



# Town Manager's Report

May 19, 2025

SALEM SPEAKS  
BUSTING  
MYTHS &  
MISINFORMATION

Introducing  
“Salem  
Speaks” – Your  
Questions,  
Answered



Water Meter  
Replacement  
Program



Memorial Day  
Events and  
Town Hall  
Closure

Learn more at [www.salemnh.gov](http://www.salemnh.gov)

**To:** Salem Town Council  
**From:** Joseph Devine, Town Manager *[Signature]*  
**Date:** May 19, 2025  
**Re:** Town Manager's Report

# MEMORANDUM



## News and Noteworthy:

### Month of May

During the Month of May we celebrate International Firefighters' Day on May 4th, National Municipal Clerks Week May 4-10, National Police Week May 11-17 with the theme of "Committed to Serve Together", National Peace Officers Memorial Day on May 15th, National EMS Week May 18-24 with the theme of ""We Care. For Everyone", National Public Works Week May 18-24 with the theme of "People, Purpose, Presence". There is no question that these themes represent our employees in these roles very well and I thank them for their service and commitment to Salem



### Update on Dog License Fee Changes and State Remittance

The Town recently completed updates to the ClerkWorks software used for dog licensing, following changes to the State's fee structure. These updates were necessary to ensure accurate reporting and payment to the NH Department of Agriculture. Notably, the State increased the fee for the first dog licensed by a senior from \$2.00 to \$2.25, retroactive to licenses already issued. We are not aware if this was communicated with previous staff, but employees were not aware. As a result, the Town will owe the State the additional amount despite not having collected it from residents.

The financial impact is minimal—approximately \$172 in additional State payments for FY2024—but staff recognize that even small increases may be noticed by senior residents. Moving forward, software updates will ensure accurate fee collection. The Town continues to charge \$6.50 for altered dogs and \$9.00 for unaltered dogs, which includes a \$4.00 Town share, in alignment with state guidance.



Staff will continue to monitor and communicate any further adjustments and will ensure transparency with both residents and the Council regarding fee-related matters.

## Budget Process Collaboration Proposal



As we prepare for the FY2026 budget season, I would like to gauge the Council's interest in a potential adjustment to our process that could enhance collaboration and efficiency. Specifically, I am proposing that we hold one joint budget presentation meeting where all departments would present their budgets to both the Town Council and Budget Committee simultaneously.

This meeting could be scheduled on a Saturday morning, allowing adequate time for all departments to walk through their proposals. While no formal questions are typically asked during the initial

presentations, this format would help streamline the process by reducing the need for departments to make multiple presentations to different groups.

The goal is to foster better alignment between the Council and Budget Committee early in the process and to respect the time and effort of department heads. If the Council is open to this concept, I will work with the Budget Committee to explore scheduling options and logistics.

### **Deliberative Session Date – 2026**

I would also like to confirm a date for the 2026 Deliberative Session. The two possible options are Saturday, January 31, 2026 or Saturday, February 7, 2026.

I am recommending January 31 to allow the Town Clerk and staff as much time as possible to prepare the ballot ahead of the election. This additional time is especially valuable to ensure accuracy, meet statutory deadlines, and handle any unexpected issues that may arise.

Please let me know if the Council is in agreement with this recommendation or if further discussion is needed.



## Introducing “Salem Speaks” – Your Questions, Answered

As part of our continued commitment to transparency and open communication, the Town of Salem is excited to launch Salem Speaks—a new webpage dedicated to answering resident questions and clarifying common rumors or misconceptions.

This resource aims to provide clear, factual information on a wide range of topics, including development, finance and taxes, infrastructure, public safety, and more. The page will be regularly updated as new questions are submitted and answered.

If you've heard something around town or simply have questions about how something works, we encourage you to visit Salem Speaks at the link below:

 [SalemNH.gov/SalemSpeaks](http://SalemNH.gov/SalemSpeaks)

Your engagement helps us build a more informed and connected community.

## Memorial Day Services – Monday, May 26, 2025



The Veterans' Association will be holding Memorial Day Services on Monday, May 26, 2025, beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the Town Common (Gazebo).

All are welcome to attend as we come together as a community to honor and remember our veterans.

## Utility Meter Upgrades Underway

The Utilities Division is currently replacing outdated meter interface units (MIUs) at homes and businesses throughout Salem. This effort supports accurate water meter readings and ensures continued reliable service.

As part of the process, staff may be seen on private property performing scheduled work. Please note that homeowners do not need to be present during the installation.

To minimize confusion and reassure residents, the Town is increasing public outreach, including social media updates and other communication channels.

If residents have any questions or concerns, they are encouraged to contact Utility Billing for more information.

