

## ?Salem Common Council hires new police officer

Written by

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? The Salem Common Council met in regular session on Monday, November 10. All members were present and they unanimously approved the minutes of previous meetings, all claims, and payroll requests.

Salem Police Chief, Scott Ratts, went before the Council to introduce Chad Webb as the candidate recommended by the interview committee to replace Brandon White on the Salem Police Department (SPD). White resigned in September to take a position with the Seymour Police Department. Webb, who has served as a reserve officer with SPD was approved for the open position by the Council and will start immediately upon completion of the mandatory physical examination.

City of Salem Clerk/Treasurer, Pat Persinger, told the Council members that with the second distribution of EDIT funds and an advance draw on property taxes, the city should be in good financial condition throughout the remainder of 2008. Mayor David Bower praised his department heads for their efforts to cut spending while still provided needed services to Salem residents.

Earlier in the evening, Bower announced that an engineering study has been completed on the possibility of raising the water level of Lake John Hay. According to Bower, it is possible to raise the water level by as much as 6 feet which would provide additional water equal to four times the volume of Lake Salinda. The projected cost of the project is less than \$1.5 million. Bower said the city would look for a grant to help with the project.

Deb Willis of Administrative Resources Association informed the Council that a housing rehabilitation grant in the amount of \$125,000 has been awarded to Salem. The Council expressed appreciation for Willis' work on the grant and went on to approve the project with an understanding that a thorough vetting process must be used in determining who is eligible to receive funds from the grant.

The Council approved the appointment of Brent Brown as the Cemetery Sexton.

The Council unanimously approved an ad valorem property tax levy to offset a \$150,00 property tax revenue shortfall brought about when several commercial property owners successfully appealed their assessments.

In other business, the Council discussed the concept of a Transient Merchant ordinance. Several ideas were floated but no decision was made.

Saying that "We need to take care of Salem residents in the first 72 hours (of an emergency)," Bower announced that the City of Salem will begin to develop its own Emergency Preparedness Plan based solely on the needs of Salem. The first organizational meeting will be on Wednesday, November 19. Representatives from the IUS School of Nursing will make a presentation at that meeting.

With no further business to discuss, the Council adjourned until its next regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, December 8.