

MINUTES
City of Geneva
Council Meeting
November 8, 2010
7:00 p.m.

Roll Call – Bill Buskirk, Philip Cordova, Tim Miller, Jeff Piotrowski, Crystal Latimer and Bruce Beckwith

Absent: Rodger Fuller,

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was said and prayer was offered by Phyllis Dunlap, Clerk of Council

Motion was made by Tim Miller, seconded by Bruce Beckwith to accept the minutes of the October 25, 2010 Council Meeting. Roll call, 6 yeas.

Citizens – Citizens were present along with a representative from the Gazette.

Department Presentation – Fire Department – Aaron Lenart Presenting

Mr. Lenart stated that today's presentation is all about water. In 2006 the City of Geneva had a flood. It was deemed a 100 year flood. After that flood the City took a look at its equipment and resources, what we could provide and what we could not provide. The Fire Department then came to the Capital meeting and presented a plan of where they would like to go. Council granted the Fire Department Thirty-five Hundred Dollars (\$3,500.00) to get started. The Fire Department purchased four ice rescue suits and four swift water suits.

The Fire Department currently has four people fully trained in swift water operations. There are quite a few hoops that you have to go through to be certified. On the ice rescue side, there are 28 of 32 people who are ice rescue certified. Along with that a boat was purchased, a sixteen foot Jon Boat along with a trailer which is utilized for transporting rescue gear.

Mark demonstrated the ice rescue suit. The suit is specifically designed for ice rescue in the event that a child, person or anyone should slip through the ice. Previously the Fire Department was using old neoprene "gumby" suits which had large feet and two fingers like a mitten, not effective.

When the money was graciously received from Council the suits were purchased through a company out of Massachusetts. The suit will provide six hours of protection in frozen water. It does not pick up any water. It is like a giant zip lock baggy. Inside the suit it is layered with thermo which also provides floatation. No life jacket is required. The suit itself is a life jacket. In combination with this suit we use a sled and reel. The sled is designed to slip it in to the victim to self rescue. If the victim can't self rescue, then the rescuer enters the water. They will tie the victim's hands into the sled. The shore crew with the reel the rescuer and the victim up onto the sled to be pulled back to safety.

Per our guidelines eight hundred to one-thousand feet is all that we are going to move out into Lake Erie. At that point, the Coast Guard comes in. If we have a call out on Lake Erie the Fire Department will notify the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard will dispatch a helicopter out of Detroit. Coast Guard only move eight hundred feet off the shore line and they use a helicopter for rescue.

One of our biggest dangers in the area is our ponds. There are ponds in Geneva that guys are just opening their eyes up to be aware of. The pond out at the soccer fields, a lot of people never knew that that retention basin "pond" exists there. Kids are fishing in that basin. We have retention basins everywhere. In fall and spring when the ice is thin it is a hazard.

Mr. Lenart demonstrated a fully functional swift water rescue suit. The swift water rescue suit does not have buoyancy. The life jacket provides buoyancy. This is so that if he goes into the water he can swim and move.

The ice rescue suit will cause you to float and be uncontrollable. Cleveland Fire two years ago had a firefighter in this suit at Martin Luther King. The firefighter entered the water to approach a car and the water was moving. He ended up going down stream and being wedged under a bridge due to the fact that he had too much buoyancy.

The buoyancy for the swift water suit allows the feet to remain underwater and allow the firefighter to kick, turn, whatever is needed to get out of the current and use the current for his benefit to get out of the water.

Along with the swift water training the Fire Department has the sixteen foot Jon Boat. With that boat the Fire Department has become members of the Ashtabula County Dive Team. Geneva Fire Department does no diving. We are totally top water. We provide ice rescue and we provide their surface support. What the divers have come to rely on is our boat handling. The boat can be picked up. Four people can launch that boat anywhere.

The boat has a nine nine motor. A nine nine doesn't sound like very much horse power on a sixteen foot boat. It moves the boat right along and allows for mobility. One man can put that motor on his shoulder and carry it to do whatever they need to do.

Last summer there was a member of the dive team that drowned in Ashtabula Harbor. At that time there was a diver from the Mentor Fire Department that came up in trouble. Nobody had previously considered who is there to protect the diver other than another diver. That responsibility was moved to a job class called rescue swimmer. You has been used by the Coast Guard; they drop people out of the helicopter to swim to get to the people in the water.

The man that is assigned to the front of our boat acts as the rescue swimmer. He is geared up with fins, a mask and his helmet. If a diver comes up and he is in any kind of stress, gives a signal, what have you, that rescue swimmer goes into the water. He swims to secure that diver and the team on the boat goes over to pick them up. So far this has worked. It is done with every training; a monthly training is done with the County Dive Team. The training is held in different places throughout the County as well as different times of day.

Mr. Lenart believes the Dive Team in the County sees Geneva Fire Department as an asset. This is taking Geneva Fire in a different area of training. The guys who are doing it enjoy the training.

Last week they were out at the Marina. They got all the suits wet, made sure that there weren't any holes to patch before the suits are needed. With almost everyone being ice rescue trained if someone goes into the water at Harpersfield or Geneva-on-the-Lake, Saybrook we can have our trailer on the road in a matter of minutes. Whereas the Volunteer Fire Departments around us would take one-half hour, we can be on scene quickly.

The Fire Department has been on five or six call outs this summer. They went to Ashtabula twice. They went to Conneaut twice. They went to Trumbull for a lost female. They searched the ponds down there. Geneva Fire is being utilized for this service.

Mr. Buskirk asked; how many divers does the Ashtabula County Dive Team have? Mr. Lenart stated that it varies on availability but they have had at least six to eight divers each time they have been out. Mr. Buskirk stated we have divers, ice and swift water, what else do we have? Mr. Lenart stated that that pretty much covers it other than support people.

Wayne Township Fire in the Southern County brings an Argo type thing. It is an eight wheeled off road machine. Wayne loads all the gear on it. It can go off road; it can go into the water. They use it for grass fires, searching for people.

Right now the County is running a fundraiser. The family of the gentleman that died in Ashtabula Harbor is running a fundraiser to try to secure the County Dive Team a side scanner and sonar. When they brought the side scan sonar out they located his body within five feet of the boat. The divers were missing it due to the bottom conditions. It is a great tool to have. It is like the thermo imaging camera, it is in the \$20,000 range.

Mr. Pearson asked how resilient is the material for the suits? Mr. Lenart stated that they have not been able to puncture it yet. The suit is reinforced. The gloves are attached to it.

Ms. Latimer asked if these two functions (ice and swift water rescue) unique to the County or other departments providing this service? Mr. Lenart states that Rome is providing ice rescue, Ashtabula Township has one suit or two suits, Rome has one or two suits and he believes Windsor and that is it for our County. Mr. Lenart stated that as for swift water there are few other gentleman trained throughout the County but they don't actively partake in it. They went to the training.

One of the nice things was that the State of Ohio picked up all of our training costs for that. It was a weeklong class. It was all real life. They would have dam releases so that the water would come up quickly, it would knock you right off your feet and take you downstream. It was a great learning experience. Mr. Lenart stated that it was one of the best schools he had ever attended.

Mr. Buskirk asked how cold the water can be when utilizing the suit. The swift water suit can go into the ice but it is not a lined suit. He would have to thicken up a lot with long underwear and sweatshirt and pants and would still be cold. There experience in the ice rescue suits is they are sweating.

The suits were purchased in 2007 and the serviceability is unknown. The manufacturer stated five years but if they can keep them in tact and keep them from leaking. A small leak can probably be patched. The ice rescue suit cost about six hundred dollars (\$600.00). The swift water suit with everything involved cost about six hundred (\$600.00) to six hundred and fifty dollars (\$650.00). They had around three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) involved with the boat including the equipment on it. The boat will last pretty much indefinitely. The motor was donated to the City. Through some grants the Fire Department does carry a full trauma kit on the boat and oxygen so that when a diver is in trouble they can provide medical attention.

Three of the four that go regularly to the water rescue class are also certified paramedics and can provide on scene stabilization.

Mr. Lenart recently learned that we do have a hyperbaric chamber in the County. It is privately owned by one of the members of the dive team. It is all certified because they are commercial divers. If we do get a diver in trouble we don't have to get that diver to Cleveland we can go here in Ashtabula County.

Ashtabula County is part of the State Emergency Response Plan. There is the opportunity for the Fire Department to be deployed all over the Country if the need arises.

The one thing that the inflatable boats have over our Jon Boat is the ability to roll them up and stick them on a helicopter. Mr. Lenart stated that he did not ever see a need for us to purchase an inflatable boat. There are other inflatables in the County. The Jon Boat is getting picked over the inflatables for jobs all the time.

The Dive Team officials are happy with the performance of the Jon Boat. The Jon Boat has been out on the lake in three and half foot waves. There was a kayaker in trouble this summer off of Geneva-on-the-Lake right around the Township Park area. Geneva Fire launched from the Geneva Marina. Geneva was on scene at the same time as the Coast Guard whose vessel is large and fast and came from Ashtabula Harbor. Mr. Lenart believes our response times are good and we are providing a good service to the public.

Citizens - Proclamation – American Medicine Chest Challenge. – Alex Meier, Boy Scout accepting the proclamation. Bill Buskirk read the City of Geneva Proclamation and congratulated Mr. Meier on his efforts to address this issue.

Items for Consideration of Council - None

City Manager's Report – City Manager, James Pearson

Mr. Pearson stated that other than what was on the Manager's Memo the only other thing he would like Council to be aware of is that just recently it was discovered that we are having some slope failure. If you drive into the new Geneva Villages by the BP Station and in between there are two retention ponds if you look to the west as you are coming down to the stop light. We are losing a lot of that bank and the road could be in jeopardy. Mr. Pearson will have our engineer

look at. Mr. Pearson believes we are going to need some engineering to determine how we are going to stop that before we lose Route 534 into the creek.

Mr. Buskirk asked if the State would have any reservation with that. Mr. Pearson states that they probably would not but, he will check with them but we do need to take some action. Mr. Pearson will report back when he knows more.

Mr. Beckwith asked if we have a pave date on Lockwood. Mr. Pearson stated that they didn't get it paved today. Mr. Pearson was told Monday or Tuesday. The weather is going to be nice this week. They should get it done this week.

Unfinished Business – None

New Business – None.

Payment of Bills

Ms. Latimer asked if the Shade Tree Commission was ever put on the sign. To advertise for new members. Mr. Pearson will check on that.

Committee Reports

The Fire Chief has requested that we get a Safety Committee together to discuss the opportunity for a used ladder truck. Mr. Pearson stated that the question to Council is, is there any interest in it. Our current ladder is a 1984. We just had to send it out and get all the cylinders rebuilt on the arms that come out to stabilize it. Stephen has a 1993 that was taken in trade which the Chief believes is in exceptional condition. A new ladder of this quality is about a million dollars (\$1,000,000.00). This one is two hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$290,000.00). Is Council interested in them going down to look at it to see if it is as good as they talk? Mr. Buskirk asked if that price includes trading in our ladder? Mr. Pearson stated no, there was some talk of trading in one our pumper.

Citizens – None

Mr. Buskirk asked if there was anything to add.

Council meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Recorded by: Phyllis Dunlap
Clerk of Council

President of Council

Clerk of Council