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O F F I C E

# MEMO

*Office of the City Clerk*  
410-548-3140

**To:** City Council

**From:** Brenda J. Colegrove, CMC  
City Clerk

**Subject:** Primary Elections

**Date:** February 8, 2005

The City Council discussed the issue of eliminating primary elections during their March 1, 2004 work session and again during their FY05 budget deliberations. I have attached a copy of the information that was provided to Council at the work session depicting the sixteen municipalities in Maryland that hold nonpartisan elections but still have primaries. With the exception of Annapolis, Baltimore and Hagerstown who have partisan elections, and these sixteen municipalities, the remaining cities/towns only have general elections.

Since Salisbury conducts nonpartisan elections (beginning with 1996 elections), and budgets are becoming tighter every year, it has been suggested that money could be saved in the election process by eliminating primary elections. It was estimated by the Wicomico County Elections Office during the FY05 budget process that approximately \$25,000 could be saved by eliminating the primary in the 2005 election. However, the Council came to a consensus to place a nonbinding question on the 2005 General Election ballot asking the electorate if the City should consider eliminating primary elections.

The attached Ordinance provides the language to be placed on the April 5 General Election ballot.

**MUNICIPALITIES IN MARYLAND  
NONPARTISAN ELECTIONS  
WITH PRIMARIES**

	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population</b>
1	City of Cambridge	10,911
2	City of Cumberland	23,212
3	Town of Deer Park	419
4	Town of Delmar	1,859
5	Town of East New Market	153
6	City of Frederick	53,500
7	Town of Friendsville	672
8	Town of Greensboro	1,632
9	Town of LaPlata	7,000
10	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	550
11	Town of Manchester	3,100
12	Town of New Market	500
13	Town of New Windsor	1,400
14	Town of Ocean City	7,173
15	City of Salisbury	23,743
16	Town of Smithsburg	2,146

NOTE: Only three Maryland municipalities have partisan elections – Annapolis, Baltimore and Hagerstown.

Information obtained from MML

bjc 2/21/03

ORDINANCE NO. 1928

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY  
TO PROVIDE A BALLOT QUESTION ON WHETHER TO CONSIDER THE  
ELIMINATION OF PRIMARY ELECTIONS.

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to place a non-binding ballot question on the April 2005 General Election Ballot in order to learn the view of the electorate as to whether the City of Salisbury should eliminate primary elections.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it enacted and ordained by the City Council of the City of Salisbury, in regular session, as follows:

1. That a non-binding ballot question be presented to the electorate in the General Election held in April 2005 to indicate approval or disapproval on the question set out below.
2. The ballot question shall read as follows:

Should the City of Salisbury consider eliminating primary elections in the City of Salisbury? Yes or No.

AND, BE IT FURTHER ENACTED AND ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, MARYLAND, that this Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage.

THIS ORDINANCE was introduced and read at a meeting of the Council of the City of Salisbury held on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2005, and having been published as required by law, in the meantime, was finally passed by the Council on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2005.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda J. Colegrove  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael P. Durn  
Council President

APPROVED BY ME THIS

\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2005

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barrie P. Tilghman  
Mayor