



City of Salem, Massachusetts
Mayor Dominick Pangallo

Neighborhood Improvement Advisory Council - Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 7:00 P.M.

Called to Order: 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Dennis Colbert, Lucy Corchado, Cynthia Jerzlo, Tom Kusterer, Amy McKeehan, Wendy Meigs, Flora Tonthat, Barbara Mann, Christy Marcrum

Also Present: Alan Hanscom, Lucy Sprague, Linda Stark

Staff Present: Lisa Peterson (Office of the Mayor)

Special Guests: Christine Ross and Samantha Giffen, League of Women Voters Salem

Approval of 7/12/23 Minutes (Barbara Mann moves, Tom Kusterer seconds): 7 – 0 – 5, minutes approved.

League of Women Voters Salem Presentation:

- Christine Ross and Samantha Giffen of The League of Women Voters Salem gave a presentation explaining the history and the mission and purpose of the LWV in Salem. They also talked about how they can and would like to partner with the various neighborhood associations across the city to organize and host candidate forums ahead of the upcoming local elections. They asked for volunteers and exchanged contact information with each neighborhood association chair interested in working with them on this initiative.

Neighborhood Association Updates:

- **Salem Willows Neighborhood Association (Cynthia Jerzlo):** The association held their September meeting the previous evening, and Salem's Veterans Agent, Kim Emerling spoke to the group – she recommends all associations invite him to be a guest speaker. She talked about the possibility of a new seawall, and roadblocks/abutters. She raised the concern of illegal campers and claims that a neighbor was “accosted”/yelled at by someone camping in the area.
- **Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Association (Flora Tonthat & Amy McKeehan):** Flora is wondering if they can get temporary speedbumps on Bridge Street by Bill & Bobs. She's concerned that 31 Williams Street is having open pit fires on their deck and is dangerous. Amy has noticed a lot of illegal dumping since the bulk item fee went into effect. She also mentioned a rat issue related to either 4 or 8 Ames Street.
- **Barnes, Clark, Wyman Area Neighborhood Association (Dennis “Bill” Colbert):** A few street lights are out on Highland Avenue.
- **Tom Kusterer (Downtown Neighborhood Association):** DNA had a meeting with Dave Kucharsky from the Traffic and Parking Department. His neighbors continue to be worried about parking. They are also concerned about the homeless encampment.
- **Greater Endicott Street Neighborhood Association “GESNA” (Barbara Mann):** They are interested in a forum, and are hosting a block party on October 1.

- **Mack Park Neighborhood Association (Christy Marcrum):** Their association is reviving post-Covid. She raised the issue of wanting a light at the corner of Mason & North Streets. She asked was is the paving priority (Irving and Phillips). She's concerned about speeding on Tremont Street. Highland Street has a lot of crashes, but Salem / Peabody split doesn't put them all on our radar if they happen over the line of Peabody – there needs to be a crosswalk or something there.
- **Point Neighborhood Association (Lucy Corchado):** Hispanic Heritage Month is about to begin. There will be a flag raising, a dominos tournament, an event with the PEM, and they are bringing keynote speaker John Quinones. She is wondering whether the city will be mailing out the resident parking passes again for October.
- **Lucy Sprague:** She is concerned about panhandling on Summer Street and harassment downtown.

City Updates:

- There is a hurricane expected in the coming days. The city is planning to barricade seawalls as well as send out a coded and a press release tomorrow detailing the city's plans and the precautions that the police recommend all community members take. Those in the Willows area should plan to move cars and be aware of the risk of flooding. Those in the Bridge Street area and across the city should also take the warnings very seriously. If there are limbs down or other things to report, anyone should call the police non-emergency number.
- School is back in session! SPS published a new strategic plan in effect for the next 3 years.
- October is nearly here! There will be resident focused resources available online. The Grand Parade is happening on October 5 with the theme "Myths & Legends." There will be free and discounted tickets for residents to attractions on both Mayor's Night Out (October 6) and throughout the month. September Salem Days (a program by the Read Family Trust) will be an opportunity this year for Salem residents to obtain free tickets to the Topsfield Fair. Those will be available at the CLC on September 14 starting at 8:00am.
- The City of Salem will be hosting its inaugural Landlord Expo on September 21 from 5:00-7:00pm at the CLC.
- The Beautification Committee recently gave awards for residential, business and traffic islands.
- The Broad Street Cemetery will be fixing and resetting stones and the next phase of the Dickson Memorial Chapel at Greenlawn Cemetery (largely focused on the stained glass this time) is commencing.
- The City of Salem received a national award for financial reporting (18th year in a row).
- Mack Park Food Farm will host its first Harvest Fest 9/23 from 3-7 (raindate 9/30).
- The Race Equity Commission has introduced a new discrimination form, available in multiple languages (can be anonymous). A tool to help the city understand all types of discrimination happening across the city to best help us serve the public.
- Monday, September 11, Fire Headquarters hosted a memorial ceremony.
- There will be a Free Book Swap & Terracycle Collection on 9/23 10-1 (CLC) – seeking volunteers!
- There will be a sculpture of Charlotte Forten Grimke in Forten Park. The public is invited (in person and online) to vote on the finalists (9/19 5:30-7:30pm event) after a local and nationwide call for artists.
- There was a hate crime in the city recently – pride crosswalks, a flag and a church were defaced. The police are investigating.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 11, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:26 p.m.