

GENEVA CITY COUNCIL MEETING
September 23, 2013
(Special Meeting)

CALL TO ORDER

The September 23, 2013 special meeting of the Geneva City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall by Ald. Chuck Brown. Aldermen present: Chuck Brown, Mike Bruno, Don Cummings, Dorothy Flanagan, Dean Kilburg, Richard Marks, Tom Simonian, Ron Singer, Dawn Vogelsberg. Aldermen absent: Craig Maladra. Also attending: Mayor Kevin Burns, Asst. City Administrator/Dir. of Administrative Services Stephanie Dawkins, Community Development Director Dick Untch, Economic Development Director Ellen Divita, Fire Chief Steve Olson, Streets Division Superintendent Chris Bong, Business Development Specialist Paul Evans.

Fox Valley Holistic Health Celebration September 29, 2013

Business Development Specialist Paul Evans explained that the Fox Valley Holistic Health Celebration will be held Sept. 29 in front of the Soup to Nuts natural health grocery at 716 W. State St. The event will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will feature about 70 holistic and healthy-living exhibitors representing a wide range of interests.

Approve Phase II / Ehlers & Associates Contract for Downtown Business District Plan in an Amount Not to Exceed \$12,300.00

Moved by Ald. Singer, seconded by Ald. Flanagan to approve Phase II / Ehlers & Associates contract for the Downtown Business District Plan in an amount not to exceed \$12,300.00.

Ald. Simonian said that after investigating this matter further, he tends to support Ald. Marks' position that additional funds should only be spent on this study if the Council has the fortitude to increase downtown sales taxes.

Ald. Bruno asked if the intent of the study is to raise sales taxes, or are there other benefits to consider. Dir. Divita believed that there always are benefits in the public planning process, adding that a number of items that could be implemented through a business district plan already have been developed but lack funding. She said Phase II of this study is to gather additional information about business district needs and potential projects. She explained that should the Council choose to institute a business district sales tax to fund these projects, the revenues collected within the district would stay within the district in a separate fund. Ald. Brown interjected that if it were decided that a certain project would benefit the entire community, funds could be drawn from the General Fund.

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Ald. Cummings asked if Dir. Divita had any sense of how the business owners felt about instituting an additional sales tax, to which she replied that opinions are about evenly divided. Ald. Kilburg felt that some funds should be allocated to reducing the threat of fire in the downtown business district, given the close proximity of the buildings. Chief Olson emphasized the impact a downtown fire can have, given the historical nature and charm factor of Geneva's downtown buildings, saying that many of those buildings have no fire detection systems in place.

On a request by Ald. Brown, Dir. Divita stated the cost of Phase I of the study was \$9,500 and the cost of Phase II is anticipated to be no more than \$12,300. She also outlined the tasks germane to both phases.

Ald. Flanagan asked if the downtown plan was needed to establish the downtown business district, to which Dir. Divita replied that the district could be created without the additional tax revenue, but it would be more difficult to put in the tax later. Ald. Vogelsberg favored moving forward with the study. Ald. Singer asked if a TIF District could be created, with Dir. Divita noting the number of existing overlaying districts in the downtown area, adding that the entire area would not qualify as a TIF District. There being no further discussion, roll call:

AYES: 7 (Ald. Brown, Bruno, Cummings, Flanagan, Kilburg, Singer, Vogelsberg)

NAYS: 2 (Ald. Marks, Simonian) MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Younie, director of facilities for the Geneva Park Dist., called attention to the Harvest Hustle 5K all-terrain run at Peck Farm Park on Sept. 28. He also noted that the Park District's Playhouse 38 Theatre has held auditions for the upcoming play "Comic Book Artist" with performances scheduled for Nov. 8, 9 and 10.

Waive Fee for Special Council Meeting

Moved by Ald. Bruno, seconded by Ald. Singer that the fee for the special Council meeting be waived. Roll call:

AYES: 9 (Ald. Brown, Bruno, Cummings, Flanagan, Kilburg, Marks, Simonian, Singer, Vogelsberg)

NAYS: 0 MOTION CARRIED

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, moved by Ald. Marks, seconded by Ald. Flanagan to adjourn the special Geneva City Council meeting. Carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Lynn P. Landberg, City Clerk