

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

August 7, 2024 – 7:00 PM
City Hall – 2nd Floor Council Room
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Brennan, Clr. Lavin, Clr. Pealer (arrived at 7:02), Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr Whitfield (arrived at 7:03)
Absent: Clr. Moracco

2. PROCLAMATION - Remembering Frank Quartaro

3. QUARTER TWO FINANCIAL REPORT – presented by Comptroller Newcomb

Comptroller Newcomb provided City Councilmembers with a budget summary page and detail page, noting that she has no concerns with where the 2024 budget stands today. She shared that 64% of revenue for the year has been collected, and that everything is tracking as expected. Comptroller Newcomb shared that everything went well with the bond rating call and the financial rating of the City. Councilor Lavin thanked Comptroller Newcomb for the improved report, and asked for an overtime summary report, wondering why 25 or 26 people are making over \$100,000 or double their salary. Comptroller Newcomb agreed to provide broken out details. Councilor Lavin then asked for the summary a few days ahead of time, along with more dashboards, again commenting on a police officer making \$140,000 rather than \$60,000. Comptroller Newcomb explained minimum staffing requirements, and Councilor Lavin then wondered who controls these requirements. City Manager Hendrix advised that Council will be provided with an overtime overview and explained that events, minimum staffing, incidents that occur near the end of shifts for Police Officers, and water main breaks and storms for DPW, and further explained that overtime is generated around health and safety. Councilor Lavin wondered what steps management has taken and pursued to reduce overtime, as well as who determines safety, arguing that other agencies should get involved. Comptroller Newcomb asked Councilmembers to email her if they are looking for anything specifically for her quarter three report.

Mayor Valentino asked when the City would see AIM funding. Comptroller Newcomb expects to see it closer to quarter four, when the State is reconciling funds. Councilor Lavin wondered about sales tax, Comptroller Newcomb advised that sales tax sits at the same level it did this time last year, and remains in line with what is anticipated for 2024. City Manager Hendrix explained how sales tax projections are based on the market. Councilor Lavin then wondered where extra sales tax revenue would go, if more than anticipated comes in. Comptroller Newcomb explained that if additional funding is received, it can roll into the general fund at year end, or the additional revenue can be used rather

than pulling the planned \$600,000 from reserve, using additional sales tax revenue instead, at council direction. Councilor Pealer wondered what expense is pulled from reserve. Comptroller Newcomb explained that there is no specific expense, rather it is planned in the budget to pull from reserves for one-time expenses.

4. WATER AND SEWER CAPACITY OVERVIEW – presented by Director of Public Works Venuti

Director of Public Works Venuti provided the following overview of the City's water and sewer capacity:

Thank you, Mayor, City Counselors. Good evening, everyone

Understanding that there has been several questions or concerns regarding regional growth and development, I appreciate the opportunity to provide a basic overview on the City's Domestic Water and Sanitary Waste Water Capacities.

So Where Does Our Clean Water Come From? Our water source is Seneca Lake. We draw what is classified as "surface water" through intake pipes installed a few hundred feet off shore, into our water treatment plant that is located in the Town of Geneva, on Lochland Road near the Geneva Country Club.

Basically, the raw water is filtered through a very old but reliable slow sand system as well as a very modern microfilter system.

Chlorine, fluoride and corrosion control measures are then introduced to the filtered water. Water is then pumped from the plant to our reservoir, which is located on Preemptions Rd, just south of Routes 5&20 above the Little League Fields.

We follow strict guidelines in order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink. The New York State Department of Health and the United States Environmental Protection Agency prescribe significant regulations which limit the number of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Last year, your tap water met all State drinking water health standards and we did not violate a maximum contaminant level or any water quality standard.

DPW staff are responsible for a distribution system that in 2023, serviced approximately 12,700 city and 2,000 Town of Geneva residents through over 4,300 water service connections, tapped off of more than 82 miles of distribution piping, that has 750 water valves and 530 fire hydrants.

Our WTP is currently rated to produce up to 5 million gallons per day and our Reservoir can hold and store 5-million-gallons that gravity feeds and supplies the system.

We produced over 592 million gallons in 2023.

Average of just 1.62 million gallons per day; the largest single day production was 2.1 million gallons; and we delivered over 501 million gallons to customers. The plant used 38 MG calculated an unaccounted loss of 58.8 MG or just 9.92% attributed to reasons such as disinfection flushing of mains, fighting fires and leakage caused by water main breaks. Regulations like us to be under 10% of loss of treated water. Today we have capacity to process and seek customers to sell additional water.

And Where Does Our Waste Water Go? It's the same answer – Seneca Lake. However, let me explain how it gets there. We collect and process sanitary sewage – which is the normal, water-carried, household and toilet wastes from residences, businesses, commercial and industrial users.

Sewage is received from City of Geneva as well as Towns of Geneva and Fayette customers.

This is called our influent water that makes its way to our Marsh Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant, located at Doran Ave.

Similar to our water regulations, in order to ensure that our treated water is safe to discharge; to protect the environment and public health, the New York State Department of Conservation and the United States Environmental Protection Agency prescribe significant regulations which dictate how we are to operate our systems.

In very basic terms there are five basic principles of wastewater treatment

Physical – removal of solid particles

Chemical – removal of contaminants

Biological – our famous “bugs” - used to removed organic matter

Tertiary – high level filtration for final removal of solids

Disinfection – any remaining pathogens or bacteria are destroyed to ensure water is safe for release into the environment. We have a State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) Permit that allows us to discharge flows up to 6.0 million gallons per day.

We do NOT have combined – storm and sanitary systems however we experience water intrusions during storm events.

DPW maintains roughly 84 miles of sanitary sewer distribution piping and thousands of manhole structures and over 4,300 laterals approximately City 4100 Town 200. Besides Marsh Creek we have several pumping stations. Our plant was designed to treat an average daily flow of 4.0 MGD in 1972 with a peak hydraulic capacity at 10.4 MGD.

Roughly 10-12 years ago a large investment was made to modify our old activated sludge process, which added anaerobic digesters and a new final settling tank allowing treatment capacity to be expanded to the current level of 6.0 MGD.

Flows above 6.0MGD are diverted to the High Flow Facility (HFF) which treats the very high flows associated inflow and infiltrations that you heard me discuss. The HFF treats flows using a high flocculated setting process before disinfection action and discharge into Seneca Lake which is our effluent. Heavy rain events and periodic snow melts increase the flows and trigger HFF operation numerous times per year.

You always hear me indicate two capacity components of waste water - the liquids and the solids. The present sludge or solids digestion process is our Auto Thermophilic Aerobic Digestion or (ATAD) systems. We are capable of handling 5,000 pounds of solids per day. Over the past few years, the average amounts of dry solids averaged 4,700 pounds per day which is roughly 94% or very near its capacity. Leaving very little reserve for growth and development which are main factor as to why we are thankfully moving forward with an ATAD expansion.

We have room for sanitary flows liquids as our engineering study, completed in 2020 indicated average daily flows of just 3.22 MGD.

Town Geneva – includes some Town of Seneca - Current contracted yearly limits are approximately 159 million gallons - in 2023 we received just approx. 92 million or about 14 % of total volume that we processed into total 702 million gallons.

We meter these flows at three locations Lyons Rd, Preemption Rd and Snell Road Meter pits

Town of Waterloo – Which Fayette 2.1Million gallons flows through is metered at Border City or about 3%.

Having a large amount of capacity does not help the city with I&I issues.

The towns are discussing proposed development much earlier in the process so that we can request engineered calculations on projected flows. We review and share this data with NYSDEC. I meet regularly with Town of Geneva and Town of Fayette staff to discuss and update anticipated developments. I have to say that the numbers have dropped off significantly over the past two years. If you're really good at math followed my figures you will note that we produced some 591 million of water and processed 702 million gallons of waste water. Inflow and Infiltration – where storm water and ground water enter the sanitary systems can be as much as 15%.

Where capacity issues need to be looked for future regional and local developments is not only I&I prevention and mitigation but also concerns we expect from significant industrial users and generators of high strength wastes.

We are very proud of our facilities and thank you and past city leadership for continued support and investments in them. If you have not had the opportunity to visit our plants, when time allows, please reach out and schedule a visit to meet with our talented employees and see firsthand more about what this department does.

I encourage everyone to please see much more information on our annual drinking water quality reports, which is summarized and posted every year electronically on our web site, and hard copies at GHA, GF Library and at City Hall.

HABS in the news - Unfortunately there are times during the year, especially hot late summer and early fall months, when the raw water quality of Seneca Lake is adversely impacted by high turbidity level, taste and odors, algal toxins or emerging contaminants. The adverse conditions create a real challenge for the WTP operators to produce a high-quality drinking water. With your earlier support, we are in early stages of seeking approvals for an additional grant funding to install a treatment system called Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) filtration. This will support the treatment already and in place. We are also seeking to replace existing chlorine gas disinfection with a liquid sodium hypochlorite disinfection system. Initial estimates - \$14M in 2024

Councilor Pealer wondered what the end result of AHAB is, wondering if it was compost. Director Venuti shared that the end result is a Class A Bio Solid sludge that doesn't go to the landfill. Councilor Pealer then wondered about ground water infiltration, and if it's cheaper to fix infiltration or expand the system. Director Venuti shared that the system is inspected as projects occur, and that DPW is lining when they can.

Councilor Lavin shared that he's impressed by DPW's nonstop work, since there isn't a lot of give between capacity and overflow sometimes. He also highlighted that with town development, if the City doesn't cut off water if they reach the limit, the charge is increased, leaving them with more access to capacity of the plant. Councilor Lavin asked how the City hears of Town projects, what communication looks like as projects move ahead, and what assurance the Town receives from the City regarding water and sewer before moving forward with their development projects. Director Venuti began by clarifying that the City doesn't overflow, and if overflow does occur there are strict reporting regulations. Regarding Carter Road and the Country Club Condo development projects, Director Venuti shared that a form has been developed that the Town fills out when a project is brought to their attention, and a build out of gallons per day expected is generated. He also shared that current domestic residential flows do in the Town do not impact the City at all. High strength industrial and commercial users have to be reviewed with regulating agencies to discuss capacity, reserves, and whether the project can be given the go ahead. Councilor Lavin argued that there is a policy issue related to a City asset being allowed to be used by the Town, asserting that the City is spawning development in the Town for projects that don't contribute to the City's property tax situation. City Manager Hendrix advised that the City is looking at a rate study with other municipalities and how the City sets rates, and the overall capacity the City is willing to share, further noting that it's helpful to have an outside consultant come in, look at the City's system and help determine those arrangements and agreements. The Headworks Loading Study is underway, and will assist in having a more informed conversation regarding capacity and where it goes. City Manager Hendrix reminded the group that these resources are highly regulated by the EPA and State Department of Health. They can say that our neighboring communities have access to these resources. Councilor Lavin spoke to leveraging City resources regardless of environmental issues. City Manager Hendrix reminded him that these are regional assets, the plants are not just ours as other entities have a vested interest, for example Waterloo and the Town of Geneva fund improvement projects. Councilor Lavin replied that legally it's the City's plant, and said the City has to look at its ability to push these issues down the road. He then asked Director Venuti where inflow comes from. Director Venuti said that it's not

always clear, but there are calculations to help determine this when significant I & I occurs, and can be challenging during rain events. Councilor Lavin lamented about pushing policy that this council hasn't been a part of creating. City Manager Hendrix acknowledged that current policies are from previous council, and reminded the group that new policies will be developed with legal and partners before next agreements, noting the Headworks and Tax studies, for clear paths and options to move forward. Councilor Lavin then stated that the current agreements are no longer binding, and that development in the Town needs to be reined in, raising equity issues and justice for tax payers and services. Mayor Valentino reminded the group that partners pay for 50% of capitol improvements, and the City would be responsible for the full amount of improvements without these partnerships. Councilor Lavin suggested that they build their own. Mayor Valentino reminded him that the law won't allow such a thing. Councilor Gillotte wondered how DPW morale is with recent water main breaks, and wondered if overtime is planned for based on the history of breakage. Director Venuti shared that DPW plans for overtime and supplies related to breaks, and shared that staff all respond to emergencies with equal vigor whether the break is at 2am or 2 in the afternoon. He also explained that when budgeting overtime, they do their best to estimate. Councilor Brennan noted that the subject really is that the growth in the Town can far exceed the growth capacity the City has. He also noted that taxes are always part of a conversation, and that a larger conversation has to happen, as part of a bigger picture, an episode to really take a hold of. Councilor Grimaldi wondered who's running the water plant. Director Venuti explained that there are four staff at the water treatment plant, three are Operator 4A's, the highest operator rank. Water maintenance staff all have B Operator's license. All go through annual training and upkeep. 8.5 FTE's staff at the waste water treatment plant, and 8 full time staff are on the field maintenance team. In the event of an emergency everyone always comes together. EPA and DOH regulations require a certain number of operators depending on the size of the facility. City Manager Hendrix noted that the new supervisor at the water plant experienced his first audit yesterday, while managing three water main breaks. Mayor Valentino noted that we're at about 25% capacity daily for water usage. He then wondered about zebra mussels and if they are still a problem for water treatment. Director Venuti explained that they still exist, but are being successfully mitigated at intake with a chemical treatment system that kills zebra mussels. It was then noted that sewer is at capacity on any given day, and a grant was recently awarded to expand sewer capacity. The City is still waiting to hear how the WIIA grant application fared, for water treatment improvements. Mayor Valentino reviewed challenges related to tax exempt properties. Previous councils and staff have worked diligently to create leverage with not for profits who don't pay property tax related to water and sewer rates, but faced legal limitations. Mayor Valentino further noted that he is looking forward to creating any leverage we can. Councilor Lavin wondered how many customers are being served in the Town of Seneca for water, wondering if the Town of Seneca is counted as one customer, or if it's by property. Director Venuti will look into numbers and get back to the group.

5. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

- A. July 10 (Regular Council Meeting)
- B. July 18 (Special Council Meeting)
- C. July 23 (Special Council Meeting)

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

MOVED THAT the minutes of the July 10, July 18 and July 23 Council Meetings be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Shanelle France, Board President of BluePrint Geneva introduced herself and shared that BluePrint Geneva is a federally recognized 501c3 charity formed in 2016. She shared that BluePrint Geneva works to pursue new concepts that focus on growing an interconnected economically powered community. Some current projects include a summer youth program, meals every Sunday that can be picked up or delivered (looking for volunteers to meal prep and plan), and a rentable kitchen space for small businesses. Questions can be emailed to genevacommunitykitchen.org. They also support a community garden on Crystal Street, if you want to help out, email james@blueprintgeneva.org, they're always looking for volunteers to keep plants watered. In an effort to bring more people to the garden, guided yoga events are being held. Connect with BluePrint Geneva on social media to stay up to date with events and opportunities.

Rev. Dr. Phillip Fleming provided an update on 501c4 organization Success for the People, which is connected with a mental health private practice in Yonkers for peer support services. This created from the ground up not for profit is also connected to Mindful Living which serves all of New York and also has a radio station, the Peer Regional Network on Live 365. Rev. Dr. Fleming went on to voice his concern with the number of opioid deaths and drug use in the County, wondering what the support level is in Geneva for recovery. He also wondered when Boards and Commissions would come up again and encouraged community engagement.

Catherine Price, BID President shared information on the Self-Guided Native Plant Tour, and shared a pamphlet as well. She explained that the flower beds are numbered, and have plaques with QR codes to scan, which link to the BID website, providing education about the native plants, and will be featured the next three Saturdays as a guided tour through plants, with education on beneficial insects. There will be seed giveaways of pollinator plants for fall sowing as well.

Kathryn Slining Haynes shared information about Weeding Wednesdays. She then commented on the Community Engagement Coordinator decision at last month's meeting, appreciating Councilor Lavin encouraging staff to work within the parameters without micromanaging. She then agreed with comments from last month's meeting about not all residents being comfortable going to their councilmembers. She hopes to see council move forward with a wider lens, and the City to be set up to be able to obtain grant funding by demonstrating engagement. She then thanked City staff carrying out City business.

Cassie Sneider introduced herself as a Ward 2 resident and small business owner. She explained that the Community Coordinator role is crucial for tasks such as managing social media, noting that each graphic posted takes about 30 minutes to an hour to create, and to consider the content that needs to be created for every concert, event, and emergency. She shared that she believes its exploitative to work staff outside of their job descriptions and after hours to create this content. She described the City Manager as thoughtful and forward thinking in creating this position, and believes that resistance to change doesn't serve the public. She shared Lancaster, PA as an example of a similarly sized city with a very successful social media campaign, and believes the elimination of the position hurts locals.

Larry Campbell introduced himself, and shared with the group that he rises to encourage Council to put a wooden stake once and for all through the heart of the zombie proposal to go into the marina

business. Firstly, the City is not in a financial position to gamble on such an experiment. There are many other more important pressing community needs that need budget support, and that would be of benefit to far more Genevans than the tiny few that would use a marina. Secondly, there are already numerous marinas along the nearby lakefront and canal. Third, Power boats would bring noise, water and air pollution to a public and wildlife green space that is truly the gem of Geneva, and one of it's greatest attractions for both Genevans and out tourist visitors. He closed his comments advising Don't kill the duck that laid the golden egg.

7. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Budget 2025

The Budget is in full force and will be presented on Monday, September 16, 2024 at 7pm. We have met with all departments and the Business Improvement District to review their funding requests. All were asked to prepare departmental/organizational budgets (budgets without fixed staffing costs) that reflected no more than 5% growth. Any items over the growth would be considered ARM (Above Required Maintenance) Requests. After reviewing budgets and requests the Comptroller and I asked each department to further review the items that are necessary for operations and those that are considered more of a want than a need. From here, we will prepare a budget that aligns with our goals of creating the lowest and most sustainable tax rate within the last ten years, provides smart spending, increases wise investments, and stabilizes the use of our resources.

The 2025 budget presentation will include detailed information on all items requested by the departments and an overview of what is recommended for funding and what is not recommended. While we have many great departments and organizations that the City supports, we have one budget that supports all of the work of the organization. Funding sources like sales tax, aid to municipalities, and local tax dollars provide resources to all our departments and must be shared.

To prepare for the 2025 budget, I suggest reviewing the 2024 budget book and understanding the format of that document. The 2025 budget book will look very similar. One addition this year will be Departmental Key Metrics. Each department will provide 2-4 key metrics they are or will be tracking related to their departmental operations. In addition to the budget presentation and the workshops, in mid-August the Comptroller and I will be providing a community budget overview via YouTube to provide community members an overview of municipal budgeting and finance. Stay tuned for this budget update.

Double Poles

Unfortunately, the utility pole work is out of our hands. Staff from the City continues to communicate with the utility companies asking for the double poles to be removed. Each utility company has 120 days to move their equipment AFTER the previous utility company has moved their hardware. The process seems to be taking much longer than needed and staff have contacted the Public Service Commission to share our concerns. If members of the public have time, they may also reach out to the PSC asking for pole removal to occur.

Partnership With Finger Lakes Community Action

Finger Lakes Community Action plans to submit a bid in partnership with the City of Geneva for a grant through the New York State Division of Homes and Community Renewal. The grant entitled Vacant Rental Improvement Program is an attempt to address the current housing crisis in New York. Through our recent housing survey, the City has identified ~50 one or two family vacant homes, which in the coming weeks, FLC Action will be reaching out to owners of to gauge their interest in participating in this program if funding is awarded. Awards to property owners are for \$50,000 and

\$75,000 for those willing to rent to both moderately and low-income households. They will allow the property owner to provide mold remediation, access/egress, roof replacement, foundation repair, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, frame of new walls, drywall, door replacements, and all will be financed to fully address code violations for a certificate of occupancy. The owner and potential owners must agree to a ten-year regulatory period to ensure that the goal of the program for low-income households is continually maintained.

CDBG Housing Application

Last week PED submitted the CDBG Housing Application, for 7 homes, Finger Lakes Community Action earmarked \$100,000 of their funding for energy assessments and weatherization. Total grant ask was \$638,444, total project \$738,444. There is not a local match for this program. We aim to submit this program every year for the next 10 years.

Related to this, our application was accepted to declare us a Pro Housing Communities Certified. After a few follow up questions we anticipate the certification being awarded soon.

Geneva Police Department Youth Academy

The GPD hosted 16 youth for the Police Department Youth Academy this summer. The Academy started on July 15 and convened every Monday and Friday through Friday, August 8. Each week the students completed physical training by the lake and then participated in tours of 911, Ontario County Sheriff's Department, Ontario County Jail, Happy Tails, Troop E, Geneva Fire Department, and Mercy Flight. They will conclude on Friday with a tour of the Ontario County Courthouse and a mock trial with members of the District Attorney's office.

Storm Debris Clean Up

DPW has been actively cleaning up yard waste and tree debris from the recent extreme weather events. If residents are cleaning limbs blown down alongside or from the rear of their property, please bring the debris to the curb line for pick up. DPW will not go on private property to retrieve limbs or brush. *Safety Reminder* – Please contact local utility companies before working in and around any power lines.

The Resource Recovery Park located on Doran Ave will continue to be open to residents Wednesday 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM and Saturday 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM for debris and food scrap drop off. Tree Contractors are not allowed to deposit their debris.

Thank you for your patience as we continue to work to clean up the city.

Potential for Rain on Friday, August 9

- To protect homes during storm events, make sure gutter down spouts are cleared and directed away from property foundations.
- If a basement is prone to water intrusion, consider raising valuables from low lying floor surfaces.
- Ensure that sumps pumps are in working order and not connected to sanitary sewer system.
- Clean off any street debris along curb line catch basin drains near your home.
- Prepare for any power outages that may occur. Put together an emergency kit with water, flashlights, batteries, and important medications.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are older or have disabilities, to ensure they are prepared for any storms.
- If you need emergency assistance, call 9-1-1.
- Stay informed about the storm's progress through local news and weather updates.
- The Geneva Fire, Police, and Public Works departments are well prepared and ready to respond to any emergencies that may occur.

BID Lakefront Contractor

In recent budget discussions with the BID we discussed current year operations and that due to challenges in filling vacancies the BID has funding that was allocated to them that they can utilize to contract for additional work on landscaping and vegetation management at the lakefront, much in alignment with the work requested by the Green committee for the remainder of 2024. DPW and BID are working to finalize this agreement with a contractor.

Community Outreach Beat the Heat Pop Up Splash Park Pilot Program

This pilot program is ready to launch. We are calling this event, Beat the Heat Pop Up Splash Park Pilot Program. We have come up with an idea of utilizing fire apparatus instead of the hydrants directly. This will allow for more water pressure control, less strain on hydrants being partially opened and closed and minimize traffic concerns of such a program. Firefighter driver, hydrant operations and apparatus controls training can be incorporated into this program. Most recently this process was tried out at the Geneva Summer Recreation program with a beautiful photo in the Finger Lakes Times on Tuesday, August 6, 2024.

City Disposition Process

We have received a couple proposals for purchasing City owned property that is not on the current listing of properties for sale. The Property Disposition Team has reviewed these properties and will bring forward a recommendation to council in the coming weeks.

Appointments to Shade Tree Committee

The City Manager appoints James Norwalk, Daisy Hoyt, Charles Rouse to the Shade Tree Committee with terms expiring December 31, 2025.

City Hall Selfie Day

Organized by Engaging Local Government Leaders, City Hall Selfie Day is a celebration of public service showcasing pride in local government institutions. 2024 marks the 9th year of City Hall Selfie Day. On August 15, 2024, government employees, elected officials, members of the media, and community members across the globe celebrate by showcasing their local municipal buildings on social media. Using the #CityHallSelfie. City Hall Selfie Day is all about local government pride. Let's show our Geneva pride!

Appreciation to Staff

The month of July was a challenging month for the City of Geneva. A month normally marked by celebrations and summer events concluded with loss for our city teams. The passing of our long-time DPW Heavy Equipment Operator Frank Quartaro and FD Assistant Chief Powers left our teams with heavy hearts. Both men were exemplary public servants, who put service above themselves day in and day out, and both are missed throughout the organization.

Thank you to the employees that have been working through their own grief to ensure our city marches on and builds off the successes created by these two men.

8. RESOLUTION – APPOINTMENT OF KATE OTT, RN MPH, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEALTH AS LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER FOR THE CITY OF GENEVA

City Manager Hendirx presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, In an effort to comply with the Shared Services Initiative, Ontario County and the City of Geneva identified an opportunity to share and coordinate the services of Mary Beer, RN MPH, the former Public Health Director of Ontario County, to act as Local Health Officer for the City of Geneva; and

WHEREAS, Since the original appointment, Mary Beer, RN MPH, has retired and Kate Ott, RN MPH has agreed to act as Local Health Officer for the City of Geneva; and

WHEREAS, The City of Geneva wishes to appoint Kate Ott, RN MPH, the Ontario County Public Health Director as the City Local Health Officer; and

WHEREAS, The Ontario County Public Health Director, Kate Ott, RN MPH agrees to act as the Local Health Officer for the City of Geneva, thereby eliminating the need for the City to appoint and pay a local health officer; and

WHEREAS, As part BBB of Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2017 specifically authorizes cooperating municipalities to enter into shared services agreements; and

WHEREAS, The parties wish to continue their Shared Services Agreement providing for the appropriate service; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Kate Ott, RN MPH, in furtherance of this appointment, will investigate complaints of public health nuisances arising with the City and when necessary to resolve said nuisances will present the facts and recommendations to the City Council for their decision and enforcement action and the payment of any costs to abate a public health nuisance shall be a City cost; and be it further

RESOLVED, The duration of the appointment began August 17, 2023 and will end on December 31, 2025.

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

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. **RESOLUTION – WITHDRAW AND RECOMMENCE FORECLOSURE ACTION**

Comptroller Newcomb presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, on or about November 8, 2023, the City of Geneva commenced an In-Rem Tax Foreclosure action pursuant to Article Eleven of the New York State Property Tax Law in Ontario County Court, index number 135252-2023 (the “Action”); and

WHEREAS, Article Eleven of the New York State Property Tax Law was recently amended by the New York State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the City Attorney and City Comptroller believe it necessary to withdraw the pending Action and recommence a new In-Rem Tax Foreclosure action to ensure compliance with the amended Article Eleven; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geneva City Council, hereby authorizes the City Attorney and City Comptroller to withdraw the pending Action and recommence a new in rem tax foreclosure action pursuant to Article Eleven of the New York Property Tax Law.

Comptroller Newcomb presented the resolution and explained that previous Legal began filing tax foreclosure action. After filings, New York State amended the law. The City Attorney and Comptroller request to withdraw and recommence this action, adding additional wording that clearly outlines the mechanism to claim surplus funds.

Councilor Brennan asked for where the surplus comes from, wondering if it's the difference between taxes owed and the property sale price. Comptroller Newcomb answered affirmatively, and explained that it is now outlined how to claim the additional funds. Councilor Grimaldi clarified that the surplus is after taxes and fees, and Comptroller Newcomb said that's correct, noting there is a small administrative fee. Councilor Petropoulos asked if the new Article 11 costs the City anything, Comptroller Newcomb confirmed that there is no cost to the City, only clearing up the process.

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

10. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

ACTION TAKEN BY Clr. Pealer; seconded by Clr. Gillotte
MOVED THAT Mary Salotti and Victoria Lehman be appointed to the Historic Districts Commission, and that Jeff Greco and Kyle Olschewske be appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

11. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor. Pealer thanked the BID and volunteers for Cruzin' Night. He also thanked DPW for their work on recent water main breaks, and debris clean up from recent storms. He asked the City Manager about double utility poles and wondered if easement and taxes are doubled when there are two poles in place. City Manager Hendrix confirmed that they are doubled, explaining that the State does a valuation on them, and noted that the new poles are of higher value. Councilor Pealer then wondered about the difference between fund balance and reserves. Comptroller Newcomb shared that there is no difference, and explained how interfund transfers are built into the budget, and further explained that the pull only occurs if fund balance is above capacity. Councilor Pealer also complimented the National Night Out public safety event on Tuesday night.

Councilor Lavin shared that residents in Ward 1 feel unsafe with trucks on South Main Street and parking on both sides of the road, noting that crossings are not fully developed. He proposed eliminating parking on one side of the road, and noted that 50-60 garbage trucks per day traveling on that stretch of road cause hazards as well. He then commented on assessments and taxes on high end homes on South Main Street, and concerns about the tax levy. He expressed concerns regarding

the lack of direction to the City Manager, and shared that Ward 1 wants to know what the City is doing about the tax situation. Mayor Valentino reminded Councilor Lavin of the recent strategic planning session and the low, sustainable tax rate that is being proposed. He explained that the lower tax rate will create a buffer in the assessment. City Manager Hendrix added that she does have direction, as the majority of council at the time gave her direction. She shared that the average change in total assessed value is 48% and that some homes had decreased assessments. Mayor Valentino reminded Councilor Lavin that the levy didn't get support, to which he suggested that Council hasn't given the City Manager direction. Mayor Valentino recalled that the tax rate will be the lowest in ten years, and that the overall levy will likely go up, a simple formula. Councilor Lavin concluded by sharing that otherwise everything is going well.

Councilor Brennan provided an update on the Historic Districts Commission, sharing that it is in good shape, and is always busy. Mayor Valentino complimented the commission on being the guard keepers of the historic nature of the City's buildings. The Shade Tree Committee met twice last month, working on saplings at Doran Ave., Councilor Brennan shared that all City trees on public right of way are inventoried and reviewed. Councilor Brennan shared that the Shade Tree Committee manages thousands of trees on a database, and further shared that residents who have a public way on their property may contact DPW or James Norwalk and let them know if they'd like to be reviewed for placement of a sapling. Councilor Brennan complimented all the work the Shade Tree Committee does related to trees in the City, including maintaining saplings and upkeep of a database keeping track of thousands of trees. Councilor Brennan raised concerns related to City Boards and Commissions, asking Council to meet with the City Manager and City Clerk with the goal of a better understanding and process for vetting, appointing and oath taking. Councilor Brennan shared his interest in revisiting the subject of Community Engagement Coordinator, as he believes a mistake was made in eliminating the role, noting that the position would aid in grant writing, grant reception, opportunities still to come, the work flow of current City staff, noting that staff is at capacity, doing their best to keep up with what they have, and Council should give staff the tools to take their direction.

Councilor Gillotte shared that the Police Budget Advisory Board did not meet last month. He shared that the Sons of Italy is having their festival over the weekend, and shared that Councilor Lavin will be in the dunk booth. BID is doing a great job, noting how nice the hanging flowers look, and how busy the City is this summer, and wanted to highlight positives about the City and it's staff. Cruzin' Night was exceptionally well attended, First Fridays have been a huge success, and the Garlic Fest was also successful. Councilor shared upcoming events including Geneva Grows Native, and Wheels on Seneca, which benefits local veterans. He also shared that recently BID's mower broke, and DPW was able to provide a used one as a replacement. BID continues to work on economic development to keep people visiting Geneva in the City for longer visits, along side the IDA and LDC.

Councilor Petropoulos thanked BID and DPW for their work as well. He raised a concern regarding the lack of trash bins on Castle Street between Elm and Main, and hopes that two more trash bins can be budgeted for purchase next year. Councilor Petropoulos also shared that Cruzin' Night went very well, and thanked the Police Department for keeping order for the evening. He also shared that the LDC is considering how to fund certain events, and will have an update next month. Councilor Petropoulos provided a follow up on securing a grocery store for downtown, with Family Dollar's departure, sharing that he will be meeting with a co-op grocer in Ithaca tomorrow, and may hand off to the LDC if the meeting is successful. He then announced a three ward Town Hall meeting on August 31 from 9:00 to noon in the Geneva Library Reading Room. Councilors from Wards 4, 5, and 6 will be hosting, and all City residents are invited. He then shared that the Scott Bissell Memorial party on Colt St. will happen on Saturday, August 17th, starting at 2pm, all are invited. Councilor Petropoulos shared an update on a meeting in July with FLACRA related to a new clinic they've opened on Lewis Street, noting they do have a plan and security, and that he's cautiously optimistic,

and will reach out to the agency if any questions or issues arise. Lastly, he complemented the National Night Out, and will be at the Youth Police Academy graduation.

Councilor Whitfield shared concerns about things happening every day that don't make Geneva beautiful, that are being swept under the rug. He shared concerns related to discriminatory behavior towards minorities in the City and community, and noted that as a NAACP political chair, he will speak up about, and investigate. Councilor Whitfield shared that Union Street has calmed down somewhat, and has been cleaned up somewhat as well. He shared that since Byrne Dairy has removed problem people around their business, those people are now going across the street and hanging out outside of the library, where there are children, which is of great concern. Councilor Whitfield also shared that there have been a few accidents on Milton Street, due to the one-way sign not being visible enough, he proposes adding another sign, so there's one on each side of the street, positioned to be more visible.

Mayor Valentino thanked Lady and Mark Gramling, with the Church of First Love, for inviting him to their event at Bicentennial Park. He shared the music, enthusiasm, and love shared at the event which he was invited to speak at, and the food was wonderful. He thanked staff, and Department Heads with their leadership building great teams, going above and beyond in their roles and doing a great job. Mayor Valentino shared how proud he is to be in Geneva, listing many recent events that were highlighted by Councilmembers, sharing that he had extended family in town last weekend for his mother's 90th birthday party and they all loved the vibe of Geneva, reiterating that Geneva is a beautiful place to work, live and play.

12. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:08pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nicole Tillotson

City Clerk