

City of Auburn, Maine
"Maine's City of Opportunity"
Conservation Commission
ANNUAL REPORT JULY 1, 2017 – JUNE 30, 2018
Submitted by Ms. Jordan Tate, Chair

Auburn's Conservation Commission is pleased to present our Annual Report for the year ending June 30, 2019. The Conservation Commission was established by the Auburn City Council February 17, 2015. The first meeting of the Commission was held June 16, 2015. Two of the original Commissioners appointed by the City Council, Maurice Keene and Tizz Crowley, have been reappointed and continue to serve in the coming year.



Commissioners serving this year include: Chair Jordan Tate, Johnna Flood, Maurice Keene, Rhyanna Larose, Ben Low, Shelley Norton, and Tizz Crowley. Support staff is Anthony Beaulieu, PE.

The Conservation Commission has two standing committees and a work group: Lewiston-Auburn Community Forest Board, the Parks Committee and the Trails Workgroup. LACFB seeks to enhance the quality of life for all citizens in the twin cities by improving and preserving their community forests. The Parks Committee focuses on City parks, cemeteries and green or open spaces. The Trails Workgroup is working on a collaborative arrangement with other community organizations to promote trail use and maintenance for all to enjoy a healthy activity.

The Conservation Commission has a comprehensive web page where community members can find out more information. The public is welcome to attend any meetings of the Conservation Commission and its committees. Community suggestions and recommendations are encouraged. Video recordings of Conservation Commission meetings are available.

<http://www.auburnmaine.gov/pages/government/conservation-commission-auburn-maine>

This year Auburn's Conservation Commission became a member of the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions. This membership provides a number of resources to improve and enhance conservation efforts in our community.

Littlefield Dam: The Conservation Commission was privileged to have Bjorn Lake, from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration speak at the August meeting. Mr. Lake assisted the Conservation Commission with information and suggestions to enable the Commission to submit an application for funding to remove the Littlefield Dam. Ms. Jordan Tate, Conservation Chair, made two presentations to the Auburn City Council to secure the Council support of the application. The Council approved the submission of a grant request to help with the removal of the Littlefield Dam. If successful, this would have an added benefit to help restore sea-run fisheries. The grant was not received as the federal government reallocated funding to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. It is expected NFWF will release the coastal resilience grant. The Conservation Commission will continue to work on the removal of the Littlefield Dam project.

Barker Mills Dam relicensing: August 29, 2017 a scoping meeting was held by FERC to address concerns of the public moving forward in the relicensing process. The Commission expressed concern over a breakdown in

communication about the promotion of the scoping meeting to the public. The Conservation Commission voted unanimously to support the City filing a Motion of Intervention.

Project Canopy-street tree survey: Tony Beaulieu, the Commission's support staff, working closely with the Commission and the LACFB is working on the next phase of the Tree Street Inventory. Part of the match for the grant is David Griswold's, a professional forester and longtime member of the LACFB from Auburn, work doing the actual on-the-street inventory.

Ag Zone Study: Eric Cousens gave a presentation on AGRP study which focuses on 40% of Auburn's land mass. The Commission submitted a letter to the City Clerk regarding the AGRP study.

Owen Grumbling Community program: Auburn Conservation Commission hosted an evening community presentation on February 27, 2018. Mr. Owen Grumbling, of the Maine Association of Conservation Commission and the Wells Conservation Commission has over 30 years' experience in conservation work. The talk discussed the work and operation of conservation commissions and included a number of case study examples.

Alert-me Notices: The Commission unanimously voted to request the City have a Conservation category for alert-me subscribers which will notify the community of meetings, speakers, and programs with a Conservation focus. The City replied they do not use the alert-me system for Boards and Committee meetings posted on the City Calendar.

Other activities:

Members of the Conservation Commission attended Maine Association of Conservation Commissions annual event and the Land Conservation Conference so to provide an update to the Commission as a whole.

Mayoral candidates Jason Levesque and Adam Lee were invited to speak to the group in November 2017. Due to scheduling conflicts neither candidate was able to attend.

The Commission supported the action for the Conservation Commission Chair to contact City departments regarding conservation projects that might come to the department. It is important communication lines are open and used both ways.

Winterrfest: No action was taken. There was no request from the City to participate and there was not sufficient notice to define and implement an activity.

150th Auburn Anniversary: The Commission enthusiastically will present a program or event to celebrate the City of Auburn and its good conversation practices.

LACFB: *ask the Forest Board to write this section or create an annual report for LACFB. Be sure to include Saturday July 22nd walk. Arbor Week: (i) Monday 5 21: members attend State Arbor Week event in Bath, for Tree City USA recognition. ii) Tuesday 5 22: Steve and John will explore presentation and distribution of cedar seedlings from CedarWorks to 4th and 5th grade classes at St. Dom's iii) Wednesday 5 23: Steve and Gary will explore planting a tree in both Pettengill Parks. iv) Thursday 5 24: Dave is working to bring a Sustainable Forestry Initiative BMP (stream crossing, water management, erosion control) workshop to Auburn. Possible*

field sites are the Pettengill woodlot adjacent to the Armory, and Sherwood Forest. v) Saturday 5 25: John is exploring a recycling day, providing a Waste Management truck for paper drop off in both cities. vi) City Hall Arbor week Displays to be coordinated by Rick. c) Project Canopy Grant 2017 i) Dave Griswold plans to resume the inventory starting in May ii) Planting portion of the grant should be considered with upcoming arbor week iii) Have until October to complete grant work and submit necessary documentation

Parks Subcommittee: Held a photo contest to encourage people to visit Auburn Parks. The winner was Ms. Reagan Jean of Lewiston. Photos are noted at the end of this report.

The Parks committee continued the “Edibles” theme for the year. Parks continues to encourage edibles in our parks and open spaces.

Parks Committee members have been doing on-site review of each park in Auburn. The work is expected to be completed in the fall of 2018. The results will be recommendations on the use, maintenance, and upgrades to each site.

Trails Workgroup- the Commission wrote a Support Letter for NEMBA and its work at Mt. Apatite. Bew Low, a Conservation Commissioner, chairs this group and will be the Commission liaison to the LA Trails group.
