

# THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

### SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

JULY 24, 2019 – 6:00 PM

Presiding – Ronald Alcock, Mayor

#### 1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Gramling, Clr. D'Amico, Clr. Hagerman, Clr. Marino, Clr. Valentino (via Skype),  
Clr. Camera, and Clr. Eddington

Absent: Clr. Hollenbeck

#### 2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Eddington: seconded by Clr. Gramling**

**MOVED THAT Council adjourn to executive session at 6:00pm pursuant to the Open Meeting Law Section 105(D) Regarding Proposed, Pending, or Current Litigation  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Eddington: seconded by Clr. Camera**

**MOVED THAT Council adjourn the executive session at 6:12pm  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Eddington: seconded by Clr. Marino**

**MOVED THAT Council return to regular session at 6:12pm  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

#### 3. 2018 FINANCIAL AUDIT PRESENTATION

Laura Landers of Freed Maxick told council that there were no significant changes and no material weaknesses or deficiencies. She gave kudos to management. She noted that the financial statements are broken down into governmental and business type activities.

Page 26 shows the fund balance with details on page 60. The unassigned fund balance can be used however the city wants noting that the total fund balance is at 24.7% and the funded capital reserves are at \$150,000.

Page 65, factors contributing to the current year excess of \$469,000 was in the sales tax and State sources exceeding budget amounts, and overall expenditures were below the budget in the amount of a little over \$400,000.

Page 30 shows the water and sewer business activities noting that they have high fixed costs, but an overall positive result for the year. She said that the operations in water and sewer are strong even though they have lower usage than in prior years.

Ms. Landers said that there were no audit adjustments meaning that all monthly reports were accurate, and they had no disagreements with management and no difficulty performing the audit.

#### 4. RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2019 GENERAL, WATER, AND SEWER FUND BUDGETS

City Manager Gerling presented the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the development of the Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park (CAFTP) was enabled by New York State legislation in 2001 for the purpose of attracting jobs and investment in research, development, and manufacturing opportunities associated with the agriculture and food sectors; and

**WHEREAS**, the City partnered with Ontario County, Cornell University, the State of New York, and the U.S. Economic Development Administration for the development of the 70-acre campus; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of New York through the NYS Department of Transportation's Industrial Access Program provided \$1,050,000 in grant funding and \$600,000 in loans for the development of public infrastructure to the site; and

**WHEREAS**, in the spirit of partnership, Cornell University and the Genesee Valley Regional Market Authority have paid \$200,000 respectively to support the loan repayment for this project,

**WHEREAS**, the City of Geneva committed to support \$200,000 for this project and has paid \$51,800 towards this commitment; and

**WHEREAS**, the remaining balance of \$148,200 on the loans are now due to be paid by the City of Geneva; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Geneva City Council, hereby and in due form, does amend the 2019 General, Water, and Sewer Fund budgets as follows:

*General Fund:*

Revenue:

Appropriation from Fund Balance:           +\$98,200

Expense—Debt Service:

CAFTP Infrastructure Loan:                   +\$98,200

*Water Fund:*

Revenue:

Appropriation from Fund Balance:       +\$25,000

Expense—Debt Service:

CAFTP Infrastructure Loan:               +\$25,000

*Sewer Fund:*

Revenue:

Appropriation from Fund Balance:       +\$25,000

Expense—Debt Service:

CAFTP Infrastructure Loan:               +\$25,000

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Eddington: seconded by Clr. Camera**

**MOVED THAT this resolution be approved**

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

5. BUDGET 2020 DISCUSSION

Asst. City Manager Blowers told council that with all of the revenues estimated and every department request entered, we currently have a \$1,132,000 deficit in the general fund. He noted that general fund debt service is down and last year's gap started at about \$800,000. The current water gap is \$302,000 and the sewer one is \$427,000. When asked about the large deficit, Mr. Blowers said that salary and benefits increase every year. He said that if council chose to, the water and sewer rates could be increased to offset those deficits (guessing about a 5-10% increase).

City Manager Gerling asked council what they care about in the budget. Clr. D'Amico said he looks at the deficit and wonders why and what are the essentials. He always tries to see what council has discretion over and if it would make sense to increase taxes. Clr. Eddington said he would like to see departments look at necessities and what they can do without. He also said that maybe we could look at scaling things down for any new projects.

Clr. Gramling said he would like us to look for ways we can increase/add revenue. Clr. Camera said he looks at salaries and wondered what contracts were up this year. He would also like to look at options for moving the recreation department to Hobart and William Smith. On the revenue side, he feels the city needs to accelerate the move to rezone the Legion property to get it on the tax rolls.

Clr. Valentino said he goes right to revenues and expenditures and compares them to previous year's numbers. He likes to see what changes are going to be taking place. He realizes that a large part of the budget is out of council's hands, but he also tries to focus on outside services that cause us to increase overall expenses. Clr. Marino said she looks at any items dealing with the comprehensive plan; new positions created or positions eliminated and partner agency allocations.

Mayor Alcock said he looks at revenues vs expenses and the budget message from the city manager. He wants to know where she wants to take the city, so his advice is to write a good budget message. Clr Hagerman said he likes to see major changes from prior year and where the city manager would like to focus council's attention. He said that it is difficult to increase tax rates without showing the taxpayers why. He would also like to see more contributions from the hospital and college.

Clr. D'Amico said he would like to see an initial budget with funding for outside agencies the same as it was for last year. He feels council should look there to cut rather than negotiate whether or not they will be included in the budget. He feels increasing revenue is a long-term plan, and asked about the Solar Village and when they will be on the tax rolls. Mr. Blowers said that the property has been transferred, so the vacant lots will be on the rolls soon, but the homes will probably not affect the taxes until 2021. Clr. D'Amico referred to the current \$229,000 the city receives from the college and hospital, and said he would like to see a student fee of \$75 per semester per student added to help recoup some of the money spent with the fire trucks responding to fire calls there as well as police calls.

Clr. Camera said he feels council should not be funding any more lakefront projects, and council should make plans so they are not having this discussion every year. He would like to see a freeze on the marina development right now. Clr. Hagerman said he would like each department to take a look from today to see if things can be done to save money. Mrs. Gerling said that she feels the department heads are thoughtful in what they want to do.

Next, the city manager asked council to tell what their constituents will ask for when the budgets come out. Clr. D'Amico said that the water and sewer costs need to be shown in a presentation and/or city manager report telling why the rates are where they are. Mayor Alcock added that we need to relay the message that everyone pays for water and sewer, including non-profits.

Clr. Marino said that she received information from her ward saying that their concerns lie with the Economic Opportunity Task Force, ONI, the new LED lighting outages, and neighborhood work. Mrs. Gerling told everyone that the city is working out the kinks with NYSEG on the LED lighting. Clr. Gramling said that the cost of sidewalk repairs is an issue and he would like the city to look into ways to assist residents as we have done in the past. Clr. Eddington said he would like the city to try for grants to help with sidewalks, and when the reassessments are done next year, he would like to try and keep it even.

Clr. Camera asked about our retirement costs being so high, and Mrs. Gerling said that they cannot be changed. Clr. Camera said he would like to look at the comparative facts sheet that compared our fire, police and public works costs to 21 other small cities in NYS. He also said that he would like to see the food waste program generate revenue, and Mrs. Gerling said she would like to wait to see it perform well first. Clr. D'Amico said he would like to look at the property we attempted to sell in Seneca County, and Mrs. Gerling said that the State Park is interested in a conversation, and the general consensus of council was to go ahead and accelerate the conversation.

Clr. Eddington said he would like to see an inventory of city owned lots that could be sold to build a new home on them. Clr. Camera agreed with this idea. Cr. Marino said she would like constituents to have an opportunity to provide more feedback after the budget process gets started.

City Manager Gerling asked council if they wanted to repeat last year's process for outside agencies where staff sent out an RFP including ways they could help us forward the Comp Plan. All of council agreed with this process, and Mayor Alcock asked to add that staff stick to the date with no one bringing requests in after the deadline. Clr. D'Amico said he would like to see what the outside agency budget would look like with 100% funding, and start a conversation early to see where cuts can be made. Clr. Hagerman said he would like to see staff recommendations on how to divide funding. He also asked about bringing the Town of Geneva to parity with city residents on water/sewer rates.

City Manager Gerling gave council some homework preparation due by August 18<sup>th</sup>, so everyone is prepared at the budget meetings.

Reminder Dates: Sept 11 – Budget Presentation  
(All at 6:00pm) Sept 25 – Council Work Session  
Oct 2 - Public Hearing  
Oct 9 - Council Work Session  
Oct 23 - Budget Work Session/Potential Adoption  
Oct 30 - Back-up Adoption Date

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Eddington: seconded by Clr. Camera**  
**MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:43pm**  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8-1 absent)**

*Lori Guinan*  
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City Clerk