



Town Manager's Report

June 16, 2025



Community
Power Plan
APPROVED



Voting
Machine
Demonstration



2025
Source Water
Protection
Award

Learn more at www.salemnh.gov

To: Salem Town Council
From: Joseph Devine, Town Manager *[Signature]*
Date: June 16, 2025
Re: Town Manager's Report

MEMORANDUM



News and Noteworthy:

2025 Source Water Protection Award – Arlington Pond & Arlington Mill Reservoir

The Town of Salem has been selected to receive the 2025 Source Water Protection Award from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES). This recognition highlights the proactive efforts of our Water Department in planning, preparing for, and responding to cyanobacteria concerns, as well as our broader work in watershed planning and water quality management around Arlington Mill Reservoir.

Last year, the Town partnered with the Environmental Research Group (ERG) through a DES grant to develop a Cyanobacteria Monitoring and Response Plan for Arlington Pond. The plan was subsequently reviewed and approved by DES. As cyanobacteria blooms have become more frequent and persistent in recent years, particularly in water bodies like Arlington Pond—which serves as a secondary water source—DES encouraged the Town to implement a comprehensive monitoring strategy.

This plan has proven effective. It enables early detection of bloom activity and has allowed us to continue utilizing Arlington Pond without compromising public safety. In parallel, the Water Department has also advanced watershed planning and long-term water quality strategies around Arlington Mill Reservoir, supporting a sustainable approach to source water protection.

This recognition is a testament to the excellent work being done by our staff to safeguard Salem's water resources, and we are proud to be acknowledged at the state level for these efforts.

Voting Machine Demonstration – June 24, 2025

On Tuesday, June 24, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the Knightly Meeting Room at Town Hall, a representative from LHS Associates will provide a public demonstration of the ImageCast Precinct II Voting Tabulator, which will replace the Town's current, obsolete Accuvote Tabulators beginning with the March 2026 election.

This event is an opportunity for residents to preview the new machines, observe their functionality, and learn about the enhanced security features that are built into this updated technology. The ImageCast Precinct II Tabulators are already in use in several communities across New Hampshire and the country. Most recently, our neighbors in Derry utilized the machines during their March 2025 municipal election, with positive results and smooth operations reported.

Residents interested in learning more about the adoption and performance of this system across the country can visit the nonpartisan election technology database hosted by Verified Voting at: <https://verifiedvoting.org/election-system/dominion-imagecast-precinct/>

We encourage all Salem residents who are curious about the upcoming changes to our election process to attend this demonstration and become familiar with the technology that will be supporting our local democracy in future elections.

Community Power Plan Approved by Public Utilities Commission

On May 28, 2025, the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (PUC) issued Order No. 28,154, formally approving the Town of Salem's Community Power Aggregation Plan. This approval follows Salem's April 1 submission of the plan, which was developed pursuant to RSA Chapter 53-E to allow the Town to procure electric power on behalf of residents, businesses, and other eligible customers.

The Commission reviewed the plan under the statutory and regulatory framework established by RSA 53-E and N.H. Admin. R. Puc 2200. No public comments were received during the required 21-day public comment period. The PUC determined that the plan meets all applicable requirements and found no substantial deficiencies.

As a minor note, the Commission recommended an update to the "Rights and Responsibilities" section of the plan to reflect that complaints against regulated utilities should be directed to the New Hampshire Department of Energy, not the PUC. This correction will be made prior to program implementation.

The approval of this plan is a major milestone for Salem's Community Power initiative, providing a foundation to move forward with competitive energy supply options that support greater choice, rate stability, and potential integration of renewable energy resources for the community.

The full docket and official order can be viewed on the PUC website at:

<https://www.puc.nh.gov/VirtualFileRoom/Docket.aspx?DocketNumber=DE%2025-024>

Salem 275th Anniversary Events – Summer 2025

The Salem 275th Anniversary Commission has an exciting lineup of community events planned throughout the remainder of 2025. These events celebrate Salem's rich history, culture, and community spirit, and are designed to engage residents of all ages. Below is a summary of key upcoming events:

- June 21 – Lafayette Re-enactment
Witness Lafayette return to Salem after 200 years with a special reenactment at the Field of Dreams from 2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.
- July 8 – Salem Nights at Hedgehog Park
Every Tuesday in July (excluding July 1), Salem residents can enjoy free access to Hedgehog Park during operating hours to celebrate National Parks Month and the 275th Anniversary. Come explore all that the park has to offer, day or night!
- August (TBA) – Moses Poor and Abnaki Park Hike
Join us for a guided trail walk as we explore the stories of Salem patriot Moses Poor and the historic Abnaki Park area. Details to follow.
- August 9 – SALEMBrATION!
Salem's largest community event in 25 years! Celebrate 275 years of Salem with an unforgettable day of music, food, family fun, and community pride on Geremonty Drive from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Granite Avenue Traffic and Speed Concerns

On June 3rd, I met on-site at Granite Avenue with Town Council Members Paul Pelletier and Joe Sweeney, along with Police Chief Joel Dolan, to address ongoing concerns about speeding vehicles and cut-through traffic on Granite Avenue and nearby Park Avenue.

After a thorough discussion, we agreed that enhanced signage is needed on both Granite Avenue and Park Avenue to improve driver awareness. Additionally, we will pursue the installation of stop signs at key intersections: Granite Avenue and Pine Street, Park Avenue and Pine Street, as well as Granite Avenue and Park Avenue Extension. These measures, combined with increased police patrols, are intended to reduce vehicle speeds and discourage drivers from using these streets as shortcuts between Main Street and South Broadway.

To gather objective data, a StealthStat traffic monitor was installed on Granite Avenue from May 13th through May 24th, recording traffic volumes and speeds over an 11-day period.

During this time, 19,646 vehicles traveled Granite Avenue, underscoring its role as a heavily used cut-through route.

Speed data indicated that 85% of vehicles traveled at an average speed of 26 mph, with an overall average speed of 32 mph and a recorded high speed of 47 mph. While the data suggests that excessive speeding may not be widespread, we do not discount the concerns shared by residents who observe and experience speeding firsthand. Speeds of 47 mph or even 30 mph can feel dangerously fast on a narrow residential street when standing in your driveway.

Moving forward, we will implement the agreed-upon signage and stop signs, increase police enforcement in the area, and continue monitoring the situation to ensure community safety and quality of life.

Items Signed on Behalf of the Town Council Since Last Update:

- Payment Check Register (6-3-25) - \$4,316,839.86
- Payroll Register No. 23 (6-3-25) - \$361,420.69
- Payroll Register No. 24 (6-9-25) - \$361,760.45
- Payment Check Register (6-10-25) - \$405,287.68