

CITY OF GENEVA COUNCIL MEETING

Immediately following Committee of the Whole Meeting at 7pm

May 17, 2021

In adherence to Gov. Pritzker's Bridge to Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois plan limiting meeting gatherings to 60% of overall room capacity; City of Geneva meetings continue to be a hybrid of live and virtual. In addition, meetings are livestreamed for the public to provide the ability to contemporaneously hear all discussion, testimony and roll call votes of the open meeting in real time. Please visit the City website for details on how to watch the meeting live. While the public may be limited or restricted from attending meetings in person, individuals wishing to provide public comment may do so in advance (recommended) or during the meeting by sending an email to: publiccomment@geneva.il.us.

For more information, please see the "Notice Regarding Meeting and Public Comment Rule Modification Due to COVID-19" <https://www.geneva.il.us/DocumentCenter/View/8694/Notice-Regarding-Meeting-And-Public-Comment>

In addition, individuals unable to attend in person (due to gathering restrictions) may be recognized during the meeting (audio only) by accessing the meeting via the link below

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4785782004996678156>

CALL TO ORDER

The Geneva City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Burns at 7:20 p.m. immediately following the Committee of the Whole.

Aldermen present: Mike Bruno, Tara Burghart, Becky Hruby, Gabriel Kaven, Craig Maladra, Amy Mayer, Richard Marks, Robert Swanson, Dean Kilburg, Brad Kosirog

Clerk attending by video or teleconference: Roger Godskesen.

Aldermen absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Stephanie Dawkins, Assistant City Administrator Ben McCready, Public Works Director Richard Babica, City Atty. Ron Sandack

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Guests from Moms Demand Action

PUBLIC HEARINGS, SPECIAL ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS

a. Proclaim June 4, 2021 as National Gun Violence Awareness Day

Moved by Ald. Swanson, seconded by Ald. Marks to so proclaim:

Mayor Burns read the proclamation and invited guests from the audience representing Moms Demand Action to the podium. Steve McCue spoke about the organization, and Martha thanked the Mayor and Council for recognizing the issue.

MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote 10/0.

b. Recommend Mayor's 2021/2022 Reappointment of City Attorney and Board & Commission Members

Moved by Ald. Kosirog, seconded by Ald. Marks.

Roll Call:

AYES: 10 (Ald. Bruno, Burghart, Hrubby, Kaven, Kilburg, Kosirog, Maladra, Marks, Mayer, Swanson)

ABSENT: 0

NAYS: 0 MOTION CARRIED

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

None

OMNIBUS AGENDA

All Items listed on the Omnibus Agenda are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a council member so requests in which event the item will be removed from the Omnibus (Consent) Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.

Moved by Ald. Bruno, seconded by Ald. Swanson to approve the agenda as amended.

Roll Call:

AYES: 10 (Ald. Bruno, Burghart, Hrubby, Kaven, Kilburg, Kosirog, Maladra, Marks, Mayer, Swanson)

ABSENT: 0

NAYS: 0 MOTION CARRIED

***6. Approve Minutes from the meetings on May 3, 2021 (Old and New Business) (Clerk recommends approval)**

Moved by Ald. Bruno, seconded by Ald. Swanson to approve the measure as presented. Approved by unanimous roll call vote. (Omnibus Agenda). MOTION CARRIED

***APPROVE REPORTS**

- a. March Financial Report
- b. Tax Reports

Moved by Ald. Bruno, seconded by Ald. Swanson to approve the measure as presented. Approved by unanimous roll call vote. (Omnibus Agenda). MOTION CARRIED

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

None

OTHER ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE

*a. Acceptance of FY2021 4th Quarter Goals Status Report

Moved by Ald. Bruno, seconded by Ald. Swanson to approve the measure as presented. Approved by unanimous roll call vote. (Omnibus Agenda). MOTION CARRIED

MUNICIPAL BILLS FOR PAYMENT

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| City of Geneva Expenditures - 5/17/2021 | \$ 2,954,492.82 |
| Manual Check(s) – | |
| Utility Billing Refund(s) | 1,741.23 |
| Misc. Refund(s) – | |

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Sales Tax Abatement – | |
| City of Geneva Payroll | 714,436.18 |
| Tri-Com Expenditures - 5/17/2021 | 242,846.00 |
| Tri-Com Payroll | 107,803.75 |
| Total Expenditures | <u>\$ 4,021,319.98</u> |

Moved by Ald. Bruno, seconded by Ald. Swanson to approve the bills as presented.

Roll Call:

AYES: 10 (Ald. Bruno, Burghart, Hraby, Kaven, Kilburg, Kosirog, Maladra, Marks, Mayer, Swanson)

ABSENT: 0

NAYS: 0 MOTION CARRIED

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ITEMS OF BUSINESS

None

PRESENTATION OF ORDINANCES, PETITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, AND BID AWARDS

a. Recommend Approval of Resolution No. 2021-36 Authorizing Execution of Change Order Number One with Henderson Products, Inc. in the amount of \$8,488.00 for an overall contract price not to exceed \$438,952.00

Moved by Ald. Burghart, seconded by Ald. Hraby to approve the measure as presented

Ald. Kilburg asked if there were any other bids for the project and the reason for the price increase. Director Babica reported that the bid was procured through the National Purchasing Alliance, which does not produce alternative bids. Babica explained further that the original bid was for 30 days only, and since it was unclear at the time there would be funds to execute the work, through oversight, Public Works did not extend the bid and lock in the original price at that time. Procedures were put in place to ensure this will not happen with future such bids.

Roll Call:

AYES: 10 (Ald. Bruno, Burghart, Hraby, Kaven, Kilburg, Kosirog, Maladra, Marks, Mayer, Swanson)

ABSENT: 0

NAYS: 0 MOTION CARRIED

b. Continued Discussions Regarding Proposed Legislation and Its Potential Impact on City of Geneva Electric Utility.

Mayor Burns opened the discussion with a recap, then invited the Council members to speak.

Swanson noted that the mission statement for the Electric Division was not in line with the strategic plan, and requested that the division look at a new statement that would combine environmental and fiscal goals.

Bruno supported this suggestion, and felt it would be easy to add these goals to the statement.

Director Babica agreed to do so.

Bruno felt there was a council consensus to de-carbonize power sources, but that the council also realizes the NIMPA (Northern Illinois Municipal Power Agency) commitment. Felt the council should voice support sooner rather than later to see some action within a reasonable timeline.

Maladra agreed with Bruno that moving to green energy was the right thing to do, but there were many unknowns. For instance, when the GGF (Geneva Generation Facility) was built, natural gas was considered green.

Kosirog felt this is a complex issue, would like to see input from high-volume business customers, and more information is needed to move forward carefully.

Burghart had spoken with other aldermen, who had put together a draft letter statement as a group. Felt that we want to weigh in on the right side of history.

A discussion followed on the letter drafted by the group.

Bruno feels all agree that we would like dependence on coal to end. Has potential concerns about the NIMPA and GGF in the future, and how to make an impact today.

Maladra had concerns about providing reliable access to power. Felt it is not clear what will replace NIMPA, but the City needs to be ready to have a backup before just turning the coal plant off.

Kilburg noted the City still needs electricity and how can the coal produced power be replaced. Nuclear could do that, but is not practical in this era. Would like input from the City's industrial customers, but will support the draft letter.

Burghart noted she shared the draft letter with other aldermen, feeling that it was good to have something to start the discussion with, Burghart formally requested it be included in the minutes.

Mayer noted that as a new alderman, there was a lot to absorb on this issue. She is always in favor of green power, and the need to get away from coal. However, it is too much for the City to absorb the costs, which needs support from the Federal and State. Felt the burden cannot all be put on Geneva's customers, and that incentives are needed to get out from the situation.

Swanson felt that a lot of people are confused, thinking that the City has the power to close the coal fired plant. Need to clarify that the Council will send a letter to the state legislature. Noted further that higher rates for electricity may cause the City to lose industrial customers, and therefore result in higher property to fund the City's needs. Swanson felt that all were in agreement that a letter should be sent, but are there any legal ramifications in doing so?

Marks felt we are all on the same page, and asked where the legislative process stands. Mayor Burns responded that his understanding at this time is all speculative at best, but feels will likely see a combination bill (some mix of the multiple bills currently under consideration), with a trailer bill (to address additional issues) likely to follow.

Marks asked whether our legislators don't already know the position of towns like Geneva. Burns said yes, and they are also interested and have expressed support.

Kilburg proposed moving forward with the draft with a suggested change, felt we need to move the creation of the letter along.

Bruno was concerned about Geneva's competition with the rest of the state.

Kaven wanted to see reliability of power outlined, did not feel the letter will make much difference, but did support sending it.

Hruby felt it is important to put the City's position in writing, because the topic is so important.

Maladra supported putting it in writing, noting the City is already recognized as a leader in the move to green energy, with 28% of the City's portfolio recognized as being green.

Kosirog suggested timing of a letter might be better after we see what comes out of the legislature. Did not see the point of a letter at this time.

Bruno felt the window is closing and that we may already have missed the opportunity to influence our legislators.

Marks asked if the Council can give the Mayor authority to write the letter, in order to speed the process.

Atty. Sandack replied that would not be the way to proceed, suggested that Council members could draft a letter. Sandack added the need to make sure we don't violate our membership agreement in NIMPA.

Burns noted he has already been representing the City's issues at meetings, and added that the GGF and the Waste Management site have not yet been discussed. Burns added his feeling that phone calls to legislators would be more impressive to them.

Burghart noted there are lots of other municipalities that will be affected, and Bruno feared that if we don't act, we will have missed an opportunity.

b.1 Motion to Hold a Special City Council Meeting May 24, 2021 with the goal of creating a letter to be sent to Legislators defining Geneva's support for a move to green energy, while outlining Geneva's specific needs Regarding Proposed Legislation and Its Potential Impact on City of Geneva Electric Utilities

Moved by Ald. Bruno, seconded by Ald. Hruby to approve the measure as presented

Discussion followed on the motion.

Kaven felt this approach seemed rushed, and wondered if legislation would likely even be voted upon until the fall session.

Kosirog also felt this was rushed, and that the City's position has already been made clear.

Marks agreed this felt rushed and that our legislators already know the issues. He added that trying to draft a letter in time would be hard to do.

Hruby felt the combined voices of the Council express more urgency.

Mayer felt it was important to write the letter.

Swanson supported having the meeting, and that the Council could vote on it then.

There being no further discussion, the motion to hold a special meeting was put to a vote.

Roll Call:

AYES: 10 (Ald. Bruno, Burghart, Hruby, Kaven, Kilburg, Kosirog, Maladra, Marks, Mayer, Swanson)

ABSENT: 0

NAYS: 0 MOTION CARRIED

A draft of the letter will be posted for review.

Kilburg felt that fine-tuning a letter probably wouldn't carry more weight.

Kosirog felt there is room to make an impact.

Hruby asked what could have been done to get final approval of the letter on the agenda for tonight's meeting. Burns and Dawkins explained the process for that to have happened.

Kosirog suggested that legal and staff review and give opinion on the draft before the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Representative Stephen Andersson expressed his pride in the City Council for their efforts in the matter before the legislature. He clarified procedure by the legislature, and that something could happen soon, but there is no way to be sure. Andersson cautioned that legislation could be voted upon by May 31. He added that advocates on both sides are cobbling together votes, and that the City Council has more opportunity right now to have an impact than it ever will at any other time.

Martha Paschke added her support for the efforts by the Council.

Ms. Holton felt if more members of the community understood the issues, they would want the Council to send the letter and to support renewable energy.

Bill Koehl felt a simple, focused message was important.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, moved by Ald. Marks to adjourn the Geneva City Council meeting.

MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote 10/0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

City Clerk
Roger Godskesen



Public Comment

City Council Meeting

May 17, 2021

From: [William Malecki](#)
To: [Swanson, Robert](#); [Maladra, Craig](#)
Cc: [Burns, Kevin](#); [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Writing in support of CEJA
Date: Monday, May 17, 2021 12:56:13 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

Alderman Maladra and Alderman Swanson.

I am writing to ask for your support in moving our city quickly away from using fossil fuel energy and to begin the transition to renewable sources such as solar and wind.

We all understand the possible ramifications that exist due to our contractual obligations to the Prairie State Coal Plant; however, because our community is well positioned financially and because our median household income is over 40% greater than across the entire State of Illinois, I believe that we collectively have the desire and the means to absorb a possible rate increase.

I believe that we, as a society, do have to take drastic steps immediately to help prevent the further deterioration of our environment. These steps should include supporting the Clean Energy Jobs Act and closing Prairie State.

I understand this is a difficult decision and that, when it comes down to dollars and cents, monetary policy typically wins over all. But I also understand that we are being faced with a bleak future if we don't step up and address these issues now. I implore you to prioritize the future of our planet first and foremost before prioritizing our pocketbooks.

Thank you as always for taking my thoughts into consideration.

Sincerely,

Billy Malecki
121 Woodlawn Street

From: [Martha Paschke](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Prairie State Coal
Date: Monday, May 17, 2021 1:45:47 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

Good afternoon,

I wanted to share with you my support for the closing of the Prairie State Coal plant as a part of Illinois' push toward a clean energy future.

I realize this may come at some cost to our city due to our contract with them, and that cost would be passed on to taxpayers.

Prairie State Coal has already cost more to run than was anticipated and it is the top polluter in Illinois and in the top 10 worst polluters in the United States.

Solar and wind energy are quickly becoming cheaper alternatives to coal and they do not put our children's futures at risk in the same way.

I'm happy to pay a little bit extra if it means ensuring a safer and healthier future for all kids. I urge you to consider this as well and let our state legislators know that the City of Geneva stands behind the closing of Prairie State Coal.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Martha Paschke

Sent from my iPhone

From: paschke.hannah@gmail.com
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: ? Clean Energy Support
Date: Monday, May 17, 2021 1:48:38 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

Dear City Counsel and Mayor Burns,

I just wanted to write to show my support for clean energy and my support for the closing of prairie state coal. As a younger citizen and a member of the next generation, decisions like these will have a huge impact on my life in the coming years, and I hope this town can recognize the importance of moving towards cleaner energy. In the short term, this may look like a difficult decision, but the long term implications of continuing to use and burn fossil fuels will be devastating, and that is a fact that is not up for debate.

Thank you for your time,
Hannah Paschke

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jeremy Paschke](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Vote to move towards clean and renewable energy!
Date: Monday, May 17, 2021 5:01:11 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

Hello

I am a concerned Geneva resident and I would like to encourage the Mayor and City Council to move away from fossil fuels and embrace renewable energy and energy storage alternatives. I know that this is a complicated issue with the closing of Prairie State Coal Plant, but now is a time to make strong fearless decisions and step into the future.

Sincerely,

--

Jeremy Paschke
14 Brookfield Lane
Geneva IL 60134

From: [Aly Fogel](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public comment: Geneva should use clean energy, not coal
Date: Monday, May 17, 2021 7:14:07 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

I'm a resident of Geneva's Ward 5, and I support closing the Prairie State coal plant.

I've been hearing about the impacts climate change will have on my future for most of my life. Now that I'm 23 years old, the impacts of fossil fuel pollution aren't just a far-off theory, it's a reality that we can see today.

Scientists from NASA have proven that the burning of fossil fuels is responsible for the lion's share of global warming [1]. Research shows that climate change is causing more frequent extreme weather events like droughts, floods and heat waves [2]. Right here in Illinois, climate change is causing unpredictable weather patterns that are harming our farmers [3].

But Geneva has a chance right here and right now to join the fight to stop the worst impacts of climate change. The Prairie State coal plant is the worst polluter in Illinois and one of the top ten worst carbon dioxide polluters in the entire country [4]. The only way forward is to leave dirty energy sources like the Prairie State coal plant in the past and transition to renewable energy sources – which are quickly becoming even cheaper than fossil fuels [5].

As someone who has lived in Geneva for the majority of my life, I would be so proud of my hometown if the council voted tonight in favor of cleaner air, cleaner water and preserving our planet's climate. So I urge Geneva's city council members to use your power tonight to vote in support of closing the Prairie State coal plant.

Thank you,
Aly Fogel

1: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/climate-change-human-cause-nasa-study-carbon-emissions/>

2: <https://www.nytimes.com/article/climate-change-global-warming-faq.html#link-429d8fc>

3: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/environment/ct-prem-climate-change-illinois-nature-conservancy-20210420-wlkygdqrxzcbdbnrm4mq5i5uqi-story.html>

4: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/environment/ct-biden-climate-illinois-coal-20210121-27fuo4lzovdejp2lf3ptpt2vqe-story.html>

5: <https://ourworldindata.org/cheap-renewables-growth#:~:text=In%20most%20places%20in%20the,declines%20by%20the%20same%20fraction>

From: [Rhonda Robinson](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Prairie State issue
Date: Monday, May 17, 2021 8:18:51 PM

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

It is concerning at least that tonight the council mentioned they had not sought the input from these 'important' industrial users...we assume they are commercial users making a profit and aware of the destruction of our state air quality caused by their energy use. In addition, it is disconcerting at the least that my utility payments are a part of that destruction.

--

Rhonda S. Robinson

"...life is best organized as a series of daring adventures from a secure base." Attributed to child psychologist John Bowlby by David Brooks in NYT 9/25/12