

City of Auburn

To: Mayor LaBonté and the Auburn City Council
From: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
Subject: January Monthly Reporting – *Fire, Police, Finance, CDBG, Health & Social Services, Planning, Permitting & Code, ICT, and Human Resources*
Date: February 28, 2013

Fire

Prevention

- In January, there were thirty-five life safety inspections conducted by the fire companies in twenty-eight businesses and seven apartment buildings. Out of those inspections, fourteen businesses and all seven apartment buildings were found not to be in compliance with the fire code.

Training

- This month crews conducted training on topics mandated by the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards. These topics include dealing with blood borne pathogens, the use of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), fit testing for SCBA masks and high efficiency particulate respirators, and other job related health and safety topics.
- Crews also participated in mass causality incident management training. A mass causality occurs when the number of injured or ill people exceeds the ability of the local emergency medical services and those immediately surrounding them. A mass causality can occur as a result of a transportation accident, fire, stadium collapse, natural disaster, or any other number of reasons.

Public Relations

- In January Chief Roma met with high school sophomores during a career fair held at Central Maine Community College. Chief Roma provided information about the fire service, job outlook, and other fire service based career opportunities.
- In addition to two tours of Central Fire Station this month, staff also provided training to the Auburn Water District on how to use the air cascade system at Central Station. This system is used to refill SCBA and SCUBA bottles.

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Emergency Responses

- In the month of January, the fire department responded to 321 requests for emergency service. These requests include, but are not limited to, 8 fires in buildings, 183 emergency medical calls, 26 false alarms, and 39 motor vehicle accidents. The city received mutual aid once and provided mutual aid one time.

Police

Operations

- Officers responded to 2,300 calls for service in January.
- Officers responded to 48 domestic violence calls.
- Officers conducted 545 traffic stops.
- Officers responded to 194 traffic accidents.

Training

- Six officers attended a week long Crisis Intervention Training presented by NAMI Maine. *“CIT is a 40 Hour program designed to increase your understanding of mental illness, the range of symptoms people live with and some of the treatment providers and support systems in your area. In addition you will be given instruction and practice in some techniques of de-escalation of individuals with mental illness experiencing a crisis.” – NAMI Maine*
- Two officers attended a two day honor guard training. *“The training was put on by our very own Maine National Guard. These servicemen took time from their busy schedule to train not only us, but law enforcement from Kansas, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Vermont. They spent 10 hours a day for three days teaching us the proper way to conduct a Colors Ceremony as well as the proper way to conduct a casket detail in order to honor our fallen with respect, honor and dignity. During this three days of training, these men suffered loss of their own and had to prepare for a funeral of one of their fallen soldiers; Lt. Col. Backus.”- Officer Gagnon.*

Community Outreach

- The police department launched a survey for our citizens to provide the agency with valuable information on how best to service the citizens of Auburn. We have had tremendous response and encourage everyone to participate. We will be ending the survey by March 15th.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/APDcommunitysurvey>
- 15 participants in the fall session of the Citizen Police Academy graduated on January 14th with a better insight into the department. A few were already VIPS and a few more are eager to sign up. This program has proven to be a successful tool for us to educate our community on what we do within the police department.

- The U.D.E.E.P. (Underage, Drinking, Education, Enforcement and Prevention) grant provided funds for our Juvenile Alcohol Response Team (JART) to conduct numerous community activities to include:
 - Party Patrols – to patrol for underage drinking activities in known party spots as well as monitor local convenience stores for young people purchasing alcohol.
 - Parking Lot Store Surveillance – we are required once a month to conduct surveillance on adults buying alcohol for young people.

During the month of January, seven people were charged with various alcohol/drug offenses as a result of the teams' effort.

- A few months ago, the police department implemented a "Challenge Coin" program. Every staff member was issued a challenge coin to provide to a citizen or business when their efforts reached the level of "above and beyond the call of duty" of a citizen.

In the month of January, two coins were given out; Wendy Brown was issued a coin for being a good neighbor by calling in suspicious activity. As a result of her calling the police, an arrest was made on a person who broke into a home and was cutting copper pipes from the residence.

A second coin was given to a business for their constant assistance in making the police aware of possible criminal activity. The staff of Republic Jewelry was awarded a coin for their referrals to the police department as it relates to individuals who attempt to sell stolen jewelry. With the efforts of Republic Jewelry and specifically owner, Dan Cunliff, numerous arrests have been made and stolen property has been returned to their rightful owner. In a time when the economy is tough for small businesses, it is nice to know Auburn has a business that looks out for our community and doesn't try to make quick cash on stolen goods.

Officers Cousins and Gagnon presented third and fourth coins to First Sgt. Maker and Sgt. Chabe of the Maine National Guard. Both officers were providing Honor Guard Training at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. This training is intended to teach officers the proper way to conduct a casket detail in order to honor a fallen officer with respect, honor and dignity. During the training, one of the training officers suffered the loss of one of his own soldiers and had to prepare for the funeral of Lt. Col. Backus.

Finance

- The Finance Director completed the 5 year Capital Improvement Program and began compiling the departmental budget requests for the City Manager.
- The department prepared the employee W-2s and 1099 forms required to be out by January 31st and completed the year end reports for payroll for the State and the IRS.

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- The Tax Collector worked on compiling a list of properties that have been foreclosed through the lien process.
- The Facilities Mgr/Purchasing Agent has been working with the larger departments to access their buildings, see if there are areas that we can save money and increase efficiencies.

CDBG

- The focus for the month of January was to work on the Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration Grant. Reine Mynahan attended several meetings to discuss a grant approach and define various components of the grant, She also worked on a presentation to both educate on the dangers of lead paint as well as to explain the elements of the grant, and solicited support letters for the grant. If awarded, an additional \$2.5 million will be injected into the Auburn-Lewiston economy.
- Reine Mynahan assisted two customers who were behind in their loan payments with loan modifications.
- Two deferred loans were converted to amortized loans because the customer had an increase in annual income.
- A contract was signed with Planning Decisions to complete an analysis of impediments to fair housing choice. This is a project funded through both Community Development Programs of the twin cities, and both housing authorities. A report of the impediments will be available by the end of June.
- The Community Development Department received the second appraisals for properties at 15 Broad Street and 6 Second Street. Both of these properties are important to the redevelopment of the land adjacent to Little Andy Park into a larger park with walking trails.
- The building at 15 Broad Street property will be rehabilitated. The developer submitted an application for funding through the Residential Rehab Program. Hal Barter conducted the initial inspection to determine what needs to be done to meet the program's housing standards.
- Two security deposit loans were approved for \$1,355. This program helps to prevent homelessness.
- Three heating assistance loans were approved in the amount of \$2,500.
- Yvette Bouttenot attended the L/A Cash Coalition kick off meeting. This is a committee that organizes the efforts for free tax preparation for low-income residents. We see this as a good opportunity to market our Homebuyer Program.

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- A Purchase & Sale Agreement was signed with the owner of 325 Turner Street. Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds will be used to demolish this residential building to make way for a winter relief parking area.
- The Community Development Loan Committee held one meeting in January. They approved an application for \$1,500, and another was tabled for more information.
- The City purchased 69 Bradman Street with Neighborhood Stabilization funds. The building will be renovated, then sold to an income eligible household.

Health and Social Services

- General Assistance paid in welfare assistance a total of \$13,208.68 in January 2013 compared to \$10,005 in the same month in 2012.
- We took in 122 applications. Compared to 82 in January 2012.
- TANF households assisted were 1 with \$241.90. TANF timed out, 4 households, for a total of \$1008.
- Workfare was assigned to 16 applicants, and completed by 16 individuals for a total of 294 hours, and a value of \$2,352. The majority of the workfare was completed at the Parks department.
- Community Cords; Three hundred gallons of oil was issued for heat, out of this fund, in January. It provided 3 households with 100 gallons of oil each, consisting of 3 adults and 5 children. Cords funds are used when a household is in need of fuel and they do not fit the General Assistance guidelines.

Planning

- During the month of January the Department processed 60 building, electrical, sign and plumbing permits. The permits resulted in the collection of \$7,441 in fees for work with an estimated construction cost of \$414,217. The number of permits was that lowest that it has been since keeping detailed monthly records last month, however, we are seeing the seasonal upswing start with January's numbers. We are on track for the best year for both of the above figures in the last five years since both have been tracked and we have already exceeded last years' totals for the FY.
- As of February 5th we are about 59% through FY 13. Our expenses are at 50% but billing is usually a couple of weeks behind so some expenses have yet not been accounted for during that period. Revenues are at approximately 83% with most of that from building permit revenues which were at 109% of the projected annual total. You may notice that revenues went down by 1% this month and

that warrants an explanation. We were accounting for actual revenues for the fire alarm but due to a spreadsheet error, we were not accounting for anticipated revenues for the fire alarm. Increasing anticipated revenues by \$29,000, offset by the months revenues reduced the percentage collected by 1%. In the future we will ensure that anticipated revenues include all categories in the total.

- The City of Auburn offers a municipal fire alarm system option to local businesses in exchange for a fee. The City system is one of many available to businesses. The system also provides municipal alarm services for City owned buildings that would otherwise be privately provided for a subscription fee. As of February 4th we have received 81% of the annual payments or \$23,200 out of the total of \$28,650 due for the service. Bills were sent out at the beginning of January with 30 days to submit payment. Second notices are going out this week.
- During the past month the Planning Department and JLUS Policy Committee made additional progress on the joint land use study (JLUS) in collaboration with the Maine Army National Guard for the area surrounding that entity's Auburn training facility. The Policy committee met on February 13, 2013 and will meet again at 4 PM at the Auburn Community Room on the second floor of Auburn Hall on March 13, 2012. We have created a web and facebook page to help keep people informed and facilitate public input. The committee is seeking input on park usage through a survey that can be accessed at the Joint Land Use Study website at: <http://www.auburnmaine.gov/Pages/Government/Auburn-Maine-Joint-Land-Use-Study> To date, over 200 people have responded to the survey.
- We have been conducting interviews for the City Planner position and hope to select the final candidate soon. We have some excellent applicants and look forward to filling the position and taking on more planning and comprehensive plan implementation projects soon. This position is critical to allow for adequate time to be dedicated to individual tasks, to serve the Planning Board, Council and Board of Appeals adequately, to meet the needs of citizens and business people in a timely manner, to improve public outreach and participation, to pursue grant opportunities and to ensure that the Planning Department has adequate succession planning to provide continuity in our planning efforts in the long term.
- During the last four weeks we tracked 20 new property specific Code Requests resulting in 6 new enforcement actions. The total number of code cases was down this month, however, a number of them were no heat complaints. From a code complaint perspective, it was a slow month. We have done some overdue housekeeping closing 175 open code requests and 62 code cases. It is common when addressing small issues or no heat complaints to ask a tenant to notify us if

the issue is not corrected by the landlord. When things get busy and the issue is corrected (so the tenant does not call back) those cases are sometimes left open and those types of complaints are cleaned up periodically as they were this month.

- During the last 30 days Cristy Bourget conducted 22 sanitation inspections including lodging, mobile vendors, restaurant and takeout facilities, 1 of which was complaint driven, in the City of Auburn. Cristy also conducted 23 sanitation inspections including lodging, mobile vendors, restaurant and takeout facilities in the town of Lisbon. The reason for increased activity in Lisbon is that most of their licensing inspections are due in the spring and inspections must occur for relicensing. We have planned for this inspection period to coincide with the slower winter months and will complete the routine Lisbon inspections on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays for the next two weeks. We are currently on track to provide the inspection service to Lisbon at a cost of about \$3000 in wages, benefits and expenses in exchange for a \$10,000 revenue and staff recommends continuing this next year because it will help fund the Departments other services.

ICT

- Departmental and Regional Collaboration:
 - Met with Museum L-A regarding ways to use GIS data for historical studies to link neighborhoods and communities.
 - Participated in interview process for Lewiston MIS department.
 - Configured and now providing hosting services for LA911 communications center data backup.
 - Configured Direct Inbound Dialing (DID) number for Auburn's Code Enforcement Officer when she is acting as Lisbon's code officer. This allows Auburn's CEO to receive calls directly from Lisbon residents without taxing our switchboard.
 - Participated in monthly AVGIS meeting to collaborate GIS efforts with Lewiston and surrounding communities.
 - Signed and submitted MOA to participate in the State's GIS aerial flyover to gather high resolution aerial photography for mapping purposes.
 - Met with Department managers' to develop GIS Needs Assessment.
- Website:
 - Met and planned the next phase of the website with the developer. Topics included integration with existing databases, an "employees only" site, and photo reviews.
 - Continued to monitor our website traffic and trends through Google analytics code.
- Communication Infrastructure:
 - AFD Engine 5 was added to our telephony schema allowing for 4 digit direct dialing.

- Discussed initial plans to add the PAL center to the City's infrastructure.
- Finished and submitted ICT's 2014 Operating Budget.
- Installed and configured Pavement Management software for the Engineering department.
- Worked with the Facilities Manager and vendor to repair the broken elevator card reader.
- Participated in facilities kick-off meeting to begin the process of inventorying and mapping city facilities.

Human Resources

- I attended a LERA (Labor and Employment Relations Association of Maine) Meeting in Westbrook. The presenter was Arbitrator Michael Ryan and topics included interpretation of past practice and other contract issues.
- Chris Mumau, HR Assistant, continued to conduct meetings with employees interested in the new dental insurance offered by Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust effective 1/1/13. There is a 60 day open enrollment period and this project will wind down on 2/28/13.
- The Human Resources staff met with Renee Bogart, ICT Director, regarding implementing an intranet for employees. As a result I have contacted my Human Resources colleagues to determine which cities have effective intranets and we will be reviewing a couple of sites to see what works and what does not.
- Ray Lussier, Safety Coordinator, met with staff from the Auburn Public Library and the Androscoggin County on a joint long term evacuation plan. The plan addresses locations for employees of the City, the Library and/or the County to be sheltered in the event of an emergency at one or more of their facilities.
- Ray Lussier also attended a meeting with the staff at the State Fire Marshall's Office and the Fire Prevention Officer regarding the emergency action plan for the proposed Ice Arena.
- Recruitments continue for the following positions: City Planner, Economic Development Specialist and Second Shift Mechanic.
- Contract negotiations are on-going for the Auburn Firefighters Association--Local 797, Lewiston/Auburn 9-1-1 Telecommunicators and M.S.E.A. (Maine State Employees Association) for the General Government Employees.