



Special Committee of the Whole Meeting – Jan. 25, 2021

Council Questions & Public Comments

Before each Committee of the Whole or City Council meeting, questions that have been posed by the City Council relating to [the agenda](#) for that evening will be posted to the City's website. Below are the responses to this week's questions. In addition, we have included all public comments that were received in advance of the City Council meeting. Please note, references to "FY" below equals fiscal year.

Staff Responses to Council Questions

Agenda Item 3. Items of Business

a) Discussion on FY 2022 Draft Budget, if needed

Page numbers refer to the Special Committee of the Whole [agenda packet for Jan. 11, 2021](#).

General Questions:

Q: Sales tax revenue is projected to be virtually the same \$4.9 million in FY 2022 compared to \$5.1 million FY 2021 budget. I would expect them to be reversed, is this accurate?

A: Based upon the economic information and historical data, professional staff believes the FY 2022 budget for sales tax is appropriate. It is important to keep in mind that the fiscal budget year does not begin until May 1, 2021. The last time the City realized less than \$5 million in sales tax was in FY 2016. While the calendar year 2020 was a year of uncertainty, many of the most pessimistic forecasts failed to appear. Most economists currently suggest a K-shaped recovery with certain sectors of the economy taking longer to recover than others. The CARES Act and other measures have pumped money into the economy bolstering consumption. Early estimates suggest that with a vaccine becoming widely available in the second half of 2021, the economy will experience a strong snapback as pent-up demand is released and public-facing sectors of the economy gradually return to normal. Taking this into consideration, it is assumed there will be less of an impact on the aggregate. As of the January sales tax reports, the City is down 18.9% year-to-date, with October sales 11.5% down from the prior year's actual.

Attached is a comparison of sales tax revenue received for the first to third-quarter 2019 compared with sales tax revenue received for the first to third-quarter 2020. The fourth-quarter revenues have not been posted yet by the State of Illinois.

Police Department Questions (budget begins on page 58):

Q: When is overtime paid?

A: The overtime budget for the Police Department is utilized to cover the following situations that are common occurrences throughout the fiscal year.

- Manpower for special events (City-sponsored and private events)

- Traffic and criminal court
- Shift coverage for manpower shortages (for example sick, vacation, and/or training absences)
- State training
- Calls for service that overlap shifts
- Intensive calls for service requiring additional manpower
- On-call coverage for Detectives and Evidence Technicians

In a year not impacted by a pandemic, \$40,000 of the overtime budget is typically used for City-sponsored special events (Festivals and Concours de Elegance). In addition, overtime is required to cover 5K runs, Fox Valley Marathon, Geneva Commons traffic control at the holidays, and Geneva High School sporting events. Those events that are not considered City-sponsored are invoiced for services, however, the expense is budgeted and accounted for in the overtime projection (as is the revenue). The rest of overtime, in a "normal" year, is utilized to cover for officers who are ill, on vacation, away at State-mandated training, are held over on calls, court, called in for additional manpower, etc. Fiscal year 2021 has been different. Special events have not occurred and several trainings were canceled. The majority of our overtime this year has been utilized due to staff shortages caused by openings, illnesses, and calls for service.

Q: Do we have staff (i.e. detectives) that could leave their office to cover shifts on the street at times to cut down on overtime? What is the rationale/protocol for this scenario?

A: A concerted effort is made to closely monitor overtime. A Patrol Sergeant and a Commander review and approve all overtime. There is no way to determine which officer will be assigned a call for service or make an arrest. Calls for service and patrol responsibilities are patrol beat specific. An officer may be assigned a serious time-consuming call with only a few minutes left in the shift. As a general rule, there are four patrol officers on duty at any one time. In a further effort to reduce overtime, there are situations where either the Commanders or Chief will cover open shifts or handle calls for service so that officers can complete their shift on time.

At times, a Detective may be assigned to cover available overtime shifts. This does have significant limitations because they cover a shift (7 a.m. to 3 p.m.) that they normally work in Investigations. If detectives work outside of their shift hours, they also earn overtime pay. Also, we have three general assignment detectives and one high school liaison. They all carry a significant caseload and workload. If they are pulled away from their investigative responsibilities, their workload does not get completed. Many aspects of their work are time-sensitive such as interviews and search warrants. To provide the best customer service and victim advocacy, it is imperative they have time to complete their assignments.

Q: Can we hire an experienced officer as opposed to one who would have to go to the academy; therefore, potentially reduce overtime expenditures?

A: The hiring process is dictated by state statute and is coordinated by the Geneva Board of Fire and Police Commissioners (BFPC). To be eligible for hire, a candidate must be on the police eligibility list. This list is good for two years (unless exhausted sooner). To be eligible, a candidate must pass a written exam, physical agility test, and an oral interview with the BFPC. The candidates securing the highest score are placed on the list in rank order and the list is certified by the BFPC. By statute, the rank of the candidates determines the order of hiring. There is an exemption allowed by state statute to skip to a candidate, anywhere on the list, who is state-certified. When a vacancy occurs, the hiring process begins. Certified or not, the following activities are completed:

- Oral interview with the Chief and Police Commanders. If the candidate passes this interview, a conditional offer of employment is made subject to:
 - Background investigation completed by the Detectives
 - Polygraph examination

- Psychological examination
- Medical examination

The hiring process can take anywhere between two to three months. Candidates who successfully passed all of the above can begin their employment. Once hired, candidates who are not certified are sent to the police academy. The police academy lasts for 3.5 months. Following graduation from the academy, the field training program begins and lasts nearly four months. The total time from beginning the hiring process (after the eligibility list is established) to an officer being certified for solo patrol is usually between 9 to 11 months from the date of hire.

The cost for a new officer involves the requisite testing (psychological, polygraph, medical), equipment costs (uniform and body armor), and the cost of the academy (\$4,400 per officer, in addition to salary). The only monetary difference in hiring a certified candidate is the academy expense.

Typically the certified officers that have expressed interest in Geneva are those who have not successfully passed a field training program with another agency, resigned, but are still certified. Failure to pass the field training program can be for numerous reasons (not a good fit, department too big, too small, needed more time than available, not a great fit for the profession). The decision to skip to a certified candidate is multi-faceted. Sometimes it is better to hire a non-certified officer and send them to the academy so that they can learn the profession the Geneva way, as compared to the possibility of bad habits being an issue from their time with another agency. Sometimes they are a great fit. They can grasp the many challenging aspects of the profession quickly and move through the field training program seamlessly. The interview and background process is very thorough to make every effort to choose the best candidate for the City of Geneva, regardless of certification. Given the time and expense it takes to hire and train an officer, we want to get it right the first time.

Q: What is the current staffing level for the Police Department?

A: There are 37 authorized sworn officers (including the Chief, Detectives, Sergeants, Patrol officers). There are 21 officers assigned to patrol, working eight-hour shifts, 24/7. They are divided by patrol shift based upon seniority and call volume (3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift is the busiest therefore, it has the most officers assigned). The 35th officer is currently in her field training program. The 36th position is currently vacant, and the 37th position (added in FY 2021) is on hold while the COVID-19 budget is evaluated. One officer is retiring Feb. 3, 2021 and a second officer is retiring May 3, 2021. This will necessitate hiring three officers prior to being able to fill the 37th position. An additional challenge has to do with the availability of the academy. Agencies are limited to two spots per academy. COVID-19 has significantly impacted academies. Classes have been canceled or extended. Classes that used to accommodate 70 students are now limited to 49. Many agencies are experiencing an increase in retirements. The waitlist for all of the police academies in Illinois is double their authorized class limit.

Q: In looking at the FY 2022 budget, would the filling of the additional police officer result in a break-even or savings as it relates to the overtime line item?

A: The hiring of a 37th officer will have a very limited impact on the reduction of the overtime budget. In reviewing the overtime expenses this past year, the hiring of a 37th officer could have *potentially* reduced overtime by approximately \$3,000.

Q: Does including the additional police officer increase the number of full-time employees budgeted as compared to the FY 2021 budget?

A: No. In FY 2021 there were 151 full-time employees budgeted. In FY 2022 there are 151 full-time employees budgeted. This is the maximum number of full-time employees authorized by the City Council.

Q: What is the history of the "37th" police officer position?

A: The 37th officer was first authorized in 2004. Due to retirements, the department has never reached 37 officers. With the downturn of the economy in 2008, the 37th officer was removed from the budget. The purpose of adding a 37th officer in FY 2021 was to address the traffic-related issues. The current staffing allows adequate staffing of patrol and investigative divisions. It allows for two calls necessitating two officers to occur at the same time. The traffic and associated complaints have increased a great deal over the past several years. Current staffing does not provide for an officer to focus on these traffic issues. Geneva is the only Tri-City police department that does not have an officer assigned specifically to traffic issues. All traffic education and enforcement related efforts are handled by on-duty patrol officers. They are responsible for enforcement, they deploy the speed trailer and portable speed signs, and complete speed studies, all while responding to 911 calls. It is not uncommon to have an officer deploying the speed trailer and then have to respond to a 911 call pulling the trailer. In addition, during a normal year, special events are time-consuming and usually handled by our midnight shift officers. This is less than ideal and can be resolved by an officer specifically assigned to this responsibility.

Q: When is it anticipated that the 37th police officer position will be filled?

A: Based upon the current vacancy, two anticipated retirements and the status of the eligibility list, this position would likely not be filled until the end of calendar year 2021 or early in calendar year 2022. As always, before moving forward with the hiring process, the Chief works closely with the City Administrator and Finance Director to determine the position fits within the budget prior to moving forward with the hiring process. However, as this position is currently budgeted for FY 2021 there is no additional impact on the FY 2022 budget. We appreciate the flexibility to be able to hire when the timing is right and there is space in the academy.

Public Comments – Public Comments attached

Sales Tax, Use Tax, and Cannabis Tax Comparisons (2019 - 2020)

Categories	1Q 2019 MT	1Q 2020 MT	%Change
General Merchandise		15,249	
Food	104,818	111,039	5.94%
Drinking & Eating	244,139	187,601	-23.16%
Apparel	127,870	77,694	-39.24%
Furniture & H.H. & Radio	133,518	144,057	7.89%
Lumber, Bldg, Hardware	72,420	71,980	-0.61%
Automotive & Filling Stations		23,908	
Drugs & Misc. Retail	262,077	245,447	-6.35%
Agriculture & All Others	77,875	60,904	-21.79%
Manufacturers	53,892	30,342	-43.70%
Totals	1,142,379	968,221	-15.25%

Categories	1Q 2019 NHMR	1Q 2020 NHMR	%Change
General Merchandise		14,937	
Food	33,222	33,489	0.80%
Drinking & Eating	238,256	181,705	-23.74%
Apparel	125,814	76,188	-39.44%
Furniture & H.H. & Radio	132,063	137,749	4.31%
Lumber, Bldg, Hardware	72,219	71,542	-0.94%
Automotive & Filling Stations		12,164	
Drugs & Misc. Retail	203,544	181,985	-10.59%
Agriculture & All Others	71,701	54,385	-24.15%
Manufacturers	53,349	30,070	-43.64%
Totals	964,806	794,214	-17.68%

Categories	2Q 2019 MT	2Q 2020 MT	%Change
General Merchandise	24,916	8,966	-64.02%
Food	122,869	117,936	-4.01%
Drinking & Eating	279,301	164,482	-41.11%
Apparel	142,853	43,525	-69.53%
Furniture & H.H. & Radio	142,656	84,347	-40.87%
Lumber, Bldg, Hardware	124,047	144,909	16.82%
Automotive & Filling Stations	30,009	22,395	-25.37%
Drugs & Misc. Retail	301,570	209,705	-30.46%
Agriculture & All Others	91,350	38,009	-58.39%
Manufacturers	63,548	19,424	-69.43%
Totals	1,323,118	853,697	-35.48%

Categories	2Q 2019 NHMR	2Q 2020 NHMR	%Change
General Merchandise	24,603	8,865	-63.97%
Food	43,158	28,306	-34.41%
Drinking & Eating	272,774	158,744	-41.80%
Apparel	141,338	42,560	-69.89%
Furniture & H.H. & Radio	141,230	83,427	-40.93%

Lumber, Bldg, Hardware	123,676	144,654	16.96%
Automotive & Filling Stations	15,339	9,183	-40.13%
Drugs & Misc. Retail	241,575	154,767	-35.93%
Agriculture & All Others	84,836	34,402	-59.45%
Manufacturers	62,471	19,008	-69.57%
Totals	1,151,001	683,917	-40.58%

Categories	3Q 2019 MT	3Q 2020 MT	%Change
General Merchandise	25,838	22,908	-11.34%
Food	114,572	121,445	6.00%
Drinking & Eating	278,813	236,460	-15.19%
Apparel	154,017	105,732	-31.35%
Furniture & H.H. & Radio	162,509	168,314	3.57%
Lumber, Bldg, Hardware	93,463	113,492	21.43%
Automotive & Filling Stations	31,114	89,626	188.06%
Drugs & Misc. Retail	304,784	335,341	10.03%
Agriculture & All Others	72,325	55,866	-22.76%
Manufacturers	54,862	27,065	-50.67%
Totals	1,292,299	1,276,249	-1.24%

Categories	3Q 2019 NHMR	3Q 2020 NHMR	%Change
General Merchandise	25,487	22,517	-11.65%
Food	39,506	35,486	-10.18%
Drinking & Eating	272,531	229,839	-15.67%
Apparel	152,232	103,941	-31.72%
Furniture & H.H. & Radio	160,903	166,849	3.70%
Lumber, Bldg, Hardware	93,450	113,430	21.38%
Automotive & Filling Stations	15,084	10,987	-27.16%
Drugs & Misc. Retail	243,108	272,560	12.11%
Agriculture & All Others	66,313	49,111	-25.94%
Manufacturers	54,335	26,384	-51.44%
Totals	1,122,949	1,031,104	-8.18%

Note: Blank categories have less than 4 taxpayers, data not shown due to confidentiality
Totals include censored data.

Combined Totals	2019 1Q-3Q	2020 1Q-3Q	%Change
MT & NHMR	6,996,552	5,607,402	-19.85%

Local Use Tax	2019	2020	%Change
Jan	77,682	88,794	14.30%
Feb	45,062	61,486	36.45%
Mar	51,912	53,432	2.93%
Apr	59,015	67,968	15.17%
May	59,408	71,954	21.12%

June	56,100	80,023	42.64%
July	57,031	80,788	41.66%
Aug	58,631	81,692	39.33%
Sept	56,172	77,791	38.49%
Oct	62,912	81,157	29.00%
Nov	69,074	85,036	23.11%
Totals	652,999	830,121	27.12%

Cannabis Use Tax	2019	2020	% Change
Jan-Nov Collections	0	14,847	100.00%

From: david.malone@natca.net
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Backyard chickens
Date: Monday, January 25, 2021 12:20:12 PM

We'd like to voice our support for the opportunity to keep chickens in Geneva. We know several families that keep chickens in St. Charles, including one 1/2 block away on Gray St and our kids would love to be able to raise chickens here. It would be a great opportunity for the kids to help take care of animals that also provide food for us.

Thank you
David, Sheri, Donovan and Tess Malone
733 Mckinley Ave