

The Salem City Council met for their monthly public meeting on the evening of Monday, May 13, 2013. Their first order of business was attending to a leftover matter from previous meetings. In April, the Council discussed at length Ordinance 1454, new legislation that would forbid residents from leaving their trash on the curb more than 24 hours before their scheduled trash pick-up.

A vote was postponed to May after the Council decided that more time was needed to figure out which of the City's departments should oversee trash pick-up violations.

During this most recent meeting, Mayor David Bower announced that the Building Inspector would be granted the power to give citations to residents who continually ignored the new regulation. "The Council is wise not to subject the police to this," he said in reference to an earlier suggestion that Salem's police force could oversee violations of the trash pick-up policy.

All of the gaps had been filled, but still not everyone was pleased with the results. "I think the ordinance is a waste of tax payers' dollars," expressed Councilman Ron Haendiges. "I can't support it." Councilman Dan Libka said the problem is "a matter of common sense." He explained that residents overcrowding their yards with trash days before the garbage trucks make their runs has been an isolated issue in the City, but one that needs to be addressed.

The Mayor added that it's an issue of a few people abusing the current system. Haendiges went on to say that he believes the intention of the ordinance is good, but he can't agree with the enforcement mechanism. The measure passed 4-1.

The Council next turned to the possibility of placing a curfew on CenterPeace, the city's local resource for outdoor concerts and other social events. There have been several incidents of vandalism at CenterPeace lately, many of them taking place after midnight.

Police Chief Troy Merry spoke to the Council about the problem, explaining that in addition to the vandalism, a discouraging amount of litter and cases of teens and adults abusing playground equipment have also led to the request. "They don't understand what maintaining something means," Merry said of the late night culprits.

He shared that some of his officers discovered that a large amount of trash had been dumped at CenterPeace in the nearby creek. "It takes more effort to throw trash in the creek than in the trash can, but they just don't want to." Merry affirmed that enforcing a curfew would help crack down on recent mischief in the area.

Denise Newkirk, Parks and Recreation Director, agreed that imposing a curfew would be a good idea. Salem's parks have been under 11 pm curfews for some time now. Newkirk said it's "a constant battle" to keep the parks clean and uncluttered, but the curfew have certainly helped give her department an edge on that front.

The Council unanimously voted to place a curfew on CenterPeace. The area will now be open daily until 11 pm.

Dale Jonas, Cemetery Saxton of Crown Hill Cemetery, spoke to the Council about the possibility of allowing people to purchase memorial trees for planting in the cemetery yard. Bower liked the idea and said it was a potentially good, additional source of revenue for the

City.

The Mayor and Jonas both mentioned that they have received many requests for such an option from citizens throughout the years. Members of the Council asked if there would be any repercussions for planting new trees on the grounds. Jonas thought there was plenty of room for new trees and bushes, his only real concern was making sure their root systems didn't disturb the existing tombstones.

The Council did not take a vote on the issue, however they plan to discuss the possibility of offering a memorial tree service with Jonas later.

Bower brought up the idea of creating a task force to repair the broken brick segments around the Square. He suggested hiring four local college kids home for the summer as part-time workers and a professional brick mason to act as their supervisor.

Clerk-Treasurer Patricia Persinger said the cost of paying all five of these potential employees for the whole summer would amount to around \$1500. She added that this figure was only an estimate and the project would need to be further realized before she could make an official projection.

Bower said the damage to Salem's iconic brickwork streets could possibly be finished up in one summer, but realistically, it would probably be completed over the course of two summers. Persinger said more details about the potential cost are still to come.

The Salem City Council meets on the second Monday of every month at City Hall. Their next meeting will be an exception, however, as it is scheduled for June 17, 2013, the third Monday of the month. As always, the public is welcome and encouraged to attend.