???? ? The Salem Common Council met in regular session on Monday, July 14 with all members present. The minutes of previous meetings and all claims were approved unanimously.

Salem City Clerk/Treasurer, Pat Persinger requested approval from the Council to request an advance draw on property taxes from funds that have been prepaid by taxpayers. According to Persinger, the move is necessitated by the anticipated delay in preparing and collecting property taxes this year. Persinger's request was approved unanimously by the Council Members.

The Council approved an ordinance to increase the boat permit fees for users of Lake Salinda and Lake John Hay. The new annual permit fees, which take effect on January 1, 2009, will be

- $15 for Washington County residents.
- $20 for non-Washington County residents who live in Indiana.
- $25 for out-of-state residents.

Salem Mayor, David Bower told the Council and the audience that he wants to use the increased revenue to help with construction of a new boat ramp necessitated by plans to raise the water level in Lake John Hay by four feet. In addition, Bower proposed that the increased revenues be used to subsidize the utility bills of the aged and the disabled in the city. The ordinance was approved unanimously.

The Council heard from Mike Ray who report on efforts to develop a Chaplain Program for county residents faced with personal tragedies such as serious automobile accidents or home fires. According to Ray, local ministers and counselors have worked out a plan with Washington County Sheriff, Claude Combs, to have volunteers on call through law enforcement dispatchers throughout the county in case an individual or family needs spiritual help during a time of crisis.

The Council voted unanimously to designate Community First Bank and First Harrison Bank as Public Depositories for the City of Salem. Bower cited a study done by City Attorney, Drew Wright, indicating that the best option for the city to maximize its interest income was to deal with these two financial institutions.

The Council discussed the possibility of enacting an ordinance allowing citizens to drive golf carts on public streets in Salem but tabled the issue on Wright's advice that the language of the law is still unclear.

In a final piece of business, the Council voted unanimously to rescind its 2004 vote of support for the new airport project.

With no further business to conduct, the Council adjourned until its July 21 joint executive meeting with the Salem Board of Aviation Commissioners. The next regularly scheduled meeting for the Council is Monday, August 11.