

MINUTES
City of Geneva
Council Meeting
February 12, 2024
6:00 p.m.

President Barbo opened the Council meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call – John Barbo, Robert Rosebrugh, Jeffrey Griffiths, James Baehr, William Baker, Dana Schenk, John Travis

Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was said and prayer was offered by Pastor Randy May, Geneva United Methodist.

Motion was made by Jeffrey Griffiths to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2024 regular council meeting, seconded by James Baehr. Roll call, 7 yeas, (Barbo, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Baker, Schenk, Travis). Motion duly passed.

Presentation – Finance Department, Finance Director Traci Welch Presenting

Ms. Welch provided an overview of the 2023 year-end financial status as well as the first month of 2024. Spreadsheets were provided to Council for reference.

The City ended 2023 with more revenue than estimated but closer to the actual as budgeted revenue as amended throughout the year.

Although additional appropriations are done throughout the year, the departments expensed much less than what was budgeted.

When Ms. Welch began at the City auditors provided Ms. Welch with several pass through adjustments for prior years which needed posted. These adjustments drove the substantial jump in revenue and expenses budgeted and actual to Wastewater and to Water.

The departments did an excellent job of staying within the amounts that they were provided.

As shown on the bottom table on the spreadsheet, some of the funds are actually deficit spending and need beginning cash to cover expenditures.

Income tax ended the year with over \$749,000 added to their carryover into 2024.

Overall the City did much better in 2023 than in 2022. Even though some funds are deficit spending and utilizing prior year carryover, it has gotten substantially better overall. The goal is to not spend more than what was collected in any given year.

Finance is gearing up for the 2023 audit and also preparing the necessary documents needed to convert from cash basis to accrual basis, the GAAP conversion. Ms. Welch prepares the documents for the GAAP conversion, Local Government Services handles the conversion. When complete the compiled 2023 year-end financial statements will be filed with the State Auditor's Office by the end of May. Audit will then perform their review and provide their opinion on the financials submitted. Audit's deadline to submit their opinion is the end of June.

Mr. Griffiths inquired about having an additional capital budget. Mr. Varckette agreed a capital budget is needed. Ms. Welch went over steps that would be needed in order to accomplish creating a capital improvement fund. Ms. Welch will do some further research for the Finance Committee to review.

Citizens – None.

City Manager Report:

Mr. Varckette introduced Josh Santiago, the City's new Water Superintendent. Superintendent Santiago will make his first presentation at the first council meeting in March.

The contract was signed and notice to proceed was issued on the West Main Project. The pre-construction conference is scheduled for Wednesday at which time timing will be discussed.

CT Consultants, Inc. contract is on the agenda. It was brought to the City's attention some time ago that CT's contract needed updating. The City did make some adjustments. The first contract was very bulky, Mr. Pasqualone removed a lot of unnecessary language. There are two different rates. The retainer and design fee. The City has been paying a \$500 a month retainer for 20 years. The retainer is being increased to \$1,000 a month. Mr. Varckette went over actual costs CT could have billed the City in 2020, 2021 and 2022. The City feels the adjustment is fair. Mr. Varckette went over the adjustments to the design fee as well.

The NOPEC Grant is on the agenda. This is an additional award of the NOPEC grant in the amount of \$11,365 for 2024. This will be added to the existing escrow balance of \$28,000. The funds can be used for energy efficiency projects. The new award must be spent by 2026. The remaining \$3,000 from the 2022 award must be spent by November 30, 2024. Combining the awards allows for a larger project.

Safe Routes to Schools grant applications are open. The City is looking at a couple of projects including a sidewalk on the Library side by the Middle School. The City is targeting projects outlined in the Safe Routes to School plan. The deadline to apply is March 1, 2024. A Resolution will be needed should the City settle on a project.

The feasibility study of Austin Road near GPS Elementary is underway. Geneva Township was awarded funding to look at the feasibility of putting a path from the Austin Road Mobile Home Park to the GPS Elementary. Geneva Township is looking at having the path go along the west side of the road which is where the sewer force main is located.

The Zoning Code Update is progressing. The Planning Commission met with the City's Consultant and went over the Planning Commissions requested revisions for the first set of chapters. The Planning Commission anticipates receiving the next chapters for review in April. The City anticipates the Zoning Update coming to Council in the fall. The plan was knocked off the rails during COVID and was slow to start.

The Business Expo is this Thursday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Geneva High School. The City will be represented by Police, Fire and City Administration.

Items for Consideration of Council:

Ordinance No. 3349. An Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Enter Into an Agreement with CT Consultants, Inc. for Professional Services, and declaring an emergency.

Motion by James Baehr, seconded by Jeffrey Griffiths that the rule of law requiring certain ordinances be read at three separate meetings be waived and suspended and Ordinance No. 3349 be placed on final roll for passage. Roll call, 7 yeas (Barbo, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Barbo, Schenk, Travis). Motion by James Baehr to declare and pass Ordinance No. 3349 as an emergency measure, seconded by Dana Schenk. Roll call, 7 yeas (Barbo, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Barbo, Schenk, Travis). Roll call on passage, 7 yeas (Barbo, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Barbo, Schenk, Travis) Ordinance No. 3349 duly passed.

Resolution No. 3597. A Resolution Authorizing All Actions Necessary to Accept Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) Energized Community Grant(s) Funds, and declaring an emergency.

Motion by Jeffrey Griffiths, seconded by James Baehr that the rule of law requiring certain ordinances be read at three separate meetings be waived and suspended and Resolution No. 3597 be placed on final roll for passage. Roll call, 7 yeas (Barbo, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Barbo, Schenk, Travis). Motion by Dana Schenk to declare and pass Resolution No. 3597 as an emergency measure, seconded by James Baehr. Roll call, 7 yeas (Barbo, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Barbo, Schenk, Travis). Roll call on passage, 7 yeas (Barbo, Rosebrugh, Griffiths, Baehr, Barbo, Schenk, Travis) Resolution No. 3597 duly passed.

Unfinished Business:

Mr. Baehr spoke with Mr. Pasqualone with regard to the trash cans being left out. Mr. Baehr provided some examples of ordinances in place in other communities which carried a minor misdemeanor fine.

Mr. Griffiths was not in favor of fines. It was noted that the City does not have the capacity to properly communicate. Ordinances are not instantly codified. The City would need a marketing plan.

Mr. Baehr noted that there are branches on the tree lawns as well as leaves.

Mr. Varckette requested that the information regarding locations of the tree branches, leaves and debris be passed on to him. Mr. Varckette will follow up.

Mr. Barbo looked into the complaint recently brought to Council's attention regarding the newspaper boxes and unsightly wires. On S.R. 534 there is wrapped up wire coming down from the utility pole. Mr. Varckette will have the Fire Department go out to the site. The Fire Department can identify the type of wire.

New Business:

Mr. Rosebrugh suggested looking into increasing some of the city's income by leasing out the jail cells. At one point the city leased jail cells to Geneva-on-the-Lake. The Safety Committee could look into this.

Chief Camper stated that he is currently looking into how much it will cost and what the city would be responsible for. If the prisoner gets sick, who will transport, etc. The Police Department has seven cells. How many of those cells are available on average depends on the time of year. Leasing the cells would help out another department and create a little income.

Ms. Welch noted that if the City were to lease out the cells, the income would not be included in the City's budget as revenue as the City budgets for things that are typically known.

The County Jail is over capacity on an ongoing basis. Since COVID the County is only taking violent criminals.

Mr. Barbo proposed looking into a city quarterly newsletter. Many people do not have computers. Communication is especially important with the West Main Street project coming up. Mr. Baker was in favor. Postage cost was discussed. Mr. Rosebrugh will look into the postage. It was noted that small messages can be printed on the water bills. A QR Code can also be printed on the water bills. A newsletter would provide updates to all residents and would not disappear as social media does.

Payment of Bills – none.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Griffiths reported that the Planning Committee Meeting on the DORA was well attended. No updates or changes were made. A public hearing will be scheduled. Implementation of the DORA will be worked on by the team at the City. The City can suspend the DORA for any reason. It was an overall robust discussion. Next steps is to hold the public hearing. The DORA application was submitted January 22, 2024. Monday March 18, 2024 was suggested for the public hearing.

Citizen – None.

James Baehr made a motion to adjourn

Dana Schenk seconded.

Council meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Recorded by: Phyllis Dunlap
Clerk of Council

President of Council

Clerk of Council