

CITY OF GENOA
City Hall
City Council Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2023
7:00 P.M.
City Council Chambers
333 East First Street, Genoa, IL 60135

Mayor Brust called the meeting of the City Council to order at 7:02pm followed by roll call. Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Stage, Braheny, and Roca were present, along with Alderman Freund and Hughes who had not been sworn in yet. Alderman Winter was absent. Quorum present.

Mayor Brust led the pledge of allegiance.

GUEST SPEAKERS – None

Motion made by Alderman Pulley to accept the minutes from the April 26, 2023 Special City Council meeting and the April 26, 2023 Special Committee of the Whole meeting, seconded by Alderman Stage. No further discussion. Voice vote was taken, all voted yes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Alderman Wesner to approve payment of the accounts payable for April 30, 2023, seconded by Alderman Stage. No further discussion. Roll call vote was taken in which Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Stage, Braheny and Roca voted yes. Motion carried.

ITEMS FROM INDIVIDUALS IN ATTENDANCE – None

OLD BUSINESS – None

FUTURE ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION – None

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion made by Alderman Braheny to approve of the appointment of Rebecca Stevenson as City Clerk, seconded by Alderman Wesner. No further discussion. Roll call vote was taken. Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Stage, Braheny and Roca voted yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Brust swore in Rebecca Stevenson as City Clerk.

Motion made by Alderman Stage to approve of the appointment of Melissa Freund as Ward 2 Alderman, seconded by Alderman Pulley. No further discussion. Roll call vote was taken. Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Stage, Braheny and Roca voted yes. Motion carried.

Rebecca Stevenson swore in Melissa Freund as Ward 2 Alderman.

Motion made by Alderman Roca to approve of the appointment of Gregg Hughes as Ward 4 Alderman, seconded by Alderman Freund. No further discussion. Roll call vote was taken. Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Freund, Stage, Braheny and Roca voted yes. Motion carried.

Rebecca Stevenson swore in Gregg Hughes as Ward 4 Alderman.

Motion made by Alderman Wesner to approve of the appointments of the Chief of Police, City Attorney, City Engineer, City Administrator, Community Development Director, Director of Public Works, Treasurer/Budget Officers, Boards and Commissions as stated in the memo from Mayor Jonathon Brust dated May 1, 2023. Alderman Pulley seconded. Mayor Brust read the names of those who will be appointed which consisted of Robert Smith, Kelly Cahill, Elisa Bonkowski, Alyssa Seguss, Janice Melton, Janis Tures, Ron Sheahan, Chris Riggs, John Patella, Josh Kubiak, Matt Hoffman, Joe Flury, Dina Fowler, Steven Francissen, Brent Holcomb, and Brent Willhemi. Mayor Brust expressed his gratitude for the great people who have stepped up to serve the City of Genoa. No further discussion. Roll call vote was taken. Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Freund, Stage, Braheny, Hughes and Roca voted yes. Motion carried.

RECOGNITION OF BOARD AND COMMISSION RETIREMENTS – Mayor Brust recognized Robert Moore who had been on the Planning Commission for the past 22 years serving faithfully for the City of Genoa. He thanked him for his years of guidance and dedication and provided him with a certificate.

APPROVE THE CITY OF GENOA SIDEWALK MASTER PLAN

Motion made by Alderman Wesner to approve of the City of Genoa Sidewalk Master Plan, seconded by Alderman Stage. Public Works director Janice Melton gave a brief overview on the plan. City Staff had gone through and targeted the areas of Genoa that didn't have sidewalks focusing more heavily on those surrounding our schools. Alderman Stage asked if there would be a lot of tree removal due to adding the discussed sidewalks. Melton answered saying it would depend on the maturity of the tree and the ability to move the sidewalk around it. Alderman Hughes asked about the location of the sidewalk that would run below the overpass on 72. Melton expressed that it would be something that the engineers would have to figure out due to the bracing of the bridge being there and not leaving much room for a sidewalk development. Mayor Brust mentioned that he met with the Director of Community External Affairs for the Canadian National, which is the railroad that runs above 72, during his time in Springfield and they are planning to meet later this month to talk through potential options and solutions. Multiple people stated they have seen people walking underneath the overpass and expressed how dangerous it is. Mayor Brust assured the council that safety is the biggest priority moving forward. No further discussion. Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Freund, Stage, Braheny, Hughes and Roca voted yes. Motion carried.

APPROVE THE SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOL SIDEWALK PRIORITY PLAN

Motion made by Alderman Hughes to approve of the Safe Route to School Sidewalk Priority Plan, seconded by Alderman Pulley. Mayor Brust and City Administrator Alyssa Seguss explained that this plan and the previously discussed plan are both designed to help when applying for a grant in the fall. If awarded, the grant would pay for 80% of the project costs. Seguss explained that we have not yet been approved as we applied for Phase 1 in 2021 and were

denied because our application was not strong enough. We are hopeful to get approved for all of Phase 1 and potentially part of Phase 2 with our new, stronger, application. Janice Melton expressed that any photos that we can get of students with backpacks on walking in places where sidewalks are not present will help to make our application stronger, such as under the overpass on 72. Alderman Pulley mentioned having a sidewalk that goes down Central St. would be beneficial as the neighborhood is getting younger and more and more kids are out. No further discussion. Alderman Wesner, Pulley, Freund, Stage, Braheny, Hughes and Roca voted yes. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT

Finance director Jan Tures stated that there is no new development since last week. They are finishing up expenditures from the fiscal year 2023 and working to create the full-page system for the utility billing.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public works director Janice Melton stated that Arbor Day is coming up on Friday May 19th with the Kish Valley Wanderers presenting us a \$1,000 check at 12pm for picture taking purposes. This helped us receive the \$18,000 reforestation grant due to it showing community support. Melton mentioned how excited she is about the new Genoa Tree Board being appointed and it being full of Genoa community members who actively want to participate. She thanked Katie Lang for finding so many quality members to join.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Smith explained they finally obtained the medical report for the missing person whose body was recovered from the Kish on March 4th. The report confirmed there was no foul play as cause of death was drowning with contributing factors being drug and alcohol use. Smith gave out the bulletin report for the month of March, if anyone has questions on any of these items please direct them to Smith. He mentioned Officer Havlicek recently backed up county in an instance where someone was fighting him. There was another unintentional death within the city in March, cause of death was a fall. There was a drug investigation as there was a heroin overdose, the first one we have had in a while. Chief Smith explained the ambulance assist that was needed for the unresponsive infant. The infant unfortunately passed away from medical reasons. Mayor Brust thanked Chief for all the hard work the police department does as hearing these things sheds light on how hard of a job they have. Officer Havlicek attended a firearms instructor course as well as SWAT training with the goal being to get him on the county SWAT team. Officer Ziemba hit his two-year anniversary as of January. Monthly trainings that have been done so far this year include law updates, bloodborne hazmat's, child abuse, interrogations, lawful search, and May will be critical incident and de-escalation training. Chief Smith stated that so far, we have taken 177 police reports for the year to which Stage asked if this is up or down from where we were at this time last year. Smith explained he would have to look it up, he said domestics are the same if not up as people like to fight after drinking. He mentioned how himself and Officer Stevenson responded to a domestic at 11am the day before where both people were intoxicated from the night before.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

City Administrator Alyssa Seguss started off by stating that there will be a planning commission meeting on the 11th to review a special use permit petition for a unique property on 1st street. This will first be heard at the planning commission meeting but will then move to be heard at a future city council meeting. The secretary of state staff was at city hall yesterday to do a mobile office event and we had 28 people come in to take advantage of that opportunity. We are hoping they will come out one more time this year. Seguss reminded everyone of the strategic planning meeting that will take place next Tuesday at city hall. Mayor Brust touched on this by explaining we have several different large plans in motion right now such as a comprehensive plan and strategic plan and this will be an opportunity to hear from various members.

COMMITTEE, BOARDS, AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Wesner spoke on behalf of the waste/water treatment committee stating they are close to the approval of the ordinance the way it stands right now. They are working on getting more information on what they can do about certain rates. Seguss spoke on the economic development commission stating they are meeting next week to go over their website page as it has recently been revamped. They are also looking at possibly hiring an intern through the NIU ignite program to help with marketing as the current person working on our marketing is going on maternity leave. Chief Smith spoke for the police commission stating they met a week or two ago and they approved the job postings for job recruits and lateral officers. Mayor Brust talked about the downtown beautification committee saying there is a downtown business survey going out soon to get feedback from our downtown group. There is no finance meeting until the 17th.

MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Brust told the council that there are shirt orders for them, and the city will cover one item for each member. He congratulated all the new alderman, the new city clerk and all the new appointments. He expressed how thankful he is for all the people that are so willing to serve.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alderman Pulley stated that tomorrow is Give Dekalb County and Alderman Stage mentioned that there is an event being put on by City Attorney Kelly Cahill's firm for newly elected officials. Cahill mentioned that everyone is invited as it is an opportunity to ask questions and learn from others. It will take place the morning of May 20th.

Motion to adjourn the meeting of the City Council was made by Alderman Wesner, seconded by Alderman Pulley. Voice vote was taken, all voted yes. Motion was carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.