

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

REGULAR COUNCIL WORK SESSION

JUNE 1, 2020 – 5:30 PM

Per Executive Order No. 202.1, this meeting took place via videoconference, and was viewable through on the City of Geneva, NY YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCV6Q8rBUqBYLrjydrZS0lJg/featured>

and

www.webex.com

Meeting number: 799 549 442

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Gaglianese, Clr. Noone, Clr. Burrall, Clr. Regan, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Camera, Clr. Pruett and Clr. Salamendra (arrived at 5:35pm)

2. OVERVIEW BY CITY MANAGER GERLING AND ASST. CITY MANAGER/COMPTROLLER BLOWERS

City Manager Gerling began by telling council they will be presenting the best- and worst-case scenarios, but the information they work with is changing every day. She noted that when they are preparing the budget, it usually comes in way over the amount they are trying to reach, and they take small measures to cut costs and project revenues. She told council that some of the moves they are proposing now may seem small in nature, but as they add up, it could mean that a job may not have to be taken away later. She noted that the city is already pretty low on numbers for staffing and are looking to continue providing good customer service to residents.

Asst. City Manager Blowers said that after the last council work session, they decided to run best and worst-case scenarios. He said that worst case scenarios were based on what they had received to date and future revenues are shown as best estimates. PILOTS and interest received on bank account numbers will grow, but not by the amounts they thought when they put this information together originally. He noted that a lot of the worst-case scenario numbers are improving through other revenues that are coming in. He said that sales tax revenue has been a concern from the beginning, and they are looking at a 25% reduction for the year. Even though current sales tax number are

down, he hopes that the numbers will pick up when everything opens back up. The concern with everything opening up is that another wave could come through and we may need to shut down again. He said that in terms of best-case scenarios, we are looking at what we would have if there was no COVID-19. He noted that some license fees collected at city hall are lower than usual, but staff feels that when we are open again, the people who have not been able to get out, will be coming in to pay those fees. He said that in a worst-case scenario for interfund transfers, we can choose not to make the transfers from one fund to another.

Mr. Blowers said that we will not have numbers for the water/sewer funds for a couple more weeks when we read the water meters.

Mr. Blowers said that some of the actions from city management so far have been: a freeze on discretionary spending, a hiring freeze, voluntary temporary layoffs, and retirement requests. He said that some items being reviewed to prepare for additional revenue loss are: items needing union negotiation such as reduced stipends or benefit payouts and rollover of vacation versus payouts, layoffs, water and sewer rate increases, and transfers between funds.

City Manager Gerling said we need a multi-tiered approach and to work with council to see where they are all coming from. She noted that the fund balance is designed for these types of emergencies with the idea of rebuilding it over the next few years. Communicating with council and getting guidance is critical. She told council that there are two resolutions before them tonight, one for the union represented employees and one for the non-represented employees. She said we are looking at a voluntary furlough period for 6-10 employees beginning June 8th through July 31st. She said this would be about \$65-\$85,000 for this period. She said that the two resolutions give her the ability to sign a memorandum of understanding with the unions because this would be a change in their working contracts.

3. RESOLUTION APPROVING BENEFIT AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT AND NON-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES FOR VOLUNTARY TEMPORARY LAYOFF PROGRAM

City Manager Gerling presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the City Manager is recommending that Management and Non-Represented employees be offered voluntary temporary layoffs; and

WHEREAS, **Governor Cuomo** declared a Disaster Emergency in the State of New York to address the threat that COVID-19 poses to the health and welfare of its residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting sales tax receipts and other revenue sources for all counties and cities of New York State, including the City; and

WHEREAS, sales tax receipts are a primary revenue source of the City and are used to pay a portion of the City cost of services each year; and

WHEREAS, it is projected that the City will incur a budget deficit in 2020 such that expenses are expected to exceed revenues; and

WHEREAS, the City is taking actions to mitigate the sales tax revenue shortfall and other deficits impacting the 2020 budget, including implementation of a temporary layoff of Management and Non-Represented unit members for a period not to exceed July 31, 2020, but in a manner that ensures that the City continues to provide essential and non-essential governmental services consistent with the Executive Orders issued by Governor Cuomo; and

WHEREAS, Management and Non-Represented has acknowledged the management right of the City to determine the size of its workforce; and

WHEREAS, this City Council has reviewed the anticipated terms of said Benefit Agreement for Management and Non-Represented with regard to the Voluntary Temporary Layoff Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby approves the City Management and Non-Represented Benefit Agreement and also approves the expenditure of any funds necessary to implement same; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager, Assistant City Manager/Comptroller, and Assistant to the City Manager/Human Resource Director be and hereby are authorized to execute said anticipated Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be provided to the City Manager, the City's Management and Non-Represented employees, elected officials, and the City's local and outside labor counsel.

When questioned, City Manager Gerling noted that the period ends July 31st, and the employees must be prepared to come back to work within three days' notice if needed before that date. The reason for voting on this is because it is a change in employee working conditions and the city will maintain their health insurance contributions during that time. Clr. Regan asked to clarify that this period falls under the CARES Act where these employees will be able to receive the additional \$600 while they are out.

When asked if every option possible was explored, City Manager Gerling said that this is one step in the journey that is a short-term solution that will result in some savings. She said that it was presented to city employees pending approval. Clr. Camera asked if the unions were approached to discuss a waiving of salary increases. City Manager Gerling said that staff will have a better picture of where we stand financially by June 15th and other options can be looked into.

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Pruetz; seconded by Clr. Regan
MOVED THAT this resolution be approved
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. RESOLUTION APPROVING MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH CSEA (CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, INC., LOCAL 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, LOCAL 835, MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES UNIT #7852-00; GENEVA PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEE'S UNIT #7852-02 AND GENEVA PUBLIC WORKS FOREMEN'S UNIT #7852-01) FOR VOLUNTARY TEMPORARY LAYOFF PROGRAM

City Manager Gerling presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Civil Service Employees Association, Inc. ("CSEA") represents a bargaining unit consisting of blue and white collar employees of the City of Geneva ("City"); and

WHEREAS, Governor Cuomo declared a Disaster Emergency in the State of New York to address the threat that COVID-19 poses to the health and welfare of its residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting sales tax receipts and other revenue sources for all counties and cities of New York State, including the City; and

WHEREAS, sales tax receipts are a primary revenue source of the City and are used to pay a portion of the City cost of services each year; and

WHEREAS, it is projected that the City will incur a budget deficit in 2020 such that expenses are expected to exceed revenues; and

WHEREAS, the City is taking actions to mitigate the sales tax revenue shortfall and other deficits impacting the 2020 budget, including implementation of a temporary layoff of CSEA unit members for a period not to exceed July 31, 2020, but in a manner that ensures that the City continues to provide essential and non-essential governmental services consistent with the Executive Orders issued by Governor Cuomo; and

WHEREAS, the CSEA and the City are parties to a collective bargaining agreement that expires December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, CSEA has acknowledged the management right of the City to determine the size of its workforce; and

WHEREAS, the City and CSEA are negotiating a Memorandum of Agreement and as it relates to the impact of the City's decision to implement temporary layoffs of certain City employees represented by CSEA; and

WHEREAS, this City Council has reviewed the anticipated terms of said Memorandum of Agreement with regard to the Voluntary Temporary Layoff Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this City Council hereby approves the City entering into the Memorandum of Agreement with CSEA and also approves the expenditure of any funds necessary to implement same; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager, Assistant City Manager/Comptroller, and Assistant to the City Manager/Human Resource Director be and hereby are authorized to execute said anticipated Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be provided to the City Manager, the City's department heads and elected officials, the City's local and outside labor counsel, and the CSEA Unit Presidents and Representative.

Clr Gaglianese said he is a little angry that council has waited so long to see this option. He feels more money could have been saved if this had been presented weeks ago. He does not want to see any DPW employees lost because council is dedicated to keeping our city beautiful. City Manager Gerling noted that this is a voluntary furlough, and even though we did not move on this sooner, there is no reason not to move on it now to incur any savings possible. Mr. Blowers said that his and the City Manager's goal was to not have layoffs, and maybe some who request this voluntary furlough may not be able to take advantage due to staffing issues. He noted that layoffs are not an option for them at this point, but if that becomes the only option, it would not be a hand selection. Because of the unions, it would be based on seniority and positions.

Clr. Camera said that he would rather see the entire workforce forego their 3% raises in 2021 so everyone is helping rather than just a few.

When Clr. Pruettt questioned why costs wouldn't go down if less people were receiving a paycheck, Mr. Blowers reminded everyone that debt cost remains the same as well as employee benefits.

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Pruettt; seconded by Clr. Regan

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

**ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye – Clr. Gaglianese, Clr. Noone, Clr. Pealer, Clr. Burrall, Clr. Regan,
Clr. Salamendra, Mayor Valentino, and Clr Pruettt**

Nay – Clr. Camera

MOTION CARRIED

5. NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Valentino asked if anyone had anything they would like to discuss at this time.

When Clr. Pruettt asked about assessments, Mr. Blowers told everyone that the Board of Assessment Review will meet the third Tuesday in June, and applications for residents are available online.

Clr. Salamendra asked why the Town of Geneva residents aren't paying more for water and sewer. City Manager Gerling said staff is looking into options in 2021. Clr. Salamendra asked about other departments not making cuts at this time and if all are fully staffed, and Mr. Blowers said that the police department has two officers that were hired before now and are currently in the police academy.

Mayor Valentino asked Mr. Blowers to explain interdepartmental transfers for council. Mr. Blowers said that because many employees paid out of the general fund also provide services for the water and sewer departments, he uses an analysis approved by the auditors to transfer around \$500,000 from each fund into the general fund rather than complicating payroll and dividing up staff hours. Mr. Blowers noted that we are allowed to do this, but we are not required.

When asked if the city could end a fiscal year in a deficit, Mr. Blowers explained that the budget must be approved by city council by October 31st, and if we don't raise enough revenue, we would need to appropriate money from fund balance.

City Manager Gerling told council that once staff has the water and sewer numbers after June 17th, they can get together and work on strategies moving forward.

6. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Salamendra; seconded by Clr. Gaglianese
MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:15pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Lori Guinan

City Clerk