



## Meeting Minutes | April 4, 2023

### Present Members

- Alphonse Wright | Chair
- Shimon Avish | Treasurer
- Pamela Geiser | Clerk
- Katelyn Adams | Liason, Salem State University
- Julio Mota | Liason, City of Salem, Mayor's Office
- Captain John Burke | Liaison, Salem Police Department
- Kerry Neenan | Liaison, Commission on Disabilities
- Patti Morsillo | Liason, Salem City Council
- Veronica Faustino | Member
- Elise Towle Snow | Member
- Denise Regan | Member

### Present Guests

Chris Fuccione, Salem Democratic Committee Coordinator  
Alan Hanscom, SATV

**Meeting called to order, recording initiated.**

**Welcome and Introductions.**

**Opportunity for Public Comment.**

- None

**Governor's Statement, read by Chair.**

### Reports from Coalition

**[A] Chair** Busy couple of weeks in Salem with the Mayoral election; very happy it's coming to a close, and happy no one as a coalition member has endorsed anyone. Would like to see more outreach and engagement from the coalition within the community; would like to form an "Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee" consisting of 2-3 people to bring ideas back to main meetings. Please email Alphonse if interested in joining.

**[B] Clerk** Minutes were emailed to the Coalition on March 8<sup>th</sup> – unanimously approved and accepted into Public Record.

**[C] Treasurer** Balance \$225.29; No changes since last meeting.

**[D] Commission on Disabilities** Looking for volunteers for [www.adaptivesportsne.org](http://www.adaptivesportsne.org) all-ages baseball games for visually impaired. Need spotters. Also continuing to review loaner wheelchairs through Destination Salem – need to determine insurance liability and what that



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entails. Mack Park Food Farm is up and coming with an accessible pathway by the gardens – volunteers needed.

**[E] Mayor's Office** Grant in Fall 2022 from Welcome Immigrant Network gateways for growth \$12K for Salem working toward immigrant inclusion. It is regional, and Salem matched the money needed for the grant; covers Peabody, Salem, and Danvers. Julio is municipal partner for residents in those communities. Part of this work is highlighting people immigrating to this community. If you know someone involved that has a good story to highlight, please reach out.

**[F] Salem State University** Opportunity for SHRC to sponsor an event for SSU at no cost. More details to come, but there will be a pop-up Exhibit honoring Holocaust stories of survivors of genocide, large scale exhibit on campus, parking lot, looking to collaborate and engage as a Coalition. Thursday 4/20. Let's collaborate via email post meeting.

**[G] Salem Police Department** No bias crimes to report. Some issues around city regarding recent immigrants showing up at police station with nowhere to turn and limited options on what to do (i.e. time of day, where to turn when DTA can't step in to help them). Establishing relationships with groups but need help for families who are recent arrivals with children needing a place to stay and scrambling to find resources. Chelsea / Chelsea Collaborative took the ball and ran. Some short-term solutions for a night, but it's the long-term process we need support.

-**Kerry** New American Center Inland anything immigration related, not sure about emergency housing; Emergency Housing Office Congress Street Salem.

-**Julio** Do police ever consider Salem Hospital overnight in Lobby? Never closed...EHCD...standing shelter for 14 months.

-**Burke** They go to hospital for the day then come to the Police again, no one swooping in to help.

-**Kate** Centerboard Lynn, MA organizing families on SSU south campus; families relocated and living on south campus.

-**Burke** Have to go through DTA, and are turned away - might be eligible as the route progresses but limited with Centerboard.

-**Denise** Lori/Julio housing resources?

-**Julio** she speaks Spanish, but can't put people up on the basis of, "I need somewhere tonight." Eventually you might be housed, but it's not permanent. Need DTA to find a permanent resource.

-**Veronica** Try Family Promise in Beverly, MA



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-**Alphonse** Let's form a "New Arrivals Subcommittee" - if you're interested, email Alphonse. Burke will be part of Subcommittee, and two other interested parties to email. Need a solution in Salem for this - can't rely on Chelsea or Lynn or Beverly - needs to be Salem.

*Moment of silence MLK was shot 65 years ago today 6:01 pm*

### **Special Presentation "UBI: What it is, and how we work towards it" by Christine Ross**

Christine Ross is a founding member of the Salem chapter of the League of Women Voters who is on the steering committee of the organization.

Universal Basic Income is defined as a government program available to a broad population that provides sufficient cash resources for a basic standard of living without other earnings that is paid regularly.

It is not conditioned on demographics, employment, earnings...it is universal. If you're not working, you can still get to a minimal standard of living (devil's in the details, of course).

The purpose is to help alleviate poverty.

To implement, there are some important considerations:

- Simplify the application for more dignity for people receiving payments.
- No one asks what you can or can't afford for employment, etc.
- Replaces patchwork programs to fill gaps for ineligible peoples.
- Avoid large deductions in benefits with earnings - you just get income regardless of choices in employment - work as much or as little as you can and not worry about your benefits.

It is a simple idea, but expensive: \$12K/person/year \$1K month or \$3Trillion per year nationally.

To help adjust plan to reduce cost, remove programs like cash welfare, nutrition/housing, tax credits (UBI would substitute for these) \$248 Billion back to program. Perhaps reduce scope cover only 18-65.

\$2.2 Trillion comparable to current cost of all welfare, tax credits, social insurance, disability programs, and health insurance combined. If we did a program like this, you would want Social Security, Medicaid & Medicare on top of this.

Focus on benefits for individuals and families with low income at application, say twice the poverty line – and \$45K/year+ anyone above would not receive UBI; Offer time limit of 12-18 months. Reduce monthly payment amount to \$400/\$500/month instead of \$1K.



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Could improve job quality over time, higher wages, etc. Children with more resources develop healthier. There may be equilibrium effects, like increases in rent, prices of goods, because families have a “higher income”, and maybe folks would migrate to communities with UBI.

Mayors for a Guaranteed Income ([mayorsforagi.org/resources](http://mayorsforagi.org/resources)) piloting nearly 100 UBI programs around the country, and found **no reduction in employment** because it is a temporary, low income payment. Less income volatility results in emotional and material hardships lessening, too.

The Expanded Child Tax Credit is very similar to UBI. During 2021 it had 3 key features: monthly payments, higher payment amount per year, applied to all families with children with limited or no earnings, too. Reduced children in poverty from 12.5% to **5.2% A HUGE HISTORICAL IMPACT**. Reduced food insecurity, no evidence of reduction in employment – just positive familial benefit.

Tried this approach in Lynn, Chelsea and Cambridge: *Family Health Project* in Lynn May 2021-May 2024 \$400/mo to new mom's for child's first three years consisting of 15 participants; *Chelsea Eats* November 2020-April 2021 and restarted in January 2023 after favorable evaluation results consisting of 2,040 participants \$200-\$400/month on food costs; *Cambridge Recurring Income for Success and Empowerment (RISE)* \$500/month for 18mos 120 pilot and 1,700-2,000 expansion with ARPA funds for all families with incomes below poverty line May 2023-Oct 2024 expansion.

In 2021 Salem Families amounted to 10,225 folks, and of those 1,237 are below Poverty Line (12%) Of 42,907 people in Salem below poverty line 6,382 14.9% could be served with UBI in Salem.

MA Bills in Legislature HD3598 3-yr study of 100 residents. Selection (lottery? To decide how much you can afford and apply equally) of who receives can be difficult but reactive decisions can be so much harder.

**Alphonse** Mayoral Election May 16th – depending on who is elected I plan on being in conversations with them about UBI in Salem; what limitations, what funding after ARPA? State House new millionaires tax? Small, limited pilots are receiving support. Let's form a “UBI Subcommittee” with an Annual Focus. We need to get there faster - no need for so many pilots! Bylaws draft incoming at next meeting.



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**Shimon** Invite Joan Lovely and Manny Cruz for May Agenda to learn where we are on this UBI legislation; let them know there is interest in this coalition!

### **Upcoming Events**

**Elise** - Witch City Action Game Night 5:30

**Julio** - May 20th Noon AAPI Month Flag Raising

**Veronica** - Mid-May-June Rainbow Terrace election for resident organization if anyone is interested in helping flyer Rainbow Terrace

### **Next Scheduled Meeting**

May 2, 2023 at 5:30 PM

### **Adjournment**