt or don't create a substantial revenue. Instead, he'd prefer they focus on projects that will increase the tax base and grow revenues, saying that is what the community needs. Overall, feels we should put pressure on neighboring communities who count on the city to start collaborating financially or cut off ties that fuel their growth. He suggested, if it were possible, to not provide fire coverage for the town by refusing to respond past the city line which would cause their insurance to go up. City Manager Hendrix noted that ours would then go up as well.

The city manager said these ideas go back to the point Clr. Brennan made regarding education. She feels it may be important to know, when having these discussions, exactly how often fire is going out of town for instance. Another piece she acknowledged is noting how these partnerships are already working, such as the wastewater program, saying we could not have done it without the town and that they do pay fees. She stated that they will look at these things because it is important in making informed decisions. She noted that many of these projects start with a vision and there is a balance to continuing the process which includes both local and grant funds. She said while a 10-million-dollar grant may sound wonderful it is usually being used on a 15-20-million-dollar project. Giving them more information on where these projects came from and how they're going are something she intends to do and finds important. She explained that the farmers market project came from the desire to have something different to hold events and farmers markets at the lakefront, but the discussion was always that it wouldn't be a city funded project. The usage rates at the rink are something she feels would also be helpful, and knowing that there will be a semi-pro lacrosse team using it starting shortly. Additionally, the costs to changing these uses are something she feels would be beneficial along with the rest of the information to have these conversations.

Clr. Lavin said he doesn't claim to know all of these things yet, but he has looked into some costs and impacts of these assets. He was told any immediate call for police needed in the town is responded to by the Geneva Police Department, numerous times a day, before the Sheriff's Department can arrive and that fire, while they don't go out that often, when they do are first on scene and it is for a major incident. He feels that is a great thing that the town should be paying for, saying if they are at least proposed it will make the town recognize the value of what they're getting.

Clr. Gillotte felt that was a good point as many of these things he wasn't aware of. However, he said he is aware of the fire department as a member, but wants to know how staff can provide them with all of this information so they can begin with the data in front of them?

City Manager Hendrix said the current discussion that Ian is leading is a great start because by identifying their priorities it allows staff to share different opportunities based on those guidelines. For example, she said the last council discussed the revenue from the rink, which brought to light that not all services provide revenue nor should they since they are public services. She said she can continue to provide day-to-day updates and more details once broad areas of focus are identified.

Mayor Valentino recognized that the discussion has changed to shared-services, which is not on the list, but clearly a priority. He emphasized the education piece because questions and comments are needed when discussing this topic in order to understand agreements that are in place currently and where gaps are. He's heard

some fallacies and wants them to be modified for better understanding. Clr. Lavin said having a committee would be beneficial to sharing this sort of information because decisions are made during the week and throughout the year that aren't brought to council until budget time. He said he's been told there are shared services and they pay for special police protection and the mayor suggested asking for proof or numbers from staff in the future to back up these claims.

Clr. Brennan jumped in to say that this goes back to the priority of council-staff collaboration so they can be informed and work as a cohesive unit. He acknowledged that most of council is new, along with the city manager, and staff like David West. He sees this as a great opportunity to make their respective talents merge and hopes to avoid any wasted time on topics that aren't relevant.

Mayor Valentino brought up BAD (Business Assessment District) which tapped into revenue sources from non-profit organizations, noting that there are opportunities, but also legal implications.

Clr. Pealer said, as a councilor, he thinks short term because unlike staff they serve in short terms. With that he feels it would be most productive to focus on marketing/branding since that is where most businesses focus when they need to improve. He added that he also believes council, as an elected body, needs to support and follow through with the projects they vote to put forward. He said, being blunt, projects usually happen in New York through pilots due to the cost of doing business but regardless once the project is approved by council they shouldn't criticize it down the road. Overall, his greatest priority is marketing, which can be a council-staff collaboration and he believes it will lead to revenue growth which will lead to lower taxes and other priorities will follow. He said in his first retreat in 2020 his first priority was communication from staff to council because they can't make educated decisions without proper staff reporting. He emphasized that this should be provided in a way that is easy for them to comprehend and concise so they can efficiently compile the information they need to move forward. This, to him, is a more realistic goal for a retreat and then the larger priorities can be tackled once the basics are in place. He also asked for clarification about the farmers market study, saying that he believes it was only a proposal/ concept rather than a project. The city manager agreed, saying it was just a study on all of the lakefront, and is different from the farmers market alone which is currently run at the visitor's center. While the current farmer's market is a part of planning and economic development, as it is currently run by the city, the concept of the study was looking at how to use event spaces better and improve the farmer's market. She reiterated it is all a concept at this point, which council approved last year, thus allowing staff to research if there were funds to be put toward it but that would need to come back for council approval first.

Clr. Brennan commented that the farmer's market study was just one of approximately 9 topics that he would just like to be brought up to speed on. They had recently learned about all of the projects approved by previous councils and he projected there was about 100 years' worth of projects if they were to move forward with all of them.

The mayor gave an overview on concepts by using the visitors center as an example. He explained that it was actually supposed to be a boat museum but, when the council saw the proposals, they realized it would be a \$250,000 per year burden on the taxpayers. Due to this they voted not to move forward with this concept and could do

the same with other projects that are in the conception stage. He went on to explain that they were allowed to shift the state funds and make a welcome center which meant having an event coordinator but that didn't work out. This meant more changes but now he feels it worked out because with some more additions, such as the playground, it is now a beautiful space but it was a process full of numerous decisions.

Ian said he feels a larger point is that in order to make decisions you may need some more information, in a digestible form, in order to make these choices especially on projects that the city previously has made decisions on. He feels that is common, appropriate, and professional so he suggests listing these items and submitting it to staff who can supply those answers.

Clr. Lavin brought up another issue that, while looking at somewhat comparable cities like Ithaca, Corning and Skaneateles he found there was more cohesion with the leadership in those communities but none of them have the same assets as we do. He said he's never seen, in his time here, the leadership from HWS colleges, the hospital, or Cornell come together to take on big community issues. He feels it is important to ask if and why that leadership isn't as cohesive here as those other places and if the city manager and mayor could work with them.

City Manager Hendrix stated it's likely not as cohesive as one perceives it to be and Clr. Lavin acknowledged that he knows there is a division between Cornell and the rest of the community but he feels they're able to leverage double the amount of money than we are as a city. Ian noted it is a unique arraignment and recognized that there is an agreement with Hobart and William Smith Colleges too.

Ian brought up the potential challenges, stating that challenges can bleed into opportunities. He listed negativity/ division, relations with intergovernmental partners, press/messaging/branding, state mandates and revenue limitations, population (aging and challenges of growth), and housing (affordability; owner-occupied vs rentals; quality) which were voiced by council as general challenges.

Clr. Petropoulos said he spoke with the county administrator, who is from here, and the economic developer for the county who is very passionate about working with Geneva so he hasn't felt any negativity from the county regarding collaboration with the city. Ian noted that is a perfect example of where a potential opportunity lies despite being identified as a challenge area.

Ian said these general challenges were meant to be regarding the community but he also asked about specific internal challenges that would be interior to the organization. As for what the city government is challenged with, he listed the tax rate/levy, funding supports, carrying out projects to completion, tax-exempt property, housing development/redevelopment, as well as trust and confidence.

Clr. Lavin asked to revisit rezoning, stating there are some decisions along Lochland Road overlooking the lake which could vastly improve the tax levy if it was rezoned. He said they could make it clear that they will allow higher density even if they allow the current homes to stay as they are. He said the rezoning revenue was not high on the list when it was rezoned so large lots were kept. He acknowledged that many people don't like the idea but he feels these things should be brought up for revenue possibilities.

Clr. Pealer said he feels the lakefront should be listed as a challenge since it is possibly the largest economic driver outside of non-profit and human services. He added that the city has not been able to cohesively decide on a functional use to draw

people into the lakefront. He noted the only two recent changes have been the hotel and visitors center. Clr. Grimaldi responded that every survey has shown the people do not want the lakefront developed. Clr. Pealer said that's his point, the people create a challenge because there are differing objectives.

Mayor Valentino stated there are developable properties in the city, some that have the infrastructure and some that don't. He'd like to see developers take advantage of properties not on the lakefront or lakeview but many won't touch these because of the lack of infrastructure. Ian said it was interesting that there are properties ready for development but lack infrastructure. Mayor Valentino said he's spoken with state and federal representatives because he feels if he can get funding for roads, water and sewer he could guarantee interest in development for housing.

Clr. Petropoulos said, in relation to infrastructure, he prioritizes maintaining the unique historical aesthetic. So, although he wants housing, he doesn't want the condos like Canandaigua has. He knows it will cost more money when building but he would prefer that so the buildings look better overall and keeps our aesthetic unique and beautiful. He feels like it sets us apart from other places and so we should maintain that by keeping things attractive.

Clr. Brennan asked what they really mean when they talk about growth and to think about the how and why they want to grow. He asked if it is only to satisfy the tax scenario to raise the levy and will that work for the next 20 years? He knows David West is looking at ways to fill in the current developable pieces but he personally wouldn't like to see our lakefront turn into Canandaigua's lakefront. Overall, he would be curious to see the everyday difference the population growth would actually have to a tax bill.

Clr. Petropoulos said, along with the conversation of population and properties, he feels they need to address properties in the city that aren't on the tax roll or take empty lots and make them developable.

Clr. Pealer spoke to the changes in population, saying that the community went from homeowners with families to primarily rentals, and those single-family homes are becoming duplexes. He added that school numbers are reflecting that since De Sales used to have hundreds of graduates on top of Geneva's graduates. Even with De Sales gone the number of graduates from Geneva has dwindled in his opinion.

Clr. Petropoulos asked how you then motivate people or find grants to encourage people to renovate or possibly remodel potential space such as above the businesses downtown.

Clr. Lavin jumped in to say he feels the city has problem solvers and has done great things and big projects. He looks forward to the opportunity to right previous wrongs but feels they've already come a long way so they just need to improve fiscal standings by determining how to generate revenues.

Ian agreed that we have a surplus of assets, from small businesses, restaurants, the lake, the Smith Opera House, and the colleges. He said as an outside observer he hopes they recognize everything that the city has. He also asked, along the lines of positivity, what would success look like for the city? He listed a few that were named including, safety, a prosperous downtown, neighborhood pride, beautification, partnerships, and population growth.

Clr. Pealer said he did independent research and considers growth an increase in population along with being future forward, technological availability, and practicality. He would feel more people living here would indicate the city is moving in the right direction.

Ian asked them to keep these goals in mind and bring any additional priorities to the next meeting when they continue this conversation. Mayor Valentino added that he likes the idea of looking ahead 20 years, despite the fact that isn't how he usually thinks, because it's a good way to put things in perspective.

3. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Brennan; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos
MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 7:20pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

Nicole Wright

City Clerk