

Salem's City Council met for their monthly meeting on June 11, and there was almost nothing but good news to be heard in the council chambers that evening. Many local programs and projects are beginning to take shape and the city is beginning to see progress unfold in several areas.

Mayor Bower talked briefly about Radius Indiana, a regional partnership consisting of 8 counties, including Washington County, that is focused on stimulating economic growth in southern and central Indiana.

He was enthusiastic about the potential assistance the partnership could provide in bringing economic growth to Salem and said that Radius Indiana will be strategizing how to best do so in the coming months. Bower currently sits on the board of Radius Indiana.

The council heard a report from Water Distribution Superintendent Russell Brown about the progress of the city's water plant improvement project. The project was initiated as an attempt to clean up Lake Salinda's water supply and eventually reinstate it as a clean source of drinking water for the city.

"We are starting to see a major impact," Brown said in reference to their ongoing clean-up efforts. He said a city-wide flushing program may be needed to completely clean the water supply, but Brown was optimistic about the future of the project.

The council heard from Tony Davis and Rick Sashay who are interested in rezoning an address on W. State Road 56 for the purpose of establishing a grain elevator business there. The council approved their request.

Bower applauded their initiative, saying this is the kind of action that will help to stimulate economic growth in Washington County. After officially opening for business, they hope to have between 7 to 10 employees in 3 years time.

A public hearing was held that evening to officially approve the sale of the old garage on Joseph Street. The hearing was a formality to appease certain legal requirements when attempting to sell a piece of government owned property.

The law also requires that the garage must sell for at least 90% of its original cost, which makes the opening bidding price \$49,400. "It's extremely expensive just sitting there," said City Attorney Andrew Wright, who took charge of the legal processes involved a couple months ago. Proceeds of the sale will go towards cleaning up the area around the garage.

Salem Parks and Rec Director Denise Newkirk gave the council a brief report on some of the activities going on at the parks this summer. She said the recently opened Veterans' Trail has been very popular and "its being widely used." The primitive walking trail is located next to Lake Salinda and is open to the public around the clock.

Newkirk also mentioned a 20 x 14 community shelter house the Parks department is currently building with the assistance of members from First Baptist Church. She anticipates the shelter will becoming another asset to the people of Salem.

The Salem City Council convenes for their regular meeting on the second Monday of every month at 7:30 pm.