

AGENDA

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF GENEVA, NEW YORK

April 3, 2024

**Public Safety Building
255 Exchange Street
Geneva, NY 14456**

COUNCIL MEETING STARTS AT 7:00PM

Listen to the City of Geneva's YouTube Channel:

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

1. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor, Steve Valentino
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL
4. PROCLAMATION – Hobart Hockey Team
5. PRESENTATIONS
 - A. Overview of the WIAA grant and ATAD expansion – Joe Venuti
 - B. Wine and Grape Report – Julia Hoyle
6. FOUNDRY UPDATE
7. SUPERVISOR UPDATE
8. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

This portion of the meeting is dedicated to correction of meeting minutes for the following Council session:

 - A. February 26th, 2024 (Special Council Meeting)
 - B. February 29th, 2024 (Special Council Meeting)
 - C. March 6th, 2024 (Regular Council Meeting)
 - D. March 11th, 2024 (Special Council Meeting)
 - E. March 18th, 2024 (Special Council Meeting)
 - F. March 20th, 2024 (Special Council Meeting)
 - G. March 27th, 2024 (Special Council Meeting)

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

This portion of the meeting is dedicated to receiving comments on any topics. The standard time limit for public comment is three (3) minutes.

10. CITY MANAGER REPORT – *This portion of the meeting is dedicated to presentation of a report by the City Manager on non-action matters that have not been addressed elsewhere on the agenda.*

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – *This portion of the meeting is dedicated to consideration of matters that have been previously considered by City Council.*

A. Resolution Adopting License Fee for Short Term Rental License – City Manager Hendrix
Page 29-30

12. NEW BUSINESS – *This portion of the meeting is dedicated to consideration of matters that have not been previously considered by City Council. These include:*

A. Resolution Declaring Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project A Type II Action
(Page 31-32)

B. Resolution Negative Declaration of Environmental Significance- Geneva Rail Trail Project
Clark to Genesee
(Page 33-34)

13. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

This portion of the meeting is dedicated to presentation of reports by the Mayor and City Councilors on non-action matters that have not been addressed elsewhere on the agenda.

14. ADJOURNMENT

GENEVACITYCOUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

February 26, 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. Gillotte, Clr. Petropoulos
Absent: Clr. Whitfield

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Pealer
MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 5:17pm to discuss collective negotiations and matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Gillotte
MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 6:32pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

3. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Lavin; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos
MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 6:32pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

Nicole Wright

City Clerk

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 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

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

ACTION MINUTES

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

March 6, 2024 – 7:00 PM

Public Safety Building

255 Exchange St.

Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1 ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Petropoulos, and Clr. Whitfield (arrived at 7:26pm)

2 EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 6:01pm to discuss sale of real property and contract negotiations

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

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

MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 6:45pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

3 PROCLAMATIONS - Mark Jones

4 PRESENTATION ON REVALUATION – Assessor Rados

5 PRESENTATION ON 2023 ACTUAL EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES – Comptroller Newcomb

6 FOUNDRY UPDATE

7 SUPERVISOR UPDATE

8 CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

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

MOVED THAT the minutes of the February 7th Council Meeting be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9 PUBLIC COMMENT

10 CITY MANAGER REPORT

11 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO CREATE AND IMPLEMENT PADDLECRAFT STORAGE PROGRAM AT SENECA LAKEFRONT

David West presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva wishes to improve affordable access to Seneca Lake by kayak, canoe, and paddleboard (together referred to as paddlecraft); and

WHEREAS, City staff has developed a program outline and cost proposal to allow storage of personally owned paddlecraft at the lakefront park, and

WHEREAS, the fees proposed fully cover the small cost of this investment, now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby approves the creation of a paddlecraft storage program commencing with the installation of 2 boat racks, holding 24 boats on City property at the Seneca Lake waterfront, and authorized the City Manager and/or her designee to proceed with all contracts, policies, and preparations reasonable and necessary for the program for the 2024 year.

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

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

Clr. Petropoulos and Clr. Brennan

Nay – Clr. Pealer and Clr. Grimaldi

MOTION CARRIED

12 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO CREATE AND IMPLEMENT PADDLECRAFT RENTAL VENDOR TEST PROGRAM AT THE SENECA LAKEFRONT

David West presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva wishes to improve affordable access to Seneca Lake by kayak, canoe, and paddleboard (together referred to as paddlecraft); and

WHEREAS, City funds for subsidizing such access for people who do not own paddlecraft is extremely limited, and

WHEREAS, private vendors are ready and willing to provide this desired amenity at a reasonable fee, now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby approves the creation of a paddlecraft rental vendor test program as described in the attached briefing. The City Manager, and any staff she designates, is hereby authorized to draft and release an RFP, choose a vendor, and complete any necessary contracting to carry out the proposed program for the benefit of the City of Geneva community.

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

13 RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SALE OF CITY-OWNED REAL PROPERTY

Comptroller Newcomb presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The City Council may declare, by resolution, its intention to dispose of City-owned real property if it finds the property is no longer needed for the purpose acquired and that said property or title thereto is not needed for any other public purpose of the City; and

WHEREAS, City Council authorizes the City Administration in consultation with the City Attorney to sell the property utilizing the established disposition of City property procedure; and

WHEREAS, any offer for the purchase of City-owned real property shall be accepted or declined by resolution of the City Council; and

WHEREAS the properties are all sold “as is” and without any representations or warranties of any kind.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geneva City Council hereby approves the 2023 list of city-owned real property for sale.

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

**ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye – Mayor Valentino, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Gillotte,
Clr. Petropoulos and Clr. Brennan**

Nay – Clr. Whitfield and Clr. Grimaldi

MOTION CARRIED

14 RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2024 GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR RATIFIED CONTRACT CHANGES

Comptroller Newcomb presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva Police Department had two (2) Axon contracts due for renewal in 2024; and

WHEREAS, the approved 2024 Budget document does not reflect the final contractual obligations and additional funds are needed to cover anticipated expenses.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Geneva City Council hereby and in due form does amend the 2024 General Fund budget as follows:

Revenues:

Add

Appropriation from General Fund Balance \$47,750

Expenses:

Add
Firearm line 3120.4058- \$13,000

Uniform Cost – 3120.4073 – \$34,750

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Lavin; seconded by Clr. Gillotte
MOVED THAT this resolution be approved
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

15 RESOLUTION CORRECTING THE POLICE BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD BYLAWS

Comptroller Newcomb presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the police budget advisory board bylaws were presented and adopted by City Council on October 7, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Police Budget Advisory Board bylaws adopted by the City Council incorrectly referred to the name of the board as the Police Budget Review Board; and

WHEREAS, the City Council intends to amend the bylaws to state the name of the board as the “Police Budget Advisory Board”.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Geneva City Council does hereby amend said bylaws, effective immediately, to state throughout, that the name of the board is the “Police Budget Advisory Board”.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Gillotte
MOVED THAT this resolution be approved
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

16 RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN INCREASE IN AIM FUNDING

Mayor Valentino presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Aid and Incentives for Municipalities (AIM) program plays a critical role in funding essential municipal services for cities and villages across New York State; and

WHEREAS, city and village officials share the same priorities as our state leaders which is to make New York safer and more affordable; and

WHEREAS, New York’s local governments, who are on the frontlines of controlling property tax affordability and ensuring public safety, are integral to achieving those goals; and

WHEREAS, the State has not increased AIM funding in 15 years and according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, inflation has increased by nearly 45% during that same period; and

WHEREAS, this neglect from the State has led to rising municipal tax burdens and harmful disinvestment in essential municipal services and staff; and

WHEREAS, the property tax cap further limits the ability of local governments to properly fund the services their residents need; and

WHEREAS, the challenges of rising inflation, the increasing costs of labor and supplies, and the end of extraordinary federal aid, only accentuate the need for an increase in AIM funding; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's 2024-25 Executive Budget proposes to keep AIM funding flat; and

WHEREAS, an increase in AIM funding would reduce the local tax burden and help revitalize communities across New York;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Geneva, Geneva City Council urges Governor Hochul to work with the leaders of the Senate and Assembly and increase AIM funding in the 2024-25 adopted State Budget.

A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senator Helming, Assemblymember Gallahan and the New York State Conference of Mayors.

ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Valentino; seconded by Clr. Lavin

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

17 **TABLED RESOLUTION ADOPTING LICENSE FEE FOR SHORT TERM RENTAL LICENSE**

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the 2024 budget was presented and adopted by City Council in October 2023, and

WHEREAS, An Ordinance Amending Chapter 350 and Chapter 215 of the Geneva City Code was adopted in October 2023 which enacted Short Term Rental License and Short Term Rental as a use allowed by Special Use Permit, and

WHEREAS, the fee schedule presented within the 2024 Budget did not include the fee for Short Term Rental License as determined by Council, now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby approves the addition of the Short Term Rental License Fee of \$1,000 per property/per year to be issued on an every other year basis.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Mayor Valentino

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be tabled

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye – Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Brennan and Clr. Petropoulos

Nay – Clr. Pealer and Mayor Valentino

MOTION CARRIED

18 RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2024 GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR ADDITIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE SOLAR ECLIPSE

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva is expected to host over 20,000 visitors on April 8, 2024 as the City experiences the 2024 Total Eclipse, and

WHEREAS, City Staff have been working with local, state, and federal partners to ensure that we are prepared to support the health and safety of our residents and visitors, and

WHEREAS, the 2024 adopted budget included up to \$10,000 to support expenses related to preparedness for the Solar Eclipse, and

WHEREAS, staff have reviewed impacts on similar cities who experienced the event in 2017 and in preparation have found that to fully prepare additional resources may be,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby does amend the 2024 General Fund Budget as follows:

REVENUES:

Add appropriation from the General Fund Balance	\$10,000
---	----------

EXPENSES:

Add to Solar Eclipse funding line 1230.4046	\$10,000
---	----------

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

**ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye – Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Brennan,
Clr. Petropoulos, and Mayor Valentino**

Nay – Clr. Pealer and Clr. Grimaldi

MOTION CARRIED

19 RATIFYING LABOR AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF GENEVA MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' UNIT- CSEA-#7852-00 (MEU)

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the collective bargaining teams for the City of Geneva and City of Geneva Municipal Employees Unit- CSEA-#7852-00 have concluded negotiations for a successor collective bargaining agreement covering the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2026 for MEU, and

WHEREAS, the City Manager is now recommending that the City Council adopt a three (3) year contract with the City of Geneva Municipal Employees Unit- CSEA-#7852-00, the following are the areas of proposed modifications:

- Article 1 – Recognition
- Article 2 – Salary
- Article 3 – Longevity

- Article 4 – Retirement
- Article 6 – Health Insurance
- Article 7 – Vacation
- Article 8 – Holidays
- Article 9 – Sick Leave
- Article 10 – Personal Leave
- Article 13 – Funeral Leave
- Article 14 – Grievance Procedures
- Article 17 – City Affairs/Management Rights
- Article 18 – Working Hours
- Article 21 – Time Schedule for Negotiations
- Article 22 – Transportation Reimbursement
- Article 25 – Seniority, Layoff, Recall
- Article 28 – Drug Policy
- Additional Items – Clothing Allowance for Code Enforcement Officer and Language Clean Up

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby ratifies said agreement and authorizes the expenditure of the necessary funds therefor; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the City Manager be and hereby is authorized to execute said agreement on behalf of the City of Geneva.

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

20 BOARD/ COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

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

MOVED THAT Matthew Fisher be appointed to the Recreation Board and Bryson

Cochran be appointed to the Planning Board

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

21 MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

22 ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:53pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nicole Wright

City Clerk

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 11, 2024 – 5:15 PM
City Hall – Second Floor Teams' Room
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Petropoulos, and Clr. Gillotte
Absent: Clr. Pealer and Clr. Whitfield

2. RETREAT WORKSESSION

Ian Coyle began by providing the councilors with a handout that he compiled of their collective input to serve as a reminder and be considered in the future. He explained that he divides input into four categories defined as SWOT analysis which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. He emphasized that one councilor's identified strengths may not be the same for another councilor.

Ian listed the strengths that the councilors see in the city which included the location, history/ architecture, natural resources, professional staff, the colleges, the lake, public safety services, and the IDA/ LDC. Clr. Lavin added that he sees diversity as a strength, even if it brings negatives with it. Mayor Valentino pointed out that many of the items they may discuss could end up in multiple categories. Clr. Petropoulos said, compared to other cities and towns in the area, the downtown area is thriving and most storefronts are filled. Ian asked him to elaborate on how he defines thriving. Clr. Petropoulos feels they are viable, imaginative, unique, and a variety of restaurants so he feels he sees more people wandering around than he used to. He also added that the downtown area by these shops is clean and there is less litter.

Clr. Gillotte said he thinks healthcare could be a strength but also a weakness to the area. He hopes believes the transition in providers could add to the area, if they can grow, and become a major healthcare hub between Syracuse and Rochester. He explained it could also be a weakness because if they can't keep up with the surrounding standards people will go elsewhere but he'd rather people feel confident here so they don't need to.

Clr. Brennan said another strength is the central geographic location. He pointed out that we are almost equal distance between Rochester and Syracuse but also central in terms of the Finger Lakes Region.

Mayor Valentino explained he feels many of these play into momentum, which he considers to be a

great strength of the city. He believes we're heading down the right path, and Clr. Brennan agreed. He elaborated that in terms of momentum he means the ability to leverage, utilize, and execute grants to improve lakefront, downtown and neighborhoods.

Clr. Petropoulos said he feels public safety is another thing that has strengthened. Clr. Brennan noted that he feels there is a collective interest in making Geneva a better place.

Ian moved on to direct them to the weaknesses that were identified prior to the meeting. He listed income mix (needing to bring in more middle class), blight/decay on properties, perceived competitive tax rate/ levy, business attraction, government efficiency at times, self-esteem, and the storm/ sewer systems or aging infrastructure. Clr. Gillotte stated another is the perception of the school system which he feels is pushing a lot of potential residents away. Mayor Valentino added the amount of property off the tax rolls and limited developable land.

Clr. Petropoulos stated another is a collective drug problem that doesn't seem to be going away. Mayor Valentino said he perceives it as more of an embedded drug problem than a permanent one, due to being located between Rochester and Syracuse, but believes there is data on that which the city manager confirmed. Clr. Lavin said when he's looked at crime in comparison to other places, he has found it is low, especially for stranger-on-stranger crime, despite the perception being that Geneva has a high crime rate. Clr. Brennan added that there is a relation to the poverty level. The city manager added many of these things are perceptions, so the lower crime rate may be a strength, and Clr. Brennan agreed that the weakness may be the perception. Ian jumped in to say there are a lot of things like that and asked them to think about how they can combat something that isn't true but is a public perception.

Next, Ian transitioned to opportunities, noting their responses which included marketing/press, capitalizing on natural resources/ lake, Cornell Ag Tech, the lakefront, S. Exchange/ Middle St area, BID, IDA/ LDC, and state-county relations or grants. Clr. Petropoulos said, in terms of the press, he has heard that Canandaigua has an agreement with the FLT not to print anything negative about the city. Clr. Lavin and the city manager confirmed that isn't true and Clr. Lavin explained that Canandaigua just isn't covered as much. Clr. Petropoulos said the positive note then is that we're receiving more publicity and Clr. Brennan added that having a newspaper within the city is an opportunity. Ian said he read an article showing that municipalities with a newspaper in them performed better than peer cities which he found to be an interesting proposition. Clr. Brennan added that voting rates tend to be higher in places with print newspapers as well.

Ian asked them to think, if someone in Rochester or Livingston County were to mention Geneva, what comes to people's minds because that is bigger than what the press writes. Clr. Lavin said he feels a community who writes their own news, rather than allowing someone else to, allows for more control. He desires having a micro-news hub, run by college students, to cover the news by telling our own story as opposed to the print. Clr. Brennan suggested, since the publisher is a small one, simply cultivating a better relationship rather than going through multiple layers. Clr. Petropoulos, in relation to Ian's question, said he feels they can't control what the press does and pointed out that the negative is always put first because it catches people's attention.

Mayor Valentino suggested another opportunity is shared services, which he feels we don't do enough of, but there are a lot of opportunities. Numerous councilors agreed and Ian asked what he would be a shared service opportunity he wishes for? Mayor Valentino answered that one is the town, to share development opportunities more freely, in order to create more developable land. Others included shared fire and police services with surrounding communities or the sewer district to increase capacity to allow for economic development. Clr. Brennan noted that the Town of Geneva is often the relationship goal that is focused on but feels Phelps and Waterloo matter just as much. City Manager Hendrix added that part of that includes looking at what agreements are already in place with those places since it isn't about the

boundaries but more about the service delivery. Clr. Brennan agreed, saying he likes the idea of building off the existing agreements, rather than building from the ground up.

Mayor Valentino said he feels shared services with non-profits would benefit the city too, but sometimes we don't fully know what they bring to the table or already provide. The city manager explained that the Ag Tech facility is an interesting public-private partnership which is going through a strategic plan process currently. She said another piece becomes how do we sustain these places here as opposed to losing them? Ian asked about the taxation, and the city manager replied that the Ag Tech Park is exempt but not all of the property is exempt. Clr. Brennan proposed using the fact they're largely tax exempt as leverage for shared services even just for relationships and knowledge. City Manager Hendrix stated knowledge is something we do get, including products, and they provide jobs which make residents as well as the connections/ relationships. She added that tech farm 2 is a project that will likely be built this year and she wanted to be clear Ag Tech and Tech farm are two different entities. Clr. Lavin added that these types of businesses supply a large percentage of the economy so going after them for taxes or payment in lieu of taxes may not be in the city's best interest. In the end, he said even if HWS and the hospital doubled what they pay and Cornell chipped in it would still be a relatively small amount in the grand scheme of things and they are businesses at the end of the day.

City Manager Hendrix said having these partnerships is key and is similar to working with other municipalities because they have a lot of power and it is important to acknowledge that Cornell main campus and subsidiary programs operate very differently.

Clr. Lavin asked if, in terms of county resources, the city is getting their full share and as connected as we should be? The city manager said she feels they can do better with those connections. She added that while she has had experience with the county side of things every county operates differently.

Mayor Valentino went back to the properties Cornell owns, saying they own it both in and out of the city, so they could develop their town land and provide the developable land to us, to put housing.

City Manager Hendrix explained the sales tax agreement was settled last year, now on an annual renewal basis to be reviewed. She said the challenge is when the population deteriorates it is easier to keep it as is since the population weighs into the agreement so it was easier to keep it where it is.

Ian next went on to threats which included recruitment/ retention, drugs/crime, dis-investment, ignorance/ parochialism, housing stock/ types, failing to capitalize on the lake, and the tax base. Clr. Brennan and Lavin pointed out that the landfills are a continued economic and environmental threat. Clr. Petropoulos feels the old army depo is another environmental threat of old firefighting foam (PFAS) which he is told has been moving toward the lake. The city manager said the water treatment plants are preparing for it and there is litigation which we have joined regarding it.

Another threat the mayor brought up inflation, which is across the board, since the rising costs of everything is a constant struggle. Ian asked when the revaluation is coming out and the city manager said they'll be going out around April 1st.

Ian said these exercises were to lead into a more defined set of goals to achieve in their time together. Going off of that he presented the acronym SMART, to set those, which is being specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. He said to him focusing on the time, resources, and money are the most important. As for time, they can choose to set those big 20-year goals they mentioned, but they have to recognize that and continually be cognizant of their limited time. As for resources he said it is time, staff, bandwidth, equipment and more but if these don't have the time and finances matched up then they're bound for failure. Lastly, he stressed the importance of looking at money, and how you can afford these various things that have costs but acknowledged not everything does have large costs.

Clr. Lavin asked what Ian's opinion is of the city's financial position. Ian addressed that the tax rate/levy are perceived as tight but feels they aren't while clarifying he'd like to look closer to say more. He asked them to consider what they're getting for what they're paying. Clr. Lavin said he feels the evidence

suggests there is no leeway but he thinks there needs to be a balance rather than all or nothing. He continued, saying he isn't trying to be cavalier about it but wants to ask how they're being proactive? Clr. Brennan said his priorities are the economics, which entails focusing on where the revenue growth is. He wants to look at ways to cut expenses or use things differently. He gave an example of the skating rink which he feels could be used differently, that could create revenue growth, as opposed to operating as a break-even operation. The city manager reminded council that there is an RFP about to go out, from the previous council, to look into how the rink operates and what revenue it generates. She added another thing to look at is looking at the fact there would need to be significant investments in order to do a lot of those changes.

Clr. Lavin expressed his urgency in getting together to set their goals and communicate those with the city manager. He said once that is done then ideas could be discussed for situations like these, saying he has proposed the colleges operating the skating rink during the winter since they are the greatest beneficiaries of it. He feels they would have no choice, and save the fee they normally spend for using it, but first there needs to be direction and urgency. He reiterated many of the projects in the works the new council doesn't support, such as the market at the lake, so he feels these lists should be prioritized. The city manager said there needs to be time to dive into budgeting and wants them to recognize that they may cut the levy by \$600,000 but that could be gone if something like a sewer-main breaks and needs to be replaced.

Mayor Valentino asked if council understood what a \$600,000 reduction would be, cost wise, to the taxpayers? He said it would be about 8% off of the tax rate which wouldn't be a big change. Clr. Lavin said he feels he needs more information to fully understand the exact financial position of the city. The mayor said he knows it, and maybe takes it for granted, but they are in a good spot and not distressed. The city manager added that, in the actuals they were shown last meeting, they saw a surplus in the general fund which is very strong budgeting from the comptroller. She feels they've done a good job of forecasting which means they've only taxes just slightly over that they needed to in order to get the budget aligned. Looking at that she feels it is a good strategic priority to get into the budget so they can all understand and be aware of what is going on. Clr. Lavin said that is where he is coming from with wanting a monthly budget committee to provide those monthly updates and how the performance is.

The mayor said, in terms of economics, he wants efficiency and to continue the economic development projects that they've already begun. He said the DIR, OEO, and legion property are still outstanding but he wants to figure out how to finish them and get them behind us. He would like to decide a certain number of projects to have ready by the end of the year and feels that focus would drive economic development. Clr. Brennan agreed, saying they could even be reduced down to 2 or 3, for end of the year goals. Clr. Petropoulos also agreed, saying you have to spend money to make money, so if the projects can be pushed along then they can start making the city money.

Clr. Gillotte said he doesn't want to fall into the trap of being a council that only talks about taxes but also look at revenue and make both a priority. Clr. Grimaldi spoke next, stressing the government exists to spend money on things it wouldn't make sense for an individual to spend money on. He said they're going to spend money on things that don't look like it is a good investment, so he doesn't think they can solely look at what is going to create revenue. He said if that was always the case then someone else would be doing it but they need to consider what is good for the citizens. He feels they should focus on things people can justify their taxes with. While he doesn't feel our taxes are high, even if others do, he wants them to feel that what they're receiving in return is worth it. He does not believe they will make money on government projects or should try to. Ian agreed the government may not be in the business to make money but they can try to spur some things along such as encouraging development or getting properties back on the tax roll.

City Manager Hendrix jumped in to address the DRI, which isn't complete, but said they can apply for the second round. First, she wants them to give their broad vision so staff can map where to go. She said that is where the farmers market project came from, it was a way to not develop the lakefront but to use it.

Clr. Petropoulos said he wants something for their money and believes finished projects will attract new ones. Clr. Gillotte agreed, saying he isn't told taxes are too high but people ask him what they are getting for them? Clr. Lavin stated this is a great city with opportunities but it is council's job to tell the city manager what they'd like to see. He believes after that then they can deal with the realities and allow her to make it happen with their version of success. Clr. Brennan agreed, saying they should work for her, because they provide their ideas and she makes it happen. Clr. Lavin said he feels they're kept at bay whereas Clr. Brennan asked for her to guide them.

Mayor Valentino said he feels council is hungry for knowledge because there are many things that they don't know about yet. Clr. Lavin said he wants to have conversations and it is important to recognize that they were voted in and talked to the voters so now it is their turn to represent what they want.

Clr. Petropoulos asked the city manager to look at which projects are the most realistic to help them prioritize rather than struggle with conflicting projects. He asked, for example, how long the marina will take to build and is it worth it? He also wanted to hear from her what he thinks could be done more efficiently? City Manager Hendrix said in terms of efficiency now that she's been here almost two years, she is working on straightening things out such as the policy on policies, which may not be fancy or feel like a lot, but it is important. As for the marina, she said there is a timeline on the marina funding, and she doesn't know if we could get any more but the building of the marina is surprisingly fast. Another thing she is looking at is investing with the comptroller so there may be some revenue there. In terms of seeing projects build, she said most take 3-5 years, but getting it into the hands of the developer is the most important because they will be paying taxes.

City Manager Hendrix said in terms of infrastructure, the weather plays a part, and they've experienced new issues which mean planning and training. She acknowledged that the government often moves slower than people would like, noting that the DRI project began 2 city managers ago. She often hears that things looked different 20 years ago, but she pointed out that staffing looked different. For example, the recreation department had a lot more staff then and there used to be an engineering team whereas now there is one junior engineer. In terms of taxes, she said they will see an increase in the property values across the city, but that does not mean that the tax rate has to increase to match that as it is up to them to decide. Clr. Lavin said he feels a well-informed council would consider it reasonable to give that direction now so they can begin working on it.

Ian asked them to put it all together by looking at how to put the funding supports around their goals, connecting plans with staff, partnerships, the community, and communicating priorities. He shared his thoughts that they should look at how things such as taxes are compared, being data-driven, and looking at investments. Additionally, he said he's big on communication, which is a continued focused area. He suggested asking how they can get to where they want, and doing so incrementally. Ian noted that inter-governmental relations are important and collaborations seem to be a priority to council.

Ian went back to their wants which were revenue generation, economic development, relations, downtown vacancies, marketing/ communications, neighborhoods/ quality of life, and recreation. Mayor Valentino felt he captured it well and mentioned, in relation to marketing, that there was a video made for the city. It was a shared campaign about being Geneva made between the city and numerous partners but got paused during the pandemic. He said he wasn't sure if anyone has seen it but an outsider watching it would see the potential in Geneva. He hopes that the communication person coming onto staff mid-year will be able to leverage some of these opportunities to drive a strategic goal.

Clr. Brennan said he feels if they can identify the items they want to achieve, identify the projects that've been started, and focus on revenue that can be their brand for their time in office. Clr. Lavin said he's suggested a leadership committee before, to emphasize what is being done in the city, and look at what can be achieved. He feels, even clean ups that cost next to nothing, can show the community that they're getting something done rather than just talking about issues. Clr. Brennan agreed, saying that's

what they're yearning for, and it builds confidence in the city. Mayor Valentino said working together with community leaders is one of the city manager's goals is to improve and promote the city as a whole.

Clr. Grimaldi said Geneva had advertised Geneva as a retirement destination before 2020. He feels that's what cleaned up S. Main Street and those higher-end people moved into the row houses and now they look great. City Manager Hendrix said that was similar to the idea of lake's edge or American legion development to become a retirement community.

Clr. Petropoulos went back to the events in the city for the community, saying that Colt Street has an annual Easter egg hunt which they've opened up to the city. He feels this is what will generate volunteerism and thinks it's important for them to share events in different wards so the community can see them being active. Mayor Valentino said events like this can develop a neighborhood and spark more events.

City Manager Hendrix noted that events go through an event process so she told them to ensure they're communicating with Liz Toner if they're helping residents with an event. She made it clear that fees are not waived for events but neighborhood events are treated a little differently. Additionally, city sanctioned events are slightly different, but if someone wanted to do an event that isn't city sanctioned there is a process and a fee which she feels is helpful for them to know. Clr. Grimaldi asked if there was neighborhood funding budgeted for these events and the city manager answered that there is no neighborhood funding. Clr. Lavin jumped in, saying that he ran the city's basketball program for years until the funding was cut, so he raised the money for the program. He feels if they can get the financials in order he feels there is money that could and should be spent on things like this that improve the overall quality of life.

3. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi
MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:09pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-2 Absent)**

Nicole Wright

City Clerk

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 18, 2024 – 5:15 PM
City Hall – Second Floor Teams' 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,
and Clr. Whitfield (arrived at 5:28pm)

Absent: Clr. Gillotte

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Grimaldi
MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 5:18pm to discuss matters
leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline,
suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-2 Absent)

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Brennan; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos
MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 6:23pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

3. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Brennan; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos
MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 6:24pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

Nicole Wright

City Clerk

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 20, 2024 – 5:15 PM
City Hall – Second Floor Teams' 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. Whitfield, and
Clr. Gillotte (arrived at 5:19pm)

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 5:19pm to discuss matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation and collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (7-1 Absent)

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

MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 7:32pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:33pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nicole Wright

City Clerk

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 27, 2024 – 5:15 PM
City Hall – Second Floor Teams' Room
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Petropoulos Clr. Pealer (arrived 5:26 pm),
Clr. Grimaldi (arrived 5:22 pm), and Clr. Whitfield (arrived 5:19 pm)

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

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

**MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 5:17 pm to discuss matters
leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline,
suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation**

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0, 3 Excused)

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

**MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 5:58pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. ADJOURNMENT

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

**MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 5:59pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Alicia Jean

Deputy City Clerk

Geneva City Council Agenda Item Briefing

To: Geneva City Council

From: Amie Hendrix, City Manager

Meeting Date: March 6, 2024

Item Title: Resolution Adopting Fees for Short Term Rental License

Action Required: The approval of this resolution will enact the fees for Short Term Rental License into the annual fee schedule.

Background Information: Chapters 350 and 215 of the Geneva City Code were modified in October 2023. As part of this update a fee of \$1,000 per property/per year was recommended by council for each license issued, issued every other year. As this occurred mid-budget this fee was not reflected in the final 2024 fee schedule. This updates the 2024 fee schedule.

Alternatives: Council may elect to amend or remove the fee amount. This would mean that there would be no fee collected at this time, although it would not change the requirement for the STR permitting and licensing process.

Financial Impact: There are approximately 130 separate STR properties that would be expected to pay this fee. The impact will be up to \$130,000 annually which will be utilized to support the delivery of this program.

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

RESOLUTION # 22 – 2024

RESOLUTION ADOPTING LICENSE FEE FOR SHORT TERM RENTAL LICENSE

City Manager Hendrix presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the 2024 budget was presented and adopted by City Council in October 2023, and

WHEREAS, An Ordinance Amending Chapter 350 and Chapter 215 of the Geneva City Code was adopted in October 2023 which enacted Short Term Rental License and Short Term Rental as a use allowed by Special Use Permit, and

WHEREAS, the fee schedule presented within the 2024 Budget did not include the fee for Short Term Rental License as determined by Council, now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby approves the addition of the Short Term Rental License Fee of \$1,000 per property/per year to be issued on an every other year basis.

Geneva City Council Agenda Item Briefing

To: Geneva City Council

From: David West, Director of Planning & Economic Development

Meeting Date: April 3, 2024

Item Title: RESOLUTION DECLARING WATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT A TYPE II ACTION

Action Required:

An affirmative vote on the provided resolution ends the State Environmental Quality Review for the proposed Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project.

Background:

The City of Geneva recently completed an Engineering Report: Evaluation of Existing Treatment Facilities laying out the need for increased quality, safety, and efficiency at the drinking water treatment plant, and evaluating various options and the associated pros and cons. The report recommends a plan for activated carbon (GAC) filtration for advanced treatment of water to address taste and odor issues and to remove or reduce many emerging contaminants of concern including PFAS. The report also recommends the addition of a new system providing disinfection by means of a liquid sodium hypochlorite system. These two systems will necessitate 3 new buildings proposed at the north side of the existing water treatment plant complex, a 45'x45' GAC filter building, a 20'x20' pump building, and a 20'x20' Sodium Hypochlorite building. All facilities would be designed in accordance with the 2018 Edition of the "Recommended Standards for Waterworks" (commonly known as the Ten States Standards). The report is available by request from the Department of Planning & Economic Development.

SEQR – the State Environmental Quality Review groups actions by governments into 3 categories, certain actions likely to have a significant impact are listed as Type I actions, certain specific actions unlikely to have any significant impact are listed as Type II actions, and everything else is considered an "Unlisted" action. The list for Type II actions is found in NY Codes and Regulations Title 6 Part 17.5-C which lists 46 actions. Number 9 applies in this case: construction or expansion of a primary or accessory/appurtenant, non-residential structure or facility involving less than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area and not involving a change in zoning or a use variance and consistent with local land use controls, but not radio communication or microwave transmission facilities; <https://dos.ny.gov/state-environmental-quality-review-act-seqra-basics>

Other Relevant Information:

NYS recently released funding notices for grants that could be applied to water treatment system upgrades, in order to be competitive, the City must complete the environmental review process before the upcoming application deadlines this summer. This resolution is a step in that process readying the City to be competitive for upcoming funds.

Financial Impact:

Keeping this review in house saved the City \$9,200 over working with a consultant.

RESOLUTION # 25 - 2024

RESOLUTION DECLARING WATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT A TYPE II ACTION

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva, with assistance from MRB Group, completed an Engineering Report for the Evaluation of Existing Treatment facilities and Recommendations for Capital Improvements at the City of Geneva Water Treatment Plant on February 6, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva seeks to be ready for grant opportunities that may fund water treatment plant improvements including WIIA, BRIC, and others; and

WHEREAS, completing SEQR review of projects is a key component in grant readiness and an important responsibility of Council; and

WHEREAS, Council declared lead agency for the review of this project on Feb. 2, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the construction of new facilities at the water treatment plant proposed by the MRB report falls well within the Type II threshold for Part617.5-C9: construction or expansion of a primary or accessory/appurtenant, non-residential structure or facility involving less than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area and not involving a change in zoning or a use variance and consistent with local land use controls, but not radio communication or microwave transmission facilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Geneva declares that the Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project is a Type 2 Action for the purposes of State Environmental Quality Review, and no further review is required.

Geneva City Council Agenda Item Briefing

To: Geneva City Council

From: David West, Director of Planning & Economic Development

Meeting Date: April 3, 2024

Item Title: RESOLUTION NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL
SIGNIFICANCE – GENEVA RAIL TRAIL PROJECT CLARK TO GENESEE

Action Required:

An affirmative vote on the provided resolution completes the State Environmental Quality Review for the proposed Rail Trail project and declares that there is not a significant environmental impact

Background:

The City of Geneva applied for financial assistance from the NYS OPRHP under the Recreational Trails Program for the purpose of funding the development of the Geneva Trail Project. The Geneva Trail Project is a phased approach to the Rail-to-Trail project for the inactive LeHigh Valley rail line as outlined in the City of Geneva's North End Brownfield Opportunity Area Open Space & Connectivity Strategy Planning Project that was completed in 2022. This phase will construct a shared use trail bridge over Doran Avenue and reinforce a section of the trail that has eroded causing a narrowing that does not allow a safe width for use.

The Rail-to-Trail project is an important opportunity for community access to green space and offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike and will ultimately connect to regional trail systems.

Other Relevant Information: none

Financial Impact:

No new impact, Council already approved moving forward with this project which includes \$10,000 in matching funds in order to receive \$180,000 from RTP. Blueprint Geneva has received grants from Ontario County to fund one of the bridges which they will donate to the City.

RESOLUTION # 26-2024

**RESOLUTION NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE – GENEVA RAIL TRAIL
PROJECT CLARK TO GENESEE**

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva, adopted the Brownfield Opportunity Area Connectivity Strategy in 2022;
and

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva was successful in pursuing a Recreational Trails Program grant in 2023;
and

WHEREAS, the Geneva City Council declares itself to be the lead agency for the review of the Geneva Rail Trail Project Clark to Genesee called for in the BOA Connectivity Strategy and funded by the RTP grant; and

WHEREAS, Council has reviewed the project plans and developed the Full Environmental Assessment Form Part 1 with the assistance of expert staff; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project replaces previously removed bridges with new bridges to allow the use of the former rail bed as a pedestrian path; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project is unlikely to have any significant environmental impacts and does not impact any sensitive areas; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Geneva adopts the attached Parts 2 & 3 Full Environmental Assessment Forms, issues a negative declaration of environmental significance, and directs the City Manager to take all necessary actions to sign and submit said documents.

