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Lovely Warren, Elaine Spaul to lead Rochester City Council

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Rochester City Council has selected its youngest-ever president in Lovely Warren, a first that she downplayed when announced Tuesday — but a position she called "a distinct honor."

The next City Council, including three new members, will officially take office on Jan. 4, and vote Warren as their president and City Council member Elaine Spaul as vice president. Their informal selection was made weeks ago.

Both Warren, 32, representing the Northeast District, and Spaul, 61, from the East District, are midway through their first four-year terms on the nine-member board. The leadership positions are two-year terms.

Warren said city finances are likely to be their greatest challenge, starting with a need to adjust spending and save \$3 million to \$4 million through a plan the administration expects to put before council next month. Warren said she wants council committee leaders to have more advance input.

She also plans to resume biweekly meetings with Mayor Robert Duffy, which were suspended under current Council President Gladys Santiago.

Also Tuesday, Council announced its priorities for 2010 — education, center city development, youth, revitalizing neighborhoods and stabilizing the work force.

Council duties are to approve spending and set policy for the city. Salaries will remain frozen in 2010 at \$31,560, with \$41,560 for the president.

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