



## April 2025 Conversation with Director Sharman and City Manager Hendrix

The following was captured during the Geneva Community Conversation held on April 18, 2025 at the Bozzuto Center.

### Recreation Department Overview

*Related Questions: What is the organizational structure for day-to-day operations? How many staff? What does the recreation department provide to the community? Why are we studying the recreation complex? What does the colleges contribute to the Rink?*

#### Staffing and Command Structure

- The Geneva Recreation Department has three full-time staff members that work year-round. A Director of Recreation, a Recreation Supervisor, and a Recreation Maintenance Mechanic. There are 30-40 part-time staff that assist with coverage at the Recreation Complex/Rink and with recreation programming such as camps, soccer, and more.
- The Recreation Department operates many different programs for youth and families, supports the operations of the Recreation Complex, Dog Park, and assists in maintaining the many parks and playgrounds throughout the City.

#### Recreation Complex

- The Recreation Complex, affectionally known as “The Cooler” has been a municipally owned and operated community hub since its inception in 1978.
- The current complex study is looking at what upgrades are necessary to continue to maintain current operations while also looking at what could be improved to maximize the use of the complex.
- Hobart and William Smith Colleges NCAA hockey teams are one of the many users of the recreation complex. HWS pays annual fees to utilize the rink, like all other users.
- The Recreation Complex operated 301 days during the past year.
- Individuals can host events at the rink such as birthday parties or community events like the Summer Happening. These event users all pay fees to support the Rink.
- The recreation department is also willing and happy to partner with other community organizations to host special events for youth and families.

## Youth Programming

- While we would love to offer youth programming in all the parks, this former program has proven challenging. When last offered fewer than five youth attended this program and it was deemed to expensive due to the staff costs for such a small turnout. We have found other ways to activate the parks including free sporting equipment at many of our parks.
- The school break and summer recreation programs have been well-attended. These programs are created using break-even funding methodology and the city does not traditionally allocate property tax revenue to these programs. This does mean that there is a fee for users AND there are scholarships available. Please encourage those who need scholarships to please ask.

## Senior Programming

- The funding was cut for the senior program that the City Recreation Department co-sponsored of the YMCA for 2025.
- This program provided supplemental programs for our seniors.
- City Council has not provided funding in 2025, but this could be sought again in the future.

## Communications

*Related Questions: How can the City communicate more? What is the current process for residents to get information? What measures are being done to assist with communications? Is there a community calendar?*

- City staff provide updates via a weekly mailing. You can subscribe here: <https://cityofgenevany.com/list.aspx>
- There is no full-time staff or position tasked with communications/updates, but all Department Heads provide information to the City Manager who is working to expand her monthly updates.
- We have two staff that assist in maintaining our social media presence. We do not monitor or respond to these sites and use them to push out information.
- We have utilized interns in the past. Currently we do not have staff that have the capacity to oversee interns focused on communication at this time, but it is something we are exploring.
- We are hopeful that events like these allow us to expand our communication efforts.
- We do have a calendar that we attempt to keep updated, the Business Improvement District also has a community calendar for downtown events.

## Relationship with Hobart and William Smith Colleges

*Related Questions: What is our relationship with HWS? Do they contribute to the City? How do we work with the colleges?*

- Members from the City leadership team (Fire Chief, Police Chief, Director of PED, and the City Manager) meet quarterly with HWS staff to discuss a variety of topics and to find ways to collaborate with the colleges.
- HWS provides funding directly to the City through a sharing agreement on an annual basis.
- If the colleges use City facilities such as the Rink or McDonough Park, they pay a user fee and also assist in maintenance costs related to maintaining the facilities at the NCAA standards.
- We have a great relationship with HWS and work closely to ensure that we are both supporting one another to make Geneva a better place for all to work, live, thrive, and play.

## City Budget

*Related Questions: What is the process? How do people learn more? What involvement do departments have? How are cuts made? Are there ways to communicate this better with the public?*

- We are continuing to hone the budget process to provide access to more information to community members. We take pride in how much information is now contained in the budget documents and will continue to improve our systems
- Departments will be presenting on April 21 and 28 an overview of their departments and the resources they need to maintain operations. These sessions will be available on YouTube.
- In May, the Council will get further analysis of where our current 2025 spending is and staff projections for 2026 expenses so that they can establish a budget direction.
- Once a direction is established by council, each department is tasked with finding ways to meet that that direction. For example, if council were to say let us begin with a budget that does not increase the tax rate by more than 5%, the Comptroller and City Manager would review all of the mandatory costs associated with City operations and then let staff know what their budget target may be.
- Once budget targets are provided departments meet with the City Manager to discuss what can be achieved with their target amounts and what they may need to maintain or expand operations that are called ARM (Above Required Maintenance) Request. All City Department budget requests are then considered against the available spending.
- Departments meet regularly with the City Manager and Comptroller throughout the process to outline what resources are necessary for the continuation of operations. Public and staff safety is always a top priority.
- Once the City Manager's budget is presented to Council, Council then can add to the budget or remove from the budget. These are their decisions. They may ask staff for ideas/recommendations of cuts. Staff take the impacts on their department and the City into their recommendations. The

City Manager and Comptroller ensure staff are at Council meetings and ready to discuss the budget items that impact them.

## Sustainability Topics

*Related Questions: When is the Resource Recovery Park opening? What will it look like?*

- The Cities' Resource Recovery Park has been and will continue to be open for food waste and leaf/lawn debris
- The pilot Resource Recovery Park Expansion will open on May 1. This will be a City/Town partnership. City residents will be able to pay for trash and recycling services at this drop off park. We will utilize a compactor for trash and roll offs for plastics and metals. There will NOT be any bulk waste such as sofas and bedding or e-waste at this time.
- City residents can purchase punch cards and recycling stickers at City Hall.
- The new hours are Thursdays and Saturdays 8:30am – 4:30pm.

## City Properties

*What is going on with the Madias Property? Do we need all this housing? What are the city housing projects and where do they fall in the planning process? What is the planning board and ZBA? How does someone serve on these boards?*

### *Madias Property*

- The property that once housed the grocery store called Madias (on Oak St and Castle St) has been envisioned for redevelopment as a three-story complex following the destruction from the fire. The cost to demolish the building were tied into the redevelopment that the owners were hoping to get grant funding to support.
- To date the owners have been working with the Code Enforcement Office to secure permitting for demolition. If they do not follow the code timeline, City Council can intervene using what is known as the Chapter 111 process of Geneva City Code. This would mean the city would pay for demolition and attempt to get reimbursed by the property owner for the total costs.
- If deadlines are not met in April and May then this process will be discussed at the June City council meeting.

### *Housing Projects*

- The City sells city owned properties through the following process/procedure:  
<https://www.cityofgenevany.gov/196/City-Owned-Property-Listings-CPL>
- In the first quarter of 2025 the city began the process to sell three properties:
  - 29 Jackson Street to Homeleasing for 60-75 units of workforce housing
  - Crystal Street to Habitat for Humanity for eight single family homes

- Middle & Hallenbeck Street to Cook Properties for 3 units of market rate single family manufactured homes
- These properties were approved for sale and are in the process of developing their projects for planning and zoning board approval. There are no current designs for the 29 Jackson Street property.
- Home leasing will be meeting with the families near the Jackson Street project to work towards what that development may be.
- Cook properties will appear at the April or May planning board meeting for subdivision of their property.
- Additionally, the city partnered with Taylor the Builders, Pivotal, Greenleaf Builders and Hunt Architects to develop the property at 595 South Exchange into housing for up to 90 units.
- Lakeview Health Services is in the planning board approval process for a housing development that they are pursuing on property they are purchasing that is NOT city owned. This property is the former Finger Lakes Times Building. The project would be a mixed-use project with some of the residents qualifying for funding for housing through Office of Mental Health or other providers.
- The Planning Board focuses on review of site plans, special use permits, and subdivision plans are discussed, and has a role in the municipal comprehensive plan., while the Zoning Board of Approvals or ZBA primarily deals with interpreting zoning regulations, granting variances, and hearing appeals from zoning decisions. Members to both boards are appointed by City Council.