Seneca VA's Tenure 2/10/10

Salem buys land for fire department

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SALEM – Mayor Diane Head couldn't be happier about the news that was solidified at Tuesday's council meeting.

Since Head took office, one of her main goals has been to improve and expand the current volunteer fire department.

Over the summer the town applied for a $500,000 grant. And, while that was not obtained, Salem has pressed on.

Head announced Tuesday that the town purchased a piece of property across from the current station. The building, at the end of Park Avenue, was once the Cherokee Path Restaurant but had been empty for a decade.

Last Thursday purchase negotiations between the owners of the building and the town were finalized.

"The price of purchase was $35,000, which includes demolition of the current structure," said Kim Alexander, representative at Salem Town Hall. "Diane and the council didn't feel like they could wait to act with a price like that. The feedback about it has been positive, no complaints, as this is another step in the right direction."

While the grant fell through, Alexander said other funding options wait in the wings.

"We may expand on the current building, but the fact that we now have the land secure will make a big difference with further applications," she added.

In addition, the audit report was good.

"Jason White, CPA reported that all areas of funds were in compliance and that our current checks and balances were keeping everything directly in line," Head said. "After years of problems with audits this was certainly something to celebrate."