

City of Auburn, Maine

Office of the City Manager



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
RE: Weekly Report
DATE: Weeks Ending April 4 and April 11, 2014

Auburn Public Library

- The first issue of our new newsletter was emailed to cardholders and supporters. It has generated some very positive feedback.
- Congratulations to our University of Maine at Augusta intern, Julie Stephenson. She has been accepted in the University College of London's masters in library science program.
- Mamie Ney sat in on a panel on MPBN's "Maine Calling" with Jennifer Rooks on Thurs., 3/27, to discuss Monica Wood's memoir, *When We Were the Kennedys*. The program has started a monthly book discussion series for the last Thursday of each month at noon. The April 24th book is Paul Doiron's *The Poacher's Son*.
- The American Music series will not meet on Mon., 4/7. The final program on the 14th will feature Latin music and will begin at 6:30 p.m.
- "Money Smart Week," a national program focusing on good personal financial practices, is the focus of teen programming this next week. On Mon., 4/7, at 4 p.m. there will be online financial games. On Tues., 4/8, at 4 p.m., teens can learn about budgeting, credit choices, and being a savvy customer. The final program is on Thurs., 4/10, at 3 p.m. and features a Monopoly tournament.
- On Tues., 4/8, at 2 p.m. in collaboration with Senior College, Michael Everett will be at the Library to discuss "Seven Canadian Artists, an art movement that began in our neighbor to the North. The story of Canada's Group of Seven provides an excellent starting point for art appreciation. The Group was a regional Toronto art movement of the early twentieth-century that created a Canadian national style of landscape painting, a style that continues to influence how Canadians and the world imagine their country.
- In addition to the regular storytime schedule, the Children's Room will feature a DIY program for tweens to make a "god's eye" ("ojo de dios"). Kid ages 8-12 are invited to get creative with yarn wrapping techniques and popsicle sticks to create their own colorful decoration. Add a tail and you have a kite, or choose colors from your favorite sports team and you've got something stunning.
- Best wishes to Kara Reiman, the APL/LPL BookReach Coordinator. Kara has accepted a full-time position as the Youth Services Librarian at the Walker Memorial Library in Westbrook. BookReach is a community collaboration of volunteer readers who bring story times and children's books to children in licensed family childcare homes. The mission is to

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raise a community of readers by enriching the lives of young children through the pleasure of reading. A search for Kara's successor is underway.

- Congratulations to The Library Café for passing their state health inspection and being rewarded with a "Golden Plate Award" by WGME News 13. The piece was scheduled to air on Thurs., 4/10. This spot and past segments can be found at www.wgme.com. Link to the "News" tab at the top of the webpage and then to the "Restaurant Report" tab.
- A joint committee of Lewiston Public Library and Auburn Public Library trustees has been formed to explore additional opportunities for collaboration and more. Sonia Buck and Kirk Egge are representing APL. The first meeting was held on Tues., 4/8. Several areas for collaboration and cooperation were identified.
- The Library has been designated by the Social Security Administration as a site to provide an exclusive online link to customers who wish to check on their accounts or apply online for benefits.
- The Library is taking steps to avoid accepting counterfeit bills. A security pen and scanner will soon be in place.
- The Library's new e-newsletter is being sent on Mondays. The response has been positive and an uptick in visits to our website has been noted. Please let us know if you would like to join our mailing list.
- The Children's Services "Play and Learn" for April Friday mornings, a part of our commitment as a Family Place Library, has been very successful, as has our monthly "Lego Club." The staff is considering adding another session of the "Lego Club."
- Upcoming programs for adults include "Lexington and Concord: Things You Didn't Learn in School" on Tues., 4/15, at 2 p.m. There is also a "Media Lab Q &A" for adults and teens that are interested in using our Media Lab on Mon., 4/14, at 2 p.m.
- The Board of Trustees will meet at 7:30 a.m. on Weds., 4/16. Officials of the Maine Community Foundation will make a presentation about the Library's endowment funds.
- The Library will hold a Spring Book Sale on Sat., May 3rd, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Donations of gently used books are welcome. We do not accept condensed versions of books, encyclopedias, textbooks, or books that are moldy, smoky, or in poor condition.
- With the income tax filing deadline fast approaching, please give to the Maine Public Library Fund, one of the tax check off beneficiaries on Form CP of the Maine tax return. This fund benefits all libraries throughout Maine, including APL. Last year the \$20,000 raised went to purchase new ebooks and audiobooks for the state-wide consortium to which APL belongs.
- Mamie Ney traveled to Columbia, SC, to accept the University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science's F. William Summers Outstanding Alumni Award on April 3rd.

Health and Social Services

- Our total March expenditures were \$12,411 which includes \$3,115 for TANF timed out households.
- We had 7 workfare clients completing 78.5 hours for a \$628 value.

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- Four cases were disqualified from receiving assistance in March for violating program regulations or fraud. Disqualifications are for 120 days and are state wide.
- Tammy Thatcher was awarded a full scholarship to attend the Maine Welfare Director's Spring seminar in April. This is a 2 day educational event scheduled for April 28 and 29, 2014.
- Dot Meagher received a scholarship to attend Verbal Judo at MMA on April 2, 2014.

ICT

- Updated Computer Use Policy.
- Configured a distribution list for Norway Savings Bank Ice Arena to simplify public communications. The email address is: arena@auburnmaine.gov
- Coordinating with various entities on the impending NextGen 911 upgrade.
- Working with Auburn Housing to help them configure their VoIP infrastructure. This new configuration will help to avoid confusion when emergency calls are made from the Housing Authority. This will also help simplify their troubleshooting and support process.
- Replace the UPSs in the third and fourth floor tel-data closets. More are on order and are scheduled to be replaced.
- Working on re-designing the wide area network to improve speed and reliability. The existing hardware is over ten years old and is no longer meeting our increased demands on technology.
- Performed a GIS-related density analysis of service calls to Lewiston and Auburn police departments to demonstrate GIS capabilities to the multi-agency Community Partnerships for Protecting Children (CPPC).
- Worked with E911 Communications Center to create an Excel formula that solved an on-going problem with military time calculations.
- Began discussion of further sharing of GIS resources with Auburn Water and Sewer District, including integrating GIS software licensing.
- Testing some new features and updates to our website including better integration with social media.
- Upgraded two PCs in the APD Patrol Division, the Sergeants' and Lieutenants' machines.
- Removed 687 instance of malware from one of the Patrol workstations. Began the implementation of the new anti-malware software, Kaspersky Labs Endpoint Security.
- Resolved technology issues at the Norway Savings Bank Ice Arena.
- Worked with CommCenter staff on phone circuit issues.
- Updated quarterly Red Book motor vehicle data in MUNIS.
- Walked through the Third Floor EOC project with a potential vendor.
- Refined requirements for the Council Chambers and Executive Conference Room technology projects.
- Attended a demo of FireHouse software at the request of the fire department. The purpose of the demo was to familiarize the fire department and ICT staff with the capabilities of specialty fire department software in preparation for a possible future purchase.
- Created new versions of the Auburn Street Map (wall map) and Street Map Book for use by the fire department. These versions include fire district boundaries and hydrant locations.

Planning, Permitting and Code

- The Planning Board projects for the next meeting include a sawmill, Dollar General Store and a major addition at Central Maine Community College. The Board will also review the Council directed Comprehensive Plan amendment to prioritize downtown as a location for passenger rail service and a downtown zoning amendment recommended by the Comprehensive Plan for our downtown area near Spring Street. We have also received an application to build a 55,000 square foot retail store at 65 Mount Auburn Ave, namely The Hobby Lobby. This is on an approved commercial subdivision site for a 53,000 square foot retail use and will not go back to the planning Board. This summer is looking up for new developments and our phones, email and meeting times have been very busy.
- The Planning Board held a workshop March 27th to work on their policies and procedures.
- 9 Gamage Avenue is still standing. The current owner, Fannie Mae, solicited bids for demolition and then had stalled the process. We recently communicated our plans for further legal action and our disappointment that Fannie Mae would not act responsibly and would contribute to blight in our community. They have since resumed efforts to demo the building. An environmental assessment was completed last week and the report should be coming soon. Environmental cleanup and demolition costs will be finalized and we hope to see action on the ground soon. It would be great to avoid local taxpayer expense if the owner will continue to move towards resolving the issues at this property.
- The New Auburn Transportation and Land Use Steering Committee will meet again on April 10th. After a very well attended and productive public meeting the consultant has been working on the draft plan and graphics to show the public how New Auburn can be improved.
- Last month was a slow permitting month and, after a strong start, we have now fallen behind on projected revenues for the year. We three-fourths of the way through the year and have only collected 52% of projected revenues. It is not unusual to fall behind in the winter and we are still optimistic that some of the projects that we are aware of will be permitted in the current fiscal year and we can get back on track. Expenses are within budget and we may be able to come in slightly under budget overall.
- Cristy Bourget, City Sanitarian and Lisbon Health Inspector has been spending much of her time in Lisbon recently. This is the most resource intensive month as all of Lisbon's establishments need to be inspected. She will be done there soon and has done great job with customer service and inspections, while keeping on budget so the revenues outweigh our costs. Zack Lenhert, CCO will be working for the Assessor's office three days a week over the next 1-2 months so our code compliance response times may be slower than usual until he returns. There is a whole winters worth of trash and debris melting out of the snow banks so this is the start of a busy time of year for clean-up complaints.
- Some major projects underway or coming soon include:
 - New Auburn Transportation and Land Use Study: Underway and scheduled for a completion date in Late May
 - Joint Land Use Study with Maine Army National Guard: Underway and scheduled for completion this summer.
 - East Auburn Steering Committee: There are a number of known potential opportunities for investment and potential challenges facing the East Auburn Village. Currently, no process in place to address all of the issues, however, there is a strong desire to ensure a coordinated effort and to stabilize and improve property

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values. Stakeholder input and involvement in identifying all of the opportunities and challenges within the neighborhood will be critical to ensure that the neighborhood is protected and enhanced. Staff is working on a draft outline intended to start that discussion, help facilitate the establishment of a neighborhood steering committee and begin a public decision making process this summer.

- Wayfinding signage: Working on a joint RFP with Lewiston staff. The draft has been sent to our finance departments for review and we hope to complete and release it soon.

Public Services

- Plow/Sand/Salt
- Clean cold storage
- Unhook/wash plows
- Clean parks building
- Parks Maintenance (at several locations)
- Repair manholes
- Trackless training
- Clean basins
- Street sweeping
- Sign work
- Maintenance – Repair of city equipment
- Cold/hot patching work around the city
- Recycling operations ongoing
- Ongoing stormwater compliance
- Project layout on Mill Street
- Partnering with Water District for box culvert on Holbrook Road
- Addressing various resident concerns
- Street/Sidewalk Sweeping
- Parks Maintenance (at several locations)
- Respiratory Fit Training
- Manhole Repair
- Sign work
- Maintenance – Repair of city equipment
- Cold/hot patching work around the city
- Recycling operations ongoing
- Counting of trash stops
- On-going stormwater compliance
- Pavement management data organization
- Turner Street Sidewalk Improvement Documents
- Road assessments
- Budget estimates

Recreation

- Registrations continued for Summer Day Camp, Youth Lacrosse, Youth Tee Ball, Spring Soccer, Men's Softball and Co-ed Softball (returning teams).
- "March Madness" basketball camp concluded on Saturday.

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- Recess Warriors continued.
- Figure Skating Instruction session III continued.
- Co-ed Adult Dodgeball league continued.
- Planning for Spring programming continued.
- Staff reviewed applications for summer day camp positions.
- Staff worked on website updates, news items and e-alerts.
- Registrations continued for Summer Day Camp, Youth Lacrosse, Spring Soccer, Men's Softball and Co-ed Softball (returning teams).
- Recess Warriors concludes on Saturday.
- Figure Skating Instruction session III continued.
- Co-ed Adult Dodgeball league continued with the final regular seasons games. Playoffs will begin next weekend.
- Lacrosse practices began (all divisions).
- Skills clinic for participants in the youth Tee Ball league takes place on Saturday. This clinic will be instructed by the ELHS varsity baseball team.
- Date for annual Fishing Derbies was announced. Press release, flyer, website news item and e-alert completed.
- Plans finalized for a single session basketball clinic instructed by YES AAU basketball. This clinic covers 2 – 9th graders, and will be held on April 23.
- Planning for spring programming continued.
- Staff attended a Recreation & Special Events Advisory Board meeting on Wednesday evening.
- Staff reviewed applications for summer day camp positions.
- Staff worked on website updates, news items and e-alerts.