



CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

Robert K. McCarthy
Acting Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2023

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Chris Sicuranza
Chief of Staff
(978) 619-5600 | csicuranza@salem.com

Mayor Bob McCarthy Announces ARPA Utilization to Combat Food Insecurity Within Salem

With SNAP benefits cut by federal budgets, Mayor McCarthy earmarks rescue funds toward local partner The Salem Pantry

(March 9, 2023) SALEM, MA – Mayor Robert “Bob” McCarthy announced today that he finalized contractual language designed to support local non-profit, The Salem Pantry, which helps support over 2,500 households for healthy eating with an additional allocation finalized of \$165,000 from American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds, contributing to nearly \$400,000 of total city funds earmarked to combat food insecurity. Federal COVID SNAP benefits are set to end this month (March 2023), with The Salem Pantry efforts representing 6,500 individuals being serviced since 2001.

“Our role in government is to make sure our most vulnerable members can get support when facing challenging times,” said Salem Mayor Bob McCarthy. “We have dedicated these once in a lifetime federal dollars from ARPA to ensure there is no gap in service from our local partners in providing healthy meals for anyone looking for it.”

In working with community partners - especially including The Salem Pantry - ARPA dollars have been utilized to allow the city to assist in opening the first true brick-and-mortar location, which Mayor McCarthy personally visited in recent weeks. The goal of ‘The Market by The Salem Pantry’ is to provide a free, dignified shopping experience for pantry guests from Salem and the North Shore. The Market will be open five days a week at various hours, including the evening and weekends, to best serve more of the community. Guests can choose from a wide range of dairy, fresh produce, nonperishables, and protein options. The Market is conveniently located in the Point neighborhood, on the corner of Congress and Leavitt Street.

Robyn Burns, Executive Director of The Salem Pantry said, “We are thrilled to have such a deep commitment from the City of Salem and Mayor Bob McCarthy. With this support, we can work collaboratively to prepare for future events that impact the health and food resources in our community. We have seen record-breaking numbers of monthly pantry visits. Mayor McCarthy’s support for the opening of The Market and our mobile program will allow us to continue to serve as a vital first-defense support for anyone in need of food.”

In addition to providing a consistent location to receive fresh, healthy food, The Market will provide additional services beyond food. The Salem Pantry's "Food is Medicine" pilot project with North Shore Physician's Group, Salem Hospital, and North Shore Community Health will have a new location. Additional services will include cooking demonstrations and community health and nutrition screenings. The Salem Pantry is currently working with The Salem Skipper and The Salem Council on Aging to support those who might not have access to transportation to The Market; many of these programs are activated by state and federal grants or subsidies as well.

To that, Mayor McCarthy has ordered an immediate use of ARPA funding to be directed toward the Salem Food Pantry to ensure our local efforts will not be impeded. While the Commonwealth has additionally appropriated some funding, this amount of \$165,000 will help ensure our local operations do not halt anyone in need of a meal.

About ARPA in Salem

ARPA provides funds to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and the negative economic affects that came with it. Salem has taken a thoughtful approach to utilizing this funding and has worked intentionally with stakeholders to identify how to best support response efforts, ensure an equitable recovery, and make transformative, positive change in the many areas of concern that impact the lives and livelihoods of Salem residents.

The City has announced major allocations of ARPA funds toward:

- Critical City capital needs (www.salemma.gov/recovery/news/city-salem-directs-arpa-funds-capital-needs)
- Business and worker recovery measures (www.salemma.gov/recovery/news/city-salem-directs-arpa-funds-business-and-workforce-recovery)
- Transportation projects (www.salemma.gov/recovery/news/city-salem-directs-arpa-funds-transportation-needs)
- Food security efforts (<https://www.salemma.gov/recovery/news/city-salem-directs-arpa-funds-food-security>)
- Affordable housing (<https://www.salemma.gov/recovery/news/city-salem-directs-over-9-million-arpa-funds-affordable-housing>)
- Health and equity (<https://www.salemma.gov/recovery/news/city-salem-directs-arpa-funds-health-equity-work>)
- Find out more about ARPA in Salem at www.salemma.gov/recovery.

Media Pictures below:

Mayor Bob McCarthy visits construction site in downtown Salem where new site to support The Salem Pantry is being built, alongside Robyn Byrns, Executive Director, The Salem Pantry.



###