



# FYI SALEM

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 15

NOVEMBER 1, 2016

## CONTACT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE:

### Phone:

(978) 619-5600

### Fax:

(978) 744-9327

### Email:

mayor@salem.com

### Web:

salem.com/mayor

### Facebook:

Kim Driscoll

### Twitter:

@MayorDriscoll



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## From the Mayor's Desk



It's November 1st and another Halloween has come and gone. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all Salem residents who were so patient through the month of October. The five weekends seemed to be our busiest ever and we are already at work reviewing operations and conducting our after-action assessment.

You can help us plan for future Haunted Happenings and Halloweens by taking a minute to complete the short survey available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SalemHalloween2016>.

Your feedback is important and we take it all into consideration each year. This is the seventh year we've sought out resident input

after October and the input and comments we get back are always beneficial to our planning.

On behalf of the City I also want to thank all of our public services staff, inspectors, special events team, and, police and other public safety personnel. That a City the size of Salem can successfully host an annual celebration like Haunted Happenings and Halloween, and have it go so smoothly, is truly a testament to their collective professionalism and dedication.

In the latest episode of the FYI Salem podcast, I talk with the Chair of Salem's Board of Registrars of Voters, Chuck Barton, and City Councillor David Eppley, who chaired our Early Voting Task Force. You can listen to the interview at <http://www.salem.com/mayors-office/pages/fyi-salem-podcast> or subscribe on iTunes or your preferred podcast service. Simply search for "FYI Salem" and sign up! During the interview we discussed the 2016 election, what's on the bal-

lot, early voting, and where and when to vote in Salem on November 8. There's information about those topics on the last page of this newsletter as well.

Despite the busyness of the Halloween season, regular City business never takes a break. Read in this issue about some recent accomplishments for Salem around the strength of our City finances and bond rating, details about our first Director of Traffic and Parking, and find out how you can offer comments and feedback about new regulations we're considering regarding the inspection of rental properties. The draft regulations will increase the frequency and fines for inspections of rentals in Salem, as we continue our work to improve quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Thanks again for your patience this October and thanks for checking out this latest issue of the FYI Salem newsletter!

Kim Driscoll  
Mayor, City of Salem

# Salem City Finances Lauded

The financial ratings firm Standard & Poor's this week again affirmed the City's AA bond rating, first issued in 2013, which is the City's highest on record.

"We consider Salem's economy very strong...Overall, the city's market value grew by 7.7% over the past year to \$4.5 billion in 2016, leading us to revise our assessment of Salem's economy to very strong from strong" the agency explained. "We view the city's management as strong, with good financial policies and practices... Salem regularly monitors revenues and expenditures, and makes conservative budget assumptions based on a five-year trend. The city council and mayor engage in regular budget surveillance and receive monthly budget-to-actual and investment reports. Salem has a comprehensive five-year, annually updated capital plan that

strong, in our view," the agency continued in their report. "In our opinion, Salem's liquidity is very strong...It has consistently maintained very strong liquidity and we expect our assessment of liquidity to remain unchanged during our outlook period... Total governmental fund debt service is 2.7% of total governmental fund expenditures [and] overall net debt is low at 1.5% of market value, which is in our view a positive credit factor."

"This rating affirmation is reflective of our dedication to positive economic growth, stable financial management policies, and sensible and sustainable budgeting practices," said Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll. "Over the last several years we have made a conscience effort to get our fiscal house in order and to keep it that way. Through our on-going commitment to responsible fiscal policies and budgeting, we have been able to maintain this record-level rating and continue moving our City forward."

governmental budgets.

The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the GFOA reflects the City's commitment to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting. In order to receive the award, the City had to meet or exceed nationally recognized guidelines for an effective budget presentation.



The GFOA guidelines are designed to assess how well a municipality's budget serve as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device. Budget documents must be rated proficient in all four categories and in fourteen mandatory criteria within those categories in order to receive the award. Salem was one of just 18 Massachusetts municipalities to receive the award.

The GFOA is a major professional association servicing the needs of nearly 19,000 appointed and elected local, state, and provincial-level government officials and other finance practitioners. It property top quality publications, training programs, services, and products designed to enhance the skills and performance of those responsible for government finance policy and management.

## S&P Global Ratings

examines both facilities and infrastructure needs... The city also has a multiyear financial plan that identifies future issues, leading to revenue and expenditure decisions with a long-term perspective. Structural balance is a clear goal in the decision-making process. Salem has an investment policy, debt policy, and a reserve policy... The city maintains some unused levy capacity (\$5.3 million) [and] actively works with department heads and collective bargaining units to keep cost in line with the budget."

"Salem's budgetary flexibility is

Salem currently holds about \$84.9 million in total direct debt, with debt service comprising only 3.2% of the City's budget expenditures. Salem maintains a highly competitive 1.5% overall net debt-to-market value, down from 1.6% last year. Of the City's \$84.9 million of debt, \$20.1 million is self-supporting debt from sewer and water enterprise funds and \$2.3 million will be reimbursed by the Commonwealth for previous school building projects.

The City of Salem has received its eighth Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), a nation-wide nonprofit organization, for its FY2016 City Budget. The award is the only national awards program for

# FYI SALEM Salem Hires 1st Traffic Director

Mayor Kim Driscoll has appointed Matthew Smith, a Salem resident and urban planner, to serve as the City's first Director of Traffic and Parking. Smith, brings extensive experience in urban planning to the new position, having worked in both the public and private sector on transportation projects, community planning, and economic development initiatives. He also brings an understanding of the specific challenges, needs, and opportunities in Salem.

Smith holds a Masters in Urban Planning from Hunter College of the City University of New York. He comes to the City from AKRF where, as a Technical Director, he worked with municipalities, agencies, and private sector clients on transportation efforts, redevelopment planning, economic analyses, and environmental assessments. Prior to AKRF he had been the Senior Economic Development Planner for the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, where he managed many community and economic

planning initiatives in the region, including the Salem Point Neighborhood Market Study.

"I believe that Mr. Smith will be a thoughtful and highly competent Director of Traffic and Parking," said Mayor Driscoll. "He has the skills and expertise to help advise the new Traffic and Parking Commission, to set up the processes and systems necessary to establishing the new regulations in partnership with the City Council, and the background to be able to oversee the implementation and updating of important City traffic policies like our Complete Streets Policy, our Residential Traffic Calming Program, and our Comprehensive Parking Plan, among others. I'm excited for him to start work and welcome him aboard our team."

"I am excited and honored to join the City of Salem as its Director of Traffic and Parking," said Smith. "As an urban planner and Salem resident, I understand and experience many of the City's transportation and parking challenges from both a professional and personal



perspective. An efficient, connected transportation network for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers and transit riders – is crucial to our quality of life and our City's economic future. I look forward to rolling up my sleeves and working with Salem residents, businesses, City staff and elected officials to identify and implement realistic transportation and parking strategies that will make Salem the most connected, accessible, and safe community possible."

## New Rental Inspections

As part of on-going efforts to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods, the City of Salem is seeking public comment on a draft revision to the Ordinance regulating the inspection of rental properties in the City. The draft Ordinance, is available for review at

[http://www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/uploads/proposed\\_residential\\_rentals\\_ordinance.pdf](http://www.salem.com/sites/salemma/files/uploads/proposed_residential_rentals_ordinance.pdf).

-Changes current inspection schedule from "on change of tenant" as voluntarily reported by landlord to required every 3 years or on change of tenant.

-Owner-occupied 2- and 3- families continue to just be "on change of tenant" or new owner.

-All other rentals with no Code violations placed on 5 year schedule.

-Properties with Code violations subject to annual inspections.

-Short term rentals (Airbnb, etc.) subject to same inspections, every 3 years or change of owner if use is continued by new owner.

-Fine for renting without inspection increased from \$20/day to \$50/day.

Submit comments to [mayor@salem.com](mailto:mayor@salem.com) before November 22.

"Ensuring that all of Salem's neighborhoods meet high standards for livability is a major priority," said Mayor Kim Driscoll. "I believe the proposed changes, to make these inspections required on a more standardized basis, are a step forward to that goal. The inclusion of short term rentals provides equal treatment for these types of rentals, while also giving renters the comfort of mind in knowing that all residential units in Salem meet all appropriate standards for habitation and use. I hope all Salem residents – whether they are tenants, landlords, or neighbors to a rental property – will offer their feedback so we can work to craft the best possible set of regulations."



# Election Day 2016



The 2016 general election takes place on Tuesday, Nov. 8. Polls are open from 7am to 8pm that day. To find your polling place and see the ballot, visit <http://wheredoivotema.com> and enter your address.

Ward 1, Precinct 1 votes at the Bentley School; Ward 1, Precinct 2 votes at 135 Lafayette Street; Ward 2 votes at St. John's Church; Ward 3 votes at Salem High School; Ward 4 votes at Witchcraft Heights Elementary School; Ward 5 votes at Saltonstall School; Ward 6, Precinct 1 votes at Bates School; Ward 6, Precinct 2 votes at Mack Park; and Ward 7 votes at the SSU Enterprise Center.

Vote early at City Hall, 93 Washington St., on 11/1 and 11/2 8am-4pm, 11/3 8am-7pm, or 11/4 8am-noon. You must be a registered voter to cast an early ballot. Absentee ballot applications must be received by the City Clerk by noon on Nov. 7. Forms are at <http://www.salem.com/city-clerk/pages/election-information-forms>.

## Contested Races on the 2016 General Election Ballot for Salem

### Electors of President & Vice President

CLINTON and KAINE	DEMOCRATIC
JOHNSON and WELD	LIBERTARIAN
STEIN and BARAKA	GREEN-RAINBOW
TRUMP and PENCE	REPUBLICAN

### Councillor—Fifth District

EILEEN R. DUFF	DEMOCRATIC
RICHARD A. BAKER	REPUBLICAN

### Sheriff—Essex County

KEVIN F. COPPINGER	DEMOCRATIC
ANNE M. MANNING-MARTIN	REPUBLICAN
MARK E. ARCHER	INDEPENDENT
KEVIN J. LEACH	INDEPENDENT

### Question 1

A YES VOTE would permit the state Gaming Commission to license one additional slot machine gaming establishment at a location that meets certain conditions specified in the law.

A NO VOTE would make no change in the current laws regarding gaming.

### Question 2

A YES VOTE would allow for up to 12 approvals each year of either new charter schools or expanded enrollments in existing charter schools, but not to exceed 1% of the statewide public school enrollment.

A NO VOTE would make no change in current laws relative to charter schools.

### Question 3

A YES VOTE would prohibit any confinement of pigs, calves, and hens that prevents them from lying down, standing up, fully extending their limbs, or turning around freely.

A NO VOTE would make no change in current laws relative to the keeping of farm animals.

### Question 4

A YES VOTE would allow persons 21 and older to possess, use, and transfer marijuana and products containing marijuana concentrate (including edible products) and to cultivate marijuana, all in limited amounts, and would provide for the regulation and taxation of commercial sale of marijuana and marijuana products.

A NO VOTE would make no change in current laws relative to marijuana.