

**CITY OF SALEM  
JANUARY 4, 2023  
SPECIAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

A Special Meeting of the Salem City Council will be held in person in the City Council Chambers, 93 Washington Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Salem and remotely via remote participation on Wednesday, January 4, 2023 at 6:00 P.M. in accordance with Chapter 107 of the Act of 2022 for the purpose of organizing City Government for the year 2023.

Notice of this meeting was posted on December 29, 2022 at 5:23 P.M.

All Councillors were present.

City Clerk, Ilene Simons, called the meeting to order and Councillor McCarthy, Senior Member, assumed the Chair.

Acting Council President McCarthy called upon Councillor Hapworth and Councillor Prosniewski to lead us in the pledge of allegiance.

**#1 – ELECTION OF PRESIDENT**

Councillor Varela introduced the following order which was adopted by a roll call vote of 11 yeas, 0 nays and 0 absent

ORDERED: That the City Council proceed to organize for 2023 by the Election of a President. And I move for adoption by roll call vote

Councillor Morsillo nominated Councillor Stott (formerly Riccardi).

Councillor Cohen seconded the nomination

Councillor McClain moved that the nominations be closed. It was so voted.

Councillor Stott was elected President of the City Council for the year 2023 by a roll call vote of 9 yeas, 0 nays, 2 present, and 0 absent. Councillor Cohen, Hapworth, McCarthy, McClain, Merkl, Morsillo, Prosniewski, Varela and Watson-Felt all voted in the affirmative for Councillor Stott. Councillors Dominguez and Stott voted present.

Acting President McCarthy appoints Councillor Merkl and Councillor Watson-Felt to escort the newly elected President Stott to the chair.

**Please see below for Councillor Stott's speech:**

Thank you to my fellow councillors

I would like to begin by acknowledging and honoring where we are meeting – This land is Naumkeag, where generations of indigenous peoples lived and passed through for centuries. I acknowledge that this is indigenous land and also acknowledge the Massachusetts Tribe, who continue to honor and hold this land into the present.

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Isn't it nice to be back in chambers, after two years of virtual reorganization meetings? This body had the first ever virtual remote inauguration, and now holds the honor of having the first ever Hybrid Re-organizational meeting.

Thank you to our madam city clerk, Ilene Simons, and assistant clerks Maureen and Rochelle for making us look good today and every day. This meeting in itself can be a full chapter in the book of firsts, thank you for making it look effortless. And also thank you to SATV and our IT department for making this all happen.

Thank you for those that joined us this evening – both in person and virtually –and I would like to recognize the elected officials that have joined us this evening - Fresh off his own inauguration, our new Essex County District Attorney & Former State Rep, and of course a Ward 6 resident, Paul Tucker. Thank you also to Senator Joan Lovely and Chief Lucas Miller of the Salem PD, along with all of the former elected officials mentioned by fellow councillor McCarthy. Thank you for joining us this evening, the city is lucky to have your leadership

Thank you to our council dean, Councillor McCarthy, our as I like to say, the council OG. With age comes wisdom, and thank you for sharing yours with us.

Thank you to outgoing President Morsillo. You are a tough act to follow. Thank you for always pushing us to do our best, resulting in great achievements for us.

And of course, thank you to – for the next ten minutes at least – our Mayor.

I'll be honest, I struggled with how to thoughtfully thank you in 50 words or less for your years of service and commitment to our wonderful city. Your leadership has transformed Salem into what it is today. A vibrant, diverse, welcoming city that we are all proud to call home, this is a direct result of your vision, determination and ability to bring people together. Thank you for your countless hours and your fearless leadership. You have inspired a generation and we can't wait to see what happens next.

And now, thank you to my fellow councilors. Thank you for a productive 2022 and for trusting me to lead in 2023. Our differences are what make us unique and got us in these seats, but as the past year has shown, our ability to work through those differences and find consensus, or close to it, are what make us stronger.

I am grateful that we can have difficult conversations with respect towards one another. I promise to stay the course and to continue our momentum and to support each of you. I plan to continue our advancements in accessibility and transparency including help implement the new agenda software and sharing documents more uniformly.

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Change is not easy - it's confusing and often messy. But I don't believe that our role is to maintain the status quo and minimize change. I love that we are questioning the status quo actually. Changing those barriers that were written before us. But as we know, in Salem especially, a delicate balance is needed; I am confident we can both embrace our storied history, and celebrate it, while moving forward together to ensure Salem is the inclusive, welcoming and vibrant home we are all working for. As the past few years have demonstrated, we as a city have become masters at pivoting, piloting and pioneering. And this year, a year I am sure will continue to be filled with more pivoting. This body - we - WE will be constant in this transitional year. In this past year, we have led with empathy, compassion and resiliency and I know we will continue to do so into this new year.

And finally, I would like to say one more Thank you – Thank you to our families. Our work takes time, time away from home; time away from the dinner table, from events, and thank you for sharing your time.

A special thank you to my mini partner in crime, my daughter Stella, who perhaps has attended more committee meetings than any other 11-year-old I know. Stella, I know this is not always easy and many of your evenings have been filled with wandering empty city buildings searching for a better Wi-Fi signal and eating dinner on the go. Thank you for being by my side.

I truly believe our Junior councilors are perhaps the most important members of this body - they are the ones I am working so tirelessly for.

So, I am ready to get started on that work. Onwards to the new year. Thank you,

**(#721A OF 2022) – SECOND READING OF CITY COUNCIL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Councillor Morsillo moved to adopt the amendments of the City Council Rules Sections 1-36 by roll call vote.

Councillor McCarthy made a motion to further amend the language in Section 13. Councillor Varella seconded the motion. It was so voted.

The City Council Rules and Regulations Sections 1-36 were adopted as amended by a roll call vote of 11 yeas, 0 nays and 0 absent.

**#2 – RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Councillor Watson-Felt introduced the following Order which was adopted.

ORDERED: That the Amended Rules and Regulations of the City Council be adopted as the Rules and Regulations for the year 2023, and that the same be suspended for this meeting.

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**#3 – MAYOR ADDRESS COUNCIL - STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS**

Council Dominguez introduced the following Order which was adopted.

ORDERED: That the Honor the Mayor be invited to address the members of the Council at this session.

*Please see below for the Mayor's speech:*

Good evening, as we start public meetings in this Chamber, I would like to begin by acknowledging that this land is Naumkeag, or fishing place, where generations of Indigenous peoples lived and passed through for centuries. We acknowledge that this is Indigenous land and also acknowledge the Massachusetts Tribe, who continue to honor and hold this land into the present.

In addition to members of the Council, I'd like to recognize other elected and city officials joining us this evening.

My heart is full of pride and appreciation as I stand before you tonight to deliver my final State of the City address. After 17 years of growth and prosperity together, we've transformed our nearly 400-year-old city into a vibrant, thriving community, the hub of the North Shore and, in so many respects, the envy of many Massachusetts communities. Together, we've built a city that is poised for an even stronger and more successful future. We professionalized local government, rebuilt city finances, prioritized transparency, encouraged more voices, and engaged more residents across Salem to participate in their government.

All of this is the direct result of intentional actions we have all taken together, city employees, City Council and School Committee members - both current and past - local leaders, business owners, institutional partners, neighborhood groups, the countless talented volunteers serving on our boards and organizations, and the residents of this remarkable community.

Tomorrow at noon, I'll be sworn in as Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts and, with Governor Maura Healey, I'll continue to work hard every day for those I'm fortunate enough to represent in all 351 of our cities and towns. Governor-elect Healey and I will bring the kind of government we prioritized here in Salem, and the kind of results we've had here, to our entire Commonwealth.

This is truly a bittersweet moment for me. While I'm thrilled by the new challenges and opportunities ahead, I'm leaving a job I love, and have loved, every single day that I've been honored to serve you. Because of the work we have done together for these past 17 years, I'm bringing with me a clear vision for a stronger Commonwealth, one based on values that both Governor-elect Healey and I share: that our communities matter. Local government matters.

I've been fortunate to have had some terrific jobs, but this has been the best job I've ever had, working alongside some of the most dedicated and professional people with whom I've had the privilege of collaborating.

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These chambers are steeped in history and pride, and the work we do here impacts just about everything in our community: Our schools and our neighborhoods, the lives and the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people who put their trust in our service. One of the things I value most about City government is that it has a direct and immediate impact on people. That is an enormous responsibility and one that I've always taken very seriously. *Everything we do here matters.*

Over these last 17 years, I've been fortunate to be surrounded by colleagues and community members who share this call to service. We recognized that, for Salem to thrive, we need diverse talent and people who share our passion for local government and our love for this community. Our work is guided by evidence, sound policy, and best practices - and we've strived to never let politics interfere with what is best for Salem. I know you – this team of leaders who have championed Salem alongside me all these years. You've done the work and you own our City's successes as much as I do.

There are so many examples I could share of how Salem has been able to punch above our weight class.

Just think about the incredible changes around our historic Harbor. Salem's waterfront -long key to our prominence and growth - had been marked by a coal fired power plant for generations. Public access and connections to our harbor – for commuting, for recreation, for much of anything at all – was largely nonexistent. Today, Salem is prepared to become a hub for offshore wind operations, using our historic port to bring good union jobs to our local economy, not to mention a clean energy future to Massachusetts. And our waterfront - combined with our hip, happening, historic downtown - is on the map today for visitors and residents alike to enjoy. Just this week - not October, or Spring or Summer, but a winter holiday vacation- our streets were teeming with visitors, who were filling hotels, shopping, eating, enjoying our history, and supporting our local economy.

Together we have changed Salem for the better.

But our legacy isn't just along the waterfront or inside a more professional City Hall, or in our teeming downtown. It's also in a more resilient and sustainability community, a place striving to be more welcoming and equitable to all. It's along complete streets enabling safer travel for all, in our signature parks, and inside a long-awaited new Community Life Center. It's in a thriving small business community and in a place where we supported each other as neighbors through a historic pandemic. It's in how we aspire - and act - to ensure homes for every resident and great schools and early childcare for every child.

Our legacy is an enduring commitment to a city that's always willing to innovate and to lead.

The vision and progress here in Salem did not come from one single source. So many people brought together their shared experiences and expertise, and that's the collaborative model that will shape how Governor-elect Healey and I will carry forward our service to the Commonwealth. Teamwork isn't a slogan, it's a way of doing business - and it's what people expect from their public officials.

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Now, those of you who know me and have worked with me know I'm pretty direct when it comes to real talk, so let's do a little bit of that tonight, too. I know that not every day of the last 17 years has been easy or that every success hasn't been - at times - hard earned. Success doesn't happen overnight, and we all recognize that

there would be shortfalls along the way. Our shared success also meant that we had to be willing to take risks and strive for real change. We 'failed up' on plenty of occasions, and we certainly often demonstrated that adage - that doing the right thing usually means doing the hard thing. But in my mind the real win, is that despite the setbacks and the challenges, we always maintained our shared vision for a better community for everyone. When we're in this Chamber, we're all Team Salem.

I didn't have the good fortune to be born here or raised here. The voters of Salem took a chance on an out-of-towner like me 17 years ago. They bucked the normal trend and set a new tone, welcoming me with open arms in 2005, as we looked to the future together. From our city's first woman mayor, to today being part of Massachusetts' first all-woman executive team, we're *still* looking to that future together.

To the people of Salem: Thank you for your confidence and your faith in me, and thank you for giving me my forever hometown. As I begin this next journey, I know I'll do so with the people in this room and the people of this great city having my back. I promise that I'll also always have yours, and that I will continue to serve you the way I always have. I'm so deeply grateful for the opportunity I've had over these last 17 years, to help shape, improve, and lead my hometown – this amazing community of Salem. And I'm so grateful for the support, collaboration, and friendship of so many of you in making that opportunity happen.

When I announced my first candidacy for mayor in 2005, I said that Salem deserved a City government as dedicated, optimistic, and forward-looking as the people it serves. I believe that we've achieved that vision and that the state of our city is as strong as its future - and I'm incredibly thankful for all of you who joined me in making that possible.

Thank you and God bless. I'm looking forward to all that comes next for Salem and for our Commonwealth.

**#3A – RESOLUTION FOR MAYOR DRISCOLL**

The following Resolution introduced by Councillor Morsillo was adopted by a roll call vote of 11 yeas, 0 nays and 0 absent.

**RESOLUTION: MAYOR KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL**

WHEREAS: In 1986 one Kimberley Lord transferred to Salem State University via Florida. She not only majored in Political Science but was an outstanding player on the woman's basketball team.

WHEREAS: The beginning of her journey and passion in politics began when right here in Salem where she was an intern in the City's planning department. Where she continues to work with some

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of these same people and has made lasting friendships with them and others that worked for the City during that time.

WHEREAS: Kimberley Lord made Salem her home after graduation and went on to marry her college sweetheart Nicholas Driscoll in 1992. Together they have raised 3 remarkable children: Delaney, Ailish, and Nicholas III.

WHEREAS: Kim's career in municipal government has taken her from Beverly's Community Development Director and, after earning her degree from the Massachusetts School of Law, Chelsea's Chief Legal Counsel and then Deputy City Manager.

WHEREAS: In 1999, Kim's name appeared for the first time, but not the last, on a Salem Ballot and was elected as the Ward 5 Councillor. She remained in that seat for 4 years.

WHEREAS: In 2005, Kimberley Driscoll decided to run for Mayor and broke the glass ceiling when elected as the first woman Mayor of the City of Salem.

WHEREAS: Kimberley Driscoll has held this position for the last 17 years, where by her leadership and dedication immensely improved the city's rainy day fund, bond rating, and transparency into city government. Her focus on the creation of a welcoming city, not only for residents but also for business owners and tourists, has resulted in a vibrant city that people want to live in, work in, play in, and visit.

WHEREAS: In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic Mayor Driscoll acted swiftly and decisively to ensure the safety and health of residents and municipal employees, while working to keep businesses afloat, resulting in a close to net zero change in vacant retail space. Her strong leadership decisions often resulted in the State following suit soon after.

WHEREAS: In 2022, Kimberley Driscoll decided to run for Lt. Governor. Kim's same passion, dedication, determination, and intelligence, which she exhibits for the City of Salem, won her the role as the State's next Lt. Governor.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Salem City Council owes a debt of gratitude to Mayor Driscoll, and as we look back over her last 3 decades of work, we say: not bad for a Navy brat and daughter of an immigrant mother from Trinidad.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That this resolution be made a matter of record of these proceedings and that the Salem City Council on behalf of the residents of the City of Salem wish Mayor Driscoll much success, in her newest role, and cannot wait to see what she does for the State of Massachusetts.

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**#4 – 2023 SPECIAL ELECTION CALENDAR TO FILL THE VACANCY OF THE MAYOR FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM**

The following Order introduced by Councillor McCarthy was adopted by a roll call vote of 11 yeas, 0 nays and 0 absent.

ORDERED: That the 2023 Special Election Calendar to fill the Vacancy of the Mayor for the remainder of the term submitted by the City Clerk be adopted by roll call vote.

**#5 - ELECTION OF ACTING MAYOR**

The following Order introduced by Councillor Dominguez was adopted by a roll call vote of 11 yeas, 0 nays and 0 absent.

ORDERED: That the City Council proceed to elect one of its members as Acting Mayor until a candidate for Mayor is elected by the registered voters of Salem and the election results are certified by the City Clerk.

Councillor Morsillo nominated Councillor McCarthy.

Councillor Prosniewski seconded the nomination.

Councillor Cohen moved that the nominations be closed. It was so voted.

Councillor McCarthy was elected Acting Mayor by a roll call vote of 10 yeas, 0 nays, 1 present, and 0 absent. Councillor Cohen, Dominguez, Hapworth, McClain, Merkl, Morsillo, Prosniewski, Varela, Watson-Felt, and Stott all voted in the affirmative for Councillor McCarthy. Councillor McCarthy voted present.

Councillor Stott asked that the vote be reflected as a unanimous roll call vote of 11 yeas, 0 nays and 0 absent. It was so voted.

City Clerk, Ilene Simons, administered the oath to the Acting Mayor Robert K. McCarthy.

**#6 – ACTING MAYOR ADDRESS THE COUNCIL**

The following order introduced by Councillor Dominguez was adopted.

ORDERED: That the Acting Mayor be invited to address the members of the Council at this session.

*Please see below for Acting Mayor McCarthy's speech:*



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Thank you

To my colleagues on the council, thank you for bestowing on me the honor of serving as acting mayor of the City of Salem

I am humbled by your support and belief that I can fill this role for the city until the special election is certified.

To my Ward One constituents, thank you for allowing me to represent you on the council for the last 15 years. While I will not be in these chambers, I will be just across the hall working with my colleagues to make sure your issues are addressed in my absence.

To all my past colleagues who helped shape me and make me the Councillor that I am today standing in front of you THANK YOU

There are too many to recognize but a few I would like to:

Joe O'Keefe

Who took me under his wing and taught me the ropes whom I affectionately called Dad  
I think about him every time I come into this room

Matt Veno

I had the pleasure of sitting next to him when I was a rookie  
I learned more from him by watching and listening. He instilled in me the power of knowing the rules

Josh Turiel

He almost instantly became my friend from the first day I met him on election night, over our ten years together he became my sounding board as we talked through so many issues, and we still do to this day

Senator Lovely

Who was a mentor and became a dear friend to this day.

She was, and is, always willing to listen and take a call and offer her advice if asked or just listen as I try to work through an issue.

The district is lucky to have her and I was lucky to serve with her when I first started

Recently she called and we were talking about what would be happening tonight. She congratulated me and told me how excited she was for me  
I told her that I was overwhelmed with the outpouring of support that department heads, employees and community leaders were offering to me.

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Her response was simple, “they recognize the work you have done on their behalf. They respect you for it, and know you will continue to do the work on their behalf in this new role.”

That’s what brings us here tonight, the work that we need to continue to do on behalf of our residents.

Tonight is not about me it’s about all of us.

The City Council is charged each year with organizing itself to serve our residents and we have an effective, professional body doing so.

Congratulations to President Stott

I look forward to your leadership in the upcoming year

Congratulations to all the Committee chairs.

All of us who have served know that all the hard work gets done in committee.

The extra layer to this years meeting is the departure of our Mayor, Kim Driscoll

I could go on for days, but I wish her all the best as she moves on to get sworn in as Lieutenant Governor.

Her leadership and friendship have been invaluable

I stand here tonight to tell the citizens of Salem that City Government will continue to work for you during this unique period and I will make informed decisions on behalf of us all.

I am not Kim Driscoll, nor do I pretend to be

I am not perfect, as my family can tell you - but my father taught me years ago that if you make a mistake, fix it immediately

My job and life experiences have taught me to be a problem solver and a consensus builder and I plan to use those skills in this new role as needed

To all the department heads and employees of this great city, my objective is to not upset the apple cart and to keep the train on the tracks.  
Salem does not work without all of you

To Ilene Maureen and Rochelle (my “Bat team”)

Thank you for making me and all us look good at each and every meeting

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Lastly, I want to thank all of family members of all the elected officials here tonight in the chambers or at home

Public Service is an honor, but we that serve know we cannot do it without the support of our families

Always remember, the work we do on behalf of our residents is important, but family always comes first

On the motion of Councillor Dominguez the meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

ATTEST:

ILENE SIMONS  
CITY CLERK