

MISSOURI

PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU

Salem News  
Salem, MO  
Circ. 3900  
From Page:  
1  
3/8/2011  
18011



# <sup>114-800</sup> Aldermen override veto by the mayor

**Electric rate hike on hold, 3A**

**By Brenda Jessen**

Staff Writer

brenda@thesalemnewsonline.com

Aldermen Thursday afternoon voted unanimously in favor of five amended ordinances that set term limits for five city positions, thus overriding a veto by the mayor.

The positions are chief of police, city clerk, director of economic development, director of public works and

## **ALDERMEN**

city attorney. Aldermen had unanimously approved these ordinances at the Feb. 21 meeting, but Mayor Gary Brown promised to veto all of them, and he did.

The amended ordinances authorize appointments to these positions by April 30 in odd numbered years.

Brown read a written statement giving two reasons for his veto of the ordinances.

"There has been a push to rid the city of the city engineer, economic development director, the city clerk and myself as director of public works for three years, at least," Brown said.

He said current ordinance language for these positions provides for "at will" employment and allows the board the power to dismiss these employees at any time.

"Some people are hung up on the words till death and not the rest of the language. You must have that in case they die. You would not need to carry them in that position after their death," the mayor said.

See **Aldermen** Page 10A





Salem News  
 Salem, MO  
 Circ. 3900  
 From Page:  
 10  
 3/8/2011  
 18011

## ALDERMEN/Mayor says Sunshine Law in question

*From Page 1A*

Brown said his second reason for the veto was that the Sunshine Law was apparently violated concerning these ordinances.

"There was no open meeting discussion about this until the first reading of these ordinances," Brown said.

Brown said that on Jan. 5, while he was passing out a sample ballot separately to aldermen, Alderman Kenneth Nash said that three aldermen were ready to change the language in the city clerk ordinance, regarding having her job until death. The mayor said aldermen Jerry Randell and Haydn Powell also told him there was talk of changing the ordinance.

Nash denied that he had organized a plan to get the ordinances changed.

City Attorney Nanci Wisdom told *The Salem News* Monday that she is not aware of any Sunshine Law violation and that it is not uncommon for a member of the board to run something by the attorney before it is put up for a vote, which is not illegal, Wisdom said.

"I have no first-hand knowledge of a Sunshine

Law violation," Wisdom said. "I was presented with a draft of the ordinances and asked by a single alderman to prepare them to be placed on the agenda," Wisdom said.

Wisdom said attorney-client communication prevents her from revealing which alderman requested the amended ordinances be prepared for consideration. She said the ordinances were read at three separate meetings before passage, allowing ample time for public knowledge of the content of

the ordinances.

Brown said that he also vetoed the ordinances because it gives the appearance of discrimination, since not all city-appointed positions were included, such as the city treasurer, engineer, police major, captain and lieutenant.

Nash told *The Salem News* Monday, "We haven't violated the Sunshine Law. I was interested in the ordinances being amended so that it isn't perceived that any city employee has a permanent job. The amended ordinances allow for appointments every two years."

