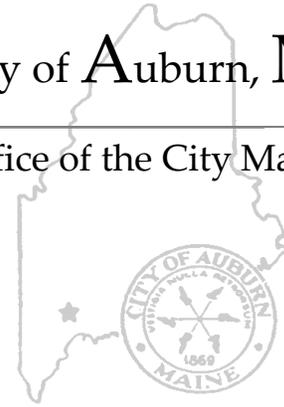


City of Auburn, Maine

Office of the City Manager



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
RE: Weekly Report
DATE: Week Ending May 23, 2014

Auburn Public Library

- The Library will be closed Mon., 5/26, in observance of Memorial Day.
- The Library will begin its summer hours schedule next week, starting on Tues., 5/27. The Library will close at 6 p.m. on Thursdays, instead of 8 p.m., and it will close at 1 p.m. on Saturdays, instead of 5 p.m.
- Comic book artist Mike Jordan and his students from Auburn Middle School revealed their “2014 APL Presents” comic book at the Library on Weds., May 21st. This was the sixth annual program and it was very successful.
- Library Director Mamie Ney is assisting in organizing Startup Weekend Auburn, which is planned for late Fall. Startup Weekend is a 54-hour event at which entrepreneurs present their ideas for businesses they wish to build from the ground up. Ideas are pitched, teams are formed, and businesses constructed with business plans, marketing plans, and more.
- The Library has completed its Annual Report for the Maine Secretary of State.
- The Young Scientists Club sessions have begun and it's not too late to sign up for these Thursday afternoon sessions. The program, sponsored by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, is open to children ages 9 to 12. They are learning about many aspects of science, such as weather, water and aerospace with fun hands-on activities. Jeanne Lothridge is the coordinator for the program. Pre-registration is required. Please contact the Children's Room for more information.
- The Library's Genealogy Detectives will help you learn how to find out more about your ancestors. The program will be held on Tues., 5/27, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Local History Room located on the second floor.
- The Library's VolunTeens will hold a year-end celebration on Fri., 5/30, from 4 to 5 p.m.
- Follow the Library on Facebook or link to our website at www.auburnpubliclibrary.org for more information about all of our programs, new books, and more library news.

CDBG

- The Steering Committee of the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative is planning a press conference to announce the new collaboration on June 6. The need to move the announcement forward is due to the resignation of one of the lead persons working on this initiative, Shanna Rogers.

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- The Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) has been released for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control Grant program. The committee will most likely be requesting a maximum grant of \$3 million and a supplemental allocation of \$400,000 to undertake identification and remediation of housing related health hazards along with the health intervention work. The deadline for the application is June 27.
- Yvette Bouttenot and the Fair Housing Team hosted a landlord fair housing forum on May 14th. The topic of the forum was "know the law for tenants with disabilities". Three professionals were invited to speak on the topic. The event was attended by 14 landlords. Most attendees provided positive feedback about what they learned.
- Reine Mynahan met with two of the new Community Development Loan Committee members to provide an orientation to the programs and to talk about processes.
- Reine Mynahan has been working with a property owner who is interested in donating his father's home at 132 Hampshire Street to the City. The property is in serious disrepair and will need substantial dollars to bring the property back to life. This is being considered for the HOME project that includes acquisition and rehabilitation of a building to be sold to a low-income homebuyer.

Health and Social Services

- Total monthly paid out for April 2014 was \$10,434 for the General Assistance program. This is \$3,168 less than we paid for the same month in 2013. We took in 69 applications for April 2014, compared to 110 in April 2013.
- This week, we investigated 2 households and found them both guilty of misrepresenting their situation and receiving assistance as a result of it. One of the cases has been forwarded to the DHHS Fraud unit as well as our police department to see about charges. It involves receiving over \$11,000 of assistance which the client was not eligible for.
- Workfare in April had not been as strong as in the past because a number of our applicants cannot do workfare. In April we had 8 clients participate in the program with a total of 75 hours completed for a value of \$600.

ICT

- Continued development and staff testing of ArcGIS Online (cloud) mapping applications. We have developed and are testing 10 applications. Most recently, we worked with the Planning Department to develop a custom online mapping application for use by a staff workgroup looking at the city's tax-acquired properties. The application allows members of the workgroup to explore the assessing and zoning information for each property.
- Began initial design for a public GIS map portal.
- Created a series of maps of properties along the western side of the Little Androscoggin River for use by Police and Fire departments in the field, as they try to determine which properties in that area are used by transients.
- Revised the scope, and generated a PO for, the Engine 2 network/phone upgrades project. We expect that this will be complete before the end of June.
- Created network accounts and profile for the new Arena Manager, Timothy Holden.
- Took delivery of the first of the new PCs for this budget year. Next step will be to configure them for our specific needs, and begin deploying them out to staff. The priority will be to users who are currently using Windows XP and the Lucity work orders application, as they are required for a much-needed Lucity version update.

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- Department staff took part in a conference call to coordinate the move of the Public Safety phone controller out to the 911 Communication Center. This move is aimed at streamlining the call-recording process at the CommCenter.

Planning

- The Planning Board has recommended approval of a zoning amendment to the Spring Street area and a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to encourage passenger rail to locate in our downtown instead of other locations. Both of those items will be up for a Council Public Hearing on June 2nd. This summer is looking up for new developments and our phones, email and meeting times have been very busy. We anticipated increased activity sooner than now but revenues are still down for the season and we hope to see some of the projects in the works before the end of the fiscal year.
- 9 Gamage Avenue is NOT still standing. I am pleased to finally say that! Although it took longer for the demolition than we would have liked, we were able to avoid local taxpayer expense while resolving the issues at this property. The Councils support in condemning the property was crucial in applying legal pressure to the owner. We anticipate a couple additional condemnations in the coming months.
- The New Auburn Transportation and Land Use plan consultant is working on the draft plan and it should be ready in June for printing.
- The Joint Land Use Study with Maine Army National Guard is nearing completion and scheduled for a public Hearing before the Planning Board and Council on June 10th at 6pm in the City Council Chambers.
- The Council will see the second and final reading and public hearing for the zoning amendment to allow the transfer of development rights for residential buildings to be relocated into the Ag/RP zone on split residential and AG/RP Parcels at the June 2nd meeting. The item was voted down at the first reading but still requires a public hearing. The Council will also be asked to consider a first reading and hold a public hearing on a zoning change along Spring Street at the same meeting. The Council initiated change to the Comprehensive Plan to prioritize downtown passenger rail location over any previous locations will be available for reading and public hearing at the June 16 Council Meeting.
- Maine DEP has installed several groundwater monitoring wells near 7 Chestnut Street on the park property, within the street right-of-way and near the PAL Center all of which are marked in white lettering. All monitoring wells are flush mounted with road boxes so that you can mow/ walk/drive/plow etc... over them and they will not interfere with any activities on the property.
- Cristy Bourget, City Sanitarian and Lisbon Health Inspector has been spending much of her time in Lisbon until recently. She has completed the bulk of her annual work for Lisbon's license renewal inspections and will now only need to respond to new applications and complaints. Her service to Lisbon has been appreciated by the community and has been on time and under budget.
- Zack Lenhart, CCO has been working for the Assessor's office three days a week over the past 1-2 months so our code compliance response times have been slower than usual. We were informed Friday that he should be back full time for his Code Compliance duties beginning May 27th.
- The City of Auburn has announced the establishment of an East Auburn Neighborhood Advisory group and has begun seeking willing community volunteers to support that effort. East Auburn has it all: a strong sense of neighborhood, a great school, access to Lake

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Auburn and the Androscoggin River. Building on the feedback from Community Conversations last fall, strengthening neighborhoods has been identified as critical to community development. While separate processes will emerge for other Auburn neighborhoods during this year, the number of known potential opportunities for investment and challenges facing the East Auburn Village make starting here logical. For more info on how to participate see the City Website at:

<http://www.auburnmaine.gov/Postings/Blogs/Detail/Press-Release-East-Auburn-Neighborhood-Advisory-Group-Established>

- The Planning Department has been tasked with preparing the tax acquired property list for consideration by the Council. We are currently collecting staff input and forming recommendations to hold or sell each parcel for the Council to consider. We will try to get this list in front of the council for a workshop in June and for action on some of them in July. There is a total of \$1.4 million dollars worth of assessed building value and \$600,000 of assessed land value on the current list.

Police

- The department handled 648 calls for service this week. Officers conducted 224 motor vehicle stops and 34 field interviews. Officers investigated 73 offenses of which, 4 of which were felonies, generating 26 arrests, 19 criminal summonses and 8 juvenile arrests. Officers responded to 15 motor vehicle crashes.
- Officers attended the American Red Cross Real Heroes Breakfast. Auburn Police along with Auburn Fire, Lewiston Fire and Lewiston Police received the First Responder's Award for our response to the Lewiston arson fires last year.
- The department has partnered with Project Lifesaver to provide people with cognitive disabilities who tend to wander a radio transmitter bracelet that allows them to be tracked much easier in the event they wander off.
- A search for a missing child with Aspergers syndrome in Mt Apatite came to a successful conclusion when the boy was actually found in Mechanic Falls by off-duty AFD Lt. Matt Fifield. Chief Crowell presented a Challenge Coin to Fifield for his efforts.
- Nine Auburn officers participated in a multi-agency drug sweep that netted 12 arrests for various drug offenses in the Twin Cities. This brings to a close a four month long drug trafficking investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Public Services

- Mill Street- pavement base course has been placed
- Whitney Street- all pipe has been installed and box cut has started
- Manley Road- project complete
- Ongoing stormwater compliance
- Sweeping (streets/sidewalks)
- Parks Maintenance (at several locations) - Ball Field Prep
- Hot Patching around the city
- Maintenance – Repair of city equipment
- Recycling operations ongoing
- Cleaning catch basins
- Install Flags – Main St./Bonny Park
- Dig Safe Markings On-going

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- Permits; excavation (private/right-of-way), fill, drive opening, pole permits etc.
- Supervisory training
- Alternative Sentencing (plant islands/mulch)

Recreation

- Registrations continued for Summer Day Camp, Golf Lessons, and Track & Field.
- Spring Running continued.
- Spring Soccer continued. No instruction on Sunday, players will take a break to enjoy the holiday weekend.
- Youth Lacrosse practices and games continued.
- Youth Tee Ball practices continued. No games on Saturday, players will take a break to enjoy the holiday weekend.
- Adult softball games continued.
- Planning for Summer programming continued.
- Staff reviewed applications and conducted interviews for summer day camp positions.
- Staff worked on website updates, news items and e-alerts.