

MINUTES
City of Geneva
Council Meeting
November 27, 2023
6:00 p.m.

Mr. Cordova opened the Council meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call – Philip Cordova, Robert Rosebrugh, Jeffrey Griffiths, James Baehr, William Baker, John Barbo

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was said and prayer was offered by Pastor David Yarbrough, New Life Assembly of God.

Motion was made by John Barbo to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023 regular council meeting, seconded by James Baehr. Roll call, 6 yeas, (Cordova, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Baker, Barbo). Motion duly passed.

Presentation – Income Tax Department, Nadine Mooneyham Presenting.

The interest rate assessed for 2024 on unpaid estimates are posted on the City’s website.

In July Governor DeWine signed House Bill 33 which included eight provisions that affect taxes. Minors are exempt from income tax. The City’s ordinances already state this. Three provisions that do affect the City’s tax include the late penalty for 2024 the will be a flat \$25.00 rather than \$25.00 per month. Beginning in 2024 a late filer will not receive a reminder until October. It is presumed that everyone that has not filed has filed for an extension. Thirdly, businesses that are filing a profit return extension to October 15 have one additional month to November 15. This may delay revenues for one month. These changes will need to happen before January 1. RITA has provided information and Council will have that legislation by December 11th.

Projections for 2023 are looking very strong and are looking ahead of our projections for the year.

Citizens – None.

City Manager Report:

The City continues to pick-up leaves. Leaves cannot be picked up when there is snow on the ground.

The City’s equipment and personnel are ready for the snow. Snow bans go into effect when the snow reaches two inches on the ground.

The City is working on an application for \$1.5 million in additional funding for the West Main project through the new round of Wastewater Infrastructure Grant funding. The requested funding is for gap funding due to the increased cost of the project from earlier this year to the point where the contract bid was accepted. If the City is successful, the funding assist towards reducing the debt the City would otherwise incur.

The City is looking into the State Capital Budget opportunity as well as the additional one-time Strategic Investment fund available. Mr. Varckette attended a seminar held by Ms. Fowler-Arthur regarding the different types of projects that would be eligible. Applications are due December 18th.

The Appalachian Community Grant – the City continues working on looking to expand our streetscape, place making and façade upgrades. The City has received positive feedback. The City hopes to receive more information in the next couple of days. The City would partner with the Ashtabula County Land Bank on the project.

Mr. Varckette has had discussions with the engineer on the Stormwater Master Plan and the project will begin in early December.

The City has received the 2024 Property and Casualty premium renewal from our carrier, the Public Entities Pool (PEP) for 2023-24, \$84,482, an increase of 7.8% over 2022-23, \$73,398. This is \$6,000 increase. Part of the reason for the increase is that some of the City's assets were not listed in the equipment schedule, which has been corrected. Under the previous plan the City paid \$130,700.

Geneva Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner is next week. The City has sponsored a table. The City will be presenting the Economic Development and Leadership awards.

The scope of the stormwater management plan is being developed. A stormwater management has been a priority for many years.

Items for Consideration of Council:

Ordinance No. 3343. An Ordinance to Provide for Appropriations for the Current Expenses and Other Expenditures of the City Of Geneva, Ohio from January 1, 2024 Through December 31, 2024.

Mr. Rosebrugh stated that the budget reflects one million dollars more in expenses than the city is expected to receive in revenue. The budget is adding a part-time zoning assistant, water department employee and an administrative person for the fire department at a cost of two to three hundred thousand which will be an ongoing cost with raises, hospitalization, etc... The carryover will be gone in a couple of years if the City spends more than it takes in. The City needs to think about the situation with the Court, Geneva Township Fire levy failing, there will be overruns on West main and the City does not know where it is on the water tower project as yet.

Mr. Griffiths stated that investing in staff positions is important. Mr. Rosebrugh's question was in regard to the grants person. Mr. Rosebrugh would like to see some type of structured salary, reward type basis, on how much money is brought into the City. Mr. Rosebrugh would not want to pay fifty to sixty thousand dollars to bring in twenty thousand in grants.

Mr. Varckette noted that the Water Superintendent position has been budgeted for every year, the City just has not hired a Water Superintendent. The grants person has been budgeted at thirty thousand dollars, no benefits, and a contract employee. With regard to the fire / zoning assistant, fire has had a volunteer assistant for twenty years.

The water tower conversations are ongoing and the project will not hit the City's budget for a couple of years. The City is working with Director Starkey with respect to various assets within the system and potential cost factors. The water tower project is actively being discussed for the State Capital Budget request.

Ms. Welch stated the water tower project will be paid from the water fund and will not be taken out of any other fund.

Mr. Varckette noted that the City projects expenses for the worst case scenario while budgeting revenue conservatively.

The Water Superintendent will be a working individual.

Mr. Cordova noted that he was not aware that the City only has one employee in the water department. The prior Superintendent did a lot of the ground work. When you do not have the staff, everything has to be farmed out.

Brandon Averill is currently responsible for the water department.

Ms. Welch noted that the street department is down two employees.

Motion by Jeffrey Griffiths, seconded by John Barbo that the rule of law requiring certain ordinances be read at three separate meetings be waived and suspended and Ordinance No. 3343 be placed on final roll for passage. Roll call, 4 yeas (Cordova, Griffiths, Baehr, Barbo), 2 nay (Rosebrugh, Baker). Roll call on passage, 5 yeas (Cordova, Griffiths, Baehr, Baker, Barbo), 1 nay (Rosebrugh). Resolution No. 3587 duly passed.

Resolution No. 3590 – Second Reading. A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to enter into an Agreement between the City of Geneva and the Township of Geneva for the Purpose of Receipt of Fire Protection Services.

Resolution No. 3591 – First Reading. A Resolution to Repeal and Replace Resolution 3064 Public Records Policy of the City of Geneva, Ohio.

Unfinished Business:

The City continues to work through the process to contract with the event planner.

Mr. Rosebrough presented Phil Cordova with a plaque honoring his service to the City of Geneva.

New Business – None.

Payment of Bills – None.

Committee Reports – None.

Citizen – None.

James Baehr made a motion to adjourn

Jeffrey Griffiths seconded.

Council meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Recorded by: Phyllis Dunlap
Clerk of Council

President of Council

Clerk of Council