



NESCA MEETING MINUTES

August 15, 2023

1. Welcome, Introductions, Announcements, Approval of Minutes:

Chair Mike Beringer opened the ZOOM meeting at 7 PM, introducing those attending (Gary Pullman, Marilyn Moritz, Lynn Cardiff, Ian Johnson, Linda Nishioka, Stacey Vieyra-Braendle, Mai Lang, Debi Brown). A motion was made and seconded to approve the July meeting minutes as provided via email. Motion Carried.

2. Salem Police Officer Report: Sgt. Erick Hernandez

- Sgt. Erick Hernandez thanked NESCA for hosting a National Night Out gathering. He said everyone from Salem PD that attended the gathering was very glad to meet so many neighbors.
- In the last month there has been an uptick in vandalism. Sgt. Hernandez recommended increasing the lighting around residences and to consider motion detectors.
- A shooting on August 7th at Portland Road and Hyacinth injured two people not involved in the dispute. A search warrant served later resulted in the arrest of two individuals.
- A traffic monitor was placed in NESCA, but Sgt. Hernandez wasn't sure where it had been. He will request an update. He has forwarded the request for monitoring on Park and 23rd and will follow up and re-request if necessary. Apparently, the monitor was moved to Center Street but needs to come back to D Street.

3. City Councilors' Report: Linda Nishioka

- Councilor Nishioka submitted a written report of Council activities, attached at the end of these minutes.
- Homeless Updates
- Town Halls
 - Councilor Nordyke made a motion for South Salem town halls where there would be meetings with city staff. This motion was voted down.
 - Ian Johnson asked what had prompted this motion. Apparently with all the questions being generated by the proposed city payroll tax, it was felt these meetings would give city staff an opportunity to answer the questions. It was also felt it would be a good time for staff to provide other information pertinent to their area.
 - Councilor Nishioka made an alternative motion to divide the city into South, West, North, and Center. This may happen later to allow city staff participate in these 'open houses.'
- Payroll Tax (Councilor Virginia Stapleton)
 - Councilor Stapleton reiterated that the payroll tax is required to maintain city services and by passing the motion at the City level, several million dollars were saved by not putting it on a ballot. She also mentioned that signature gatherers for the petition may have been paid by businesses outside of Salem.
 - The campaign for YES VOTE may have been paid \$5,000 to \$7,000. Being on the ballot is going to cause an uphill battle to defeat the measure in November.
 - Ian suggested that a Press Release be prepared, publicizing the information about outside monies coming into our community, interfering with our business.

- If the ballot measure stands and defeats the Payroll Tax, Plan C leaves the \$10m in needed cuts up to the City Manager. They know the cuts will be significant. Currently there's no scheduled budget committee meeting. A Revenue Task Force will be set up, hoping to soon have 300 yard signs to promote the need for the tax.
- Council hopes to find a commercial insurance representative to share how rates will go up with cuts in city services without the payroll tax. Even if monies are allocated to re-establish services to those agencies who had to eliminate staff, it takes time to recruit, hire, and train staff. Currently the City's Fire Marshall has seven people he could hire but won't, due to the concern of needing to then lay them off if the budget gets cut.
 - On a personal note, Virginia said this fight is very hard and is taking a toll on members of the council. She said they were so pleased when the voters passed the \$600m budget. But she said she won't risk her health or time with her family to get this passed.

4. Guest Speaker: Virginia Stapleton Salem City Councilor

Salem Bike Vision: Virginia provided a detailed program on the Salem Bike Vision. The following is a compilation of some of the information provided. See the SBV website for more information. www.salembikevision.org

Virginia, along with Ian Davidson, past President of the Cherriots Board of Directors, and Dylan McDowell, Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair, is a co-founder of Salem Bike Vision (SBV). SBV is proposing a comprehensive bike network that would utilize existing infrastructure in a way that will provide access and direct routes for residents traveling by bicycle and mobility devices. The goal is to build a comprehensive bike network in Salem to ensure physical protection for bicyclists of all ages and skill levels.

Their mission is to create safe and accessible transportation options for everyone in the community.

The existing bike infrastructure routes don't connect. One of the top priorities is a protected North/South and East/West corridor while providing citywide connections. A 2012 study found that 56% of Salem citizens are interested in greater bike access and are concerned with safety issues. Salem needs lanes that are physically separate from traffic and/or use highly visible green paint to designate bike lanes. People are choosing biking as a way of life and E bikes have become more popular, outselling electric vehicles during the pandemic. With more riders, it is important that routes are created to provide routes to where people want to go and that will get them there safely. When speaking of protection, it is planned to have bike lanes that are physically separated from traffic, for example with concrete curbs or bollards. Green paint is used in many projects to help bike riders know where they are supposed to be and to help drivers recognize that area is for bikes. Virginia is advocating for more green paint as a good visual reminder to watch for bikes.

Pedestrian safety is also of great concern. In NESCA and other northeast Salem neighborhoods, many residents don't use vehicles. In the Salem-Keizer area, 15-20 people are killed every year by cars. So far this year we have had 10 pedestrian fatalities, which is unacceptable for our community. Small, inexpensive changes can save lives and prevent serious injury. Everyone – drivers and those walking or rolling – benefit when safety is built in. By 2050 Salem is to be a carbon neutral city, making the city more climate friendly. Bike and pedestrian safety for transportation will be important to aid in this goal. It is important to find a way to get people out of their cars and onto their bikes to help achieve this goal, but it must be a safe alternative.

Bond projects that are connected to Salem Bike Vision are:

- Completion of the Union Street bikeway which is a vital link in the East/West connection.
- Marine Drive with a fully separated multi-use path from Wallace Marine Park to Harriet Drive NW.
- Pringle Creek Pathway, connecting Riverfront Park to the Civic Center under Commercial Street.
- Urban upgrades on State Street, Pringle Road, Davis Road, and Fisher Road to include new bike infrastructure.
- Salem will also be getting its first cycle-track on McGilchrist St. SE.
- There are many other re-pavement projects in the bond with the goal to change the way roads are painted/striped to include protected bike lanes.

SBV is building support through community rides (a recent one had a good turnout) and community presentations. The organization is listening and learning, doing map updates, and adding diversity. They advocate moving projects forward and working with city staff to increase protections for the most vulnerable road users, including people in wheelchairs. There seems to be good support for the efforts, including from many businesses. Some traffic lanes and parking spots will need to be removed and anything requiring money will be difficult as there is little support for new taxes.

Those interested in receiving monthly updates about the SBV plans, events, and news can sign up on the website: [Salem Bike Vision](#) and click on the Add Your Name tab.

NESCA board members agreed to write a letter in support of SBV.

5. Committee Reports:

a. Land Use

Ian Johnson

- Ian said there's been no action on the North Campus. Again, the Governor wants any surplus state property to be available for the unsheltered whenever feasible.
- Ian talked to Evan Sekulic (Neighborly Ventures) about a stop sign across from Frederick St. NE so residents from The Jory aren't speeding out onto Park. Evan told him there was supposed to be a sign and he would take care of it.
- Land Use notices he receives aren't often timely enough to do any research. The Board agreed that he could use his best judgment as to whether input from NESCA is needed. If so, Mike will call a Board meeting.
- No permits have been issued yet for the Salem Hospital property on the west side of 23rd. When a representative of the developer made a presentation at a recent NEN meeting, attendees were less than enthusiastic about the project. Ian mentioned that neighborhoods have a lot less ability for pushback against housing developers now than in the past. As a result, it would be better for the neighborhoods to work with any developer instead of putting up barriers.

b. Transportation:

Mai Vang

- Mai brought up working to reestablish the D Street bus route. Mai was told by the General Manager that the cut was due to ridership levels, so they ended in favor of Market Street and Center Street. They look at D Street as being more residential and wanted to keep it more pedestrian and bike friendly. They sounded open to neighborhood suggestions and feedback.
- The Free-Fares-for-Kids program has seen a 70% increase in ridership since its inception and has now been changed to have free fares available year-round for kids 18 and under.
- Cherriots is doing a good job of getting people to their places of employment. The Salem population, on average, usually has access to transit within 45 minutes about 78% of the time. Most people who take Cherriots are within 10 minutes of a bus stop.
- New forms of payment:
 - Electronic card
 - Phone app
- Ian asked about a couple of proposed initiatives (wondering if there is any status):
 - Transponders to alert riders if the buses are on time, etc.
 - Electronic signals to allow lights to turn green to keep buses moving when there are only a certain number of other vehicles.
 - Mai has not heard of these but will check on the status.
 - Gary mentioned these are still listed in the Transportation Safety Plan but didn't know about funding.

c. Parks

[no chair]

- Mike reminded everyone that NESCA is recruiting someone to chair the Parks Committee and to handle the quarterly litter patrols. The litter patrol is a major fund raiser for NESCA.

- d. Hoover School *[Teri Lupoli]* Reported by Marilyn Moritz
 - The school supply drive will be handled as in the past, with all supplies taken to Teri's home. Teri previously reported that the Salem First Nazarene church is willing to give any leftover supplies from their school supply outreach to NESCA for Hoover School.
 - Teri sent an email to Bridget West, Hoover School Principal, regarding the back-to-school open house, to let her know that NESCA would again like to set up a table. No response to date.
- e. Watershed *[Gary Pullman]*
 - Gary said we're in a drought.
- f. North Campus Ian Johnson [no additional report]

6. Other Business: Old Business

- 25th Avenue NE – private street or not?
 - Ian has reached out to Irma Coleman for a clarification of the status of 25th Street NE between D and Center Street, whether it is a city street or a private road.

6. Other Business: New Business

7. Discussion/Questions/Comments

There being no further business, Mike thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM. **The next scheduled NESCA meeting will be held via ZOOM on September 19th beginning at 7:00 PM. The ZOOM meeting link will be provided to those on the NESCA email distribution list prior to the meeting.** The link will also be available on the city website. Next month's guest will be State Representative Tom Anderson, discussing this past year's legislative session.

Submitted by: Teri Lupoli

With notes provided by Marilyn Moritz

NESCA Secretary/Treasurer

Attending:

Mike Beringer*, Marilyn Moritz*, Lynn Cardiff*, Gary Pullman*, Stacey Vieyra-Braendle*, Ian Johnson, Mai Vang, Virginia Stapleton Salem City Council

*NESCA Board Members

- **Other Website Information:**
 - To report homeless camping: <https://form.cityofsalem.net/s3/homeless-camping-complaint>
 - To report homeless concerns: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/report-concerns-about-homeslessness.aspx>
 - To sign up for weekly updates regarding homeless: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/tracking-progress-on-homeslessness-efforts.aspx>
 - To report graffiti: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/report-graffiti.aspx>
 - [503-371-4262 Graffiti Response team](https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/report-graffiti.aspx)
 - The link for the crime statistics: www.cityofsalem.net/crime-stats

Addendum to NESCA Minutes:

Councilor Nishioka Report for NAs dated August 2023 – v2 updated 8/15/23.

Updates:

- Employee Payroll Tax
 - A referendum has been filed to take the Employee Payroll Tax to the voters.
 - Marion County has two weeks to verify the signatures.
 - If the timeline is in place, the Safe Salem tax will likely be on the November ballot.

- On August 1, 2023, petitioner Preston Mann submitted, to the City Recorder, signature sheets containing over 10,000 signatures for the referendum petition concerning Ordinance No. 12-23, the Safe Salem Employee Payroll Tax. Petitioner needs 3,986 valid signatures to qualify the referendum for election. The City Recorder's office reviewed the sheets for compliance with state election law and over August 2nd and 3rd delivered the sheets to the Marion County elections official for review and verification. Upon completion of Marion County's review, it will determine whether an adequate number of signatures have been submitted, and if so, certify the measure for the November 7, 2023 election.
 - We are in a holding pattern for now.
- Airport
 - Announcement of Airline – Avelo to begin service in October:
 - SLE to Burbank and Las Vegas.
 - Added destinations expected a few months later.
 - SLE to San Francisco bay area, probably San Jose
 - SLE to Phoenix area
- Shelters and Navigation Center
 - Youth Micro Shelters had a grand opening 7/13
 - Navigation Center taking in residents – going well.
 - Jimmy Jones report: Of the 60 program beds, we have 40 filled as of this morning, with a plan to continue to add 5 a week until we get to 60. We will be close to full occupancy by September. The other 15 beds are “diversion beds,” designed for short-term stays (day or two) for law enforcement referrals. We are not activating those until we get the program beds full. If law enforcement needs to bring right now, we are placing those folks into program beds.
- Salem Housing Authority
 - Purchased an entire apartment complex, Orchard Park, in NE Salem, 224 units for singles and families in permanent supportive housing for 60 years! This is a big deal.
- **Meeting 7/24/23**
 - Approval of Planning Administrators' decision on 436-unit subdivision apartment campus in West Salem with 21 days for continued written testimony.
 - Approved Salem Heights Street Refinement Plan with multiuse pathway.
- **Meeting 8/14/23**
 - Councilor Nordyke's motion for South Salem “Town Hall” failed.
 - I pulled my motion for a regional Open House format and will bring it forward later.
 - West Salem's Titan Apartments project was approved for the Subdivision Tentative Plan.
 - End-of-session report summarizing the City's legislative activities during the 2023 session of the Oregon State Legislature.
 - Bring report file # 23-313, item # 6.b for 8/14/23.
 - Bond Oversight Steering Committee report. Projects happening:
 - Bring report file # 23-316, item # 6.e for 8/14/23.
- **Things happening in Ward 2**
 - Five overlay zones for reconsideration for removal along Commercial Street SE on September 25. I'm working on a compromise that I hope the Council will vote in favor of allowing the Fairmont Neighborhood and individual homes to apply for the National Historic Registry in overlay zones 1, 2, 4. Zones 3 and 5 would be eliminated from the overlay zones immediately. If the NHR status is achieved, the height limit abutting them would be 45 feet versus 55, 65 or 70 feet. If the NHR is not achieved in 5 years, then overlay zones 1, 2, 4 would be eliminated.
 - Mill Creek, Mill Race, and Waller Dam are being reviewed for restorative work.

- **Initiatives**

- Councilor Stapleton and I met with the program director to utilize UO and the Sustainable Cities Year Projects program.
 - The partnership is already underway, beginning with a summer quarter course on potential safe uses of artificial intelligence for greater efficiency in local government. While more options for Winter and Spring quarters are still being explored, SCYP will be in Salem to help with:
 - **Climate Action Plan Implementation** with a Community-Engaged Architecture course to discover opportunities for resiliency hubs across Salem.
 - **Equity in Operations Fee.** As we implement new software, this Public Budgeting course can help us advance new ways of thinking about differentiation among customer classes, based on equity considerations.
 - **Volunteerism and community.** A Journalism course and a nonprofit consultancy course will work to define what the next wave of volunteers look like and how the City may alter volunteer opportunities to retain Library, Parks, Center 50+, Neighborhood Associations, Board and Commissions, and other volunteers.
 - **Digital divide and civic engagement.** An Engaged Journalism course will consider where people in Salem get their information, and what tools and methods Salem can apply to better connect with our younger population and members of our cultural communities.
 - **Furthering 2022 Safety and Livability Bond projects.** Architecture courses will further our thinking about mixed use building designs for branch libraries and housing. Another Architecture course may re-think Civic Center to integrate passive cooling into the seismic retrofit project.
 - **Walkability and mobility policy and design.** A GIS course can help conduct a walkability assessment (and gaps) of pedestrian corridors and a mobility-centered planning course can help advance some topics in the Salem in Motion work to update Salem's Transportation Systems Plan.
 - I want the city to begin a Community Service program to help those with city fines to work volunteer service hours, reducing their fines. This may be part of the volunteerism and community program listed in the SCYP.
 - Dark Skies will need to wait as a city initiative. I hope we can begin as a grassroots program beginning with individual homes, neighborhoods and on.

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