

# City of Auburn, Maine

## Office of the City Manager



**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Howard Kroll, City Manager  
**RE:** Weekly Report  
**DATE:** Week Ending January 30, 2015

### Assessing

- Joe has been working with Patriot and Paul Fraser to assure our current operating system is compatible with updates needed to the CAMA system
- Karen, Joe, Katelyn and Paul Fraser attended a webinar to view updates available and necessary for the Patriot CAMA system
- Katelyn and Joe visited the Freeport Assessing office to discuss their personal property procedures and brought back some very good suggestions.
- Due to lack of a quorum of BOAR members Karen rescheduled the Prospect Hill Golf Course appeal (again) for the 23rd of February.

### Auburn Public Library

- Due to this week's storm the Library was closed all day Tues., 1/27, through Noon on Weds., 1/28. Our Maintenance Coordinator Rick Duchesneau and Public Works have done a great job in making sure the Library is accessible. Thank you. The Library was very busy before the storm as customers came in to check out extra books, audios, and videos. We had to cancel our teen karate program with Phoenix Academy. They were so impressed with their first program that they gave that they are very happy to reschedule.
- Our new wireless printing system is set up and working well. It even allows those working at home to remotely schedule a printing job for when they arrive at the Library (2-hour limit).
- We have received a number of book donations lately. All donations are sorted. Items that are appropriate for our collection are added. All others are set aside for our seasonal books sales. Think Spring?
- Behavior problems, overall, are easing. However, we had an intruder in one of our offices last week. He was there to use the phone and try to access a computer. He was escorted out of the building and the police were called. This was someone that was familiar to us but had not caused problems before. Three teens were banned from the Library for a month for a significant inappropriate behavior.
- Our yearly school visits for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are coming to a conclusion. Auburn's Park Avenue and Minot are set to visit in February.

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- The Children's Department has planned a full slate of programs for February school vacation. There is something scheduled each day, including a visit from the Chewonki Batmobile, parachute play, and a special Lego Club session.
- Our upcoming programs include:
  - Teen Life Skills: Healthy Relationships: February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. In recognition of this important annual event, schools and teen centers all over the country are participating in special activities. Julia Teitel, the Androscoggin County Community Educator for Safe Voices, will be at APL every Thursday in February from 3pm-4pm for a fun game or activity centered on dating and healthy relationships. There will be snacks, candy, and prizes- come join us. The first session is Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>. Just for teens, ages 12-18.
  - Kids! Read to a Dog: Studies show that children who are typically nervous reading aloud become much more calm and confident when reading to animals. A child may sign up for a 15 minute session to read aloud with trained therapy dog, Maggie (a sheltie). Sessions are available at 5:00, 5:15, 5:30 and 5:45 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month (Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>). Please register directly with the Children's Department at 207.333.6640 x 3.
  - Cleaning Up Your Credit: The holidays have come and gone, the New Year has started and now you want to focus on restoring your financial credit. Join Laurie McDonnell, of Women, Work and Community for a special workshop on "Cleaning Up Your Credit" on Fri., Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, at 10 a.m. The workshop will cover the concepts of credit, strategies for reducing debt and repairing credit, credit reports, and credit scores. This free workshop is free. Please pre-register.
- The Library has a number of programs planned in association with the City's Winter Festival, which runs Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>. On Friday there will be a special morning storytime and a snowman-making event to kick off the weekend. The Library is partnering with the Auburn Ski Association to present a "fireside chat" about Maine's skiing history on Friday night at 6:30 p.m. The Children's Room is hosting a family movie at 1 p.m. on Saturday. For additional information please check the City's website or the Festival's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Auburn2014WinterFestival>. (The link is correct with the 2014 reference.)
- Follow the Library on Facebook or link to our website at [www.auburnpubliclibrary.org](http://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org) for more information about all of our programs, new books, and more library news.

**City Clerk**

- Created a new filing system for disposition permits
- Created a new spreadsheet for tracking Special Events/Mass Gatherings
- Licensed 1 Cab Driver
- Received 1 application for banner space
- Issued 9 birth certificates, 34 death certificates, 5 marriage certificates, 2 marriage licenses, and 14 burial permits
- Processed 96 Voter Registration changes, additions, and cancellations in the Central Voter Registration System

## **CDBG**

- A Request for Proposals was released this week seeking proposals for consulting services. The consultant will identify hazardous materials in the 4 residential buildings that will be demolished in the spring. The report will identify the locations of asbestos and universal waste, and will provide an estimate for the cost of removal.
- Another meeting was held by the planning committee to establish a community garden program in Auburn. St. Mary's Nutrition Center of Maine, Auburn's consultant, is finalizing the scope of work and the schedule for completing the required tasks. The first task of the consultant will be to conduct outreach into the three neighborhoods to determine where there is strong interest. This phase of the planning will begin the first of February. Denis D'Auteuil was asked to join the committee to explore a partnership with Public Services.
- "Opening Doors: Community Resource Fair" will be held on April 16 at Kaplan University from 8:00 am – 7:00 pm. This all day event will be focusing on tenant issues in Lewiston & Auburn. Service providers will have an opportunity to network with each other in the morning followed by the resource fair where informational tables will be manned by providers. A variety of workshops and presentations will be offered from 1:00 – 7:00 pm. A sub-committee of the LAASH Group is organizing this event and it is supported by the Auburn Lewiston Fair Housing Alliance as well as other non-profits. This activity is one of the strategies identified in the Auburn-Lewiston Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice.
- The final meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee scheduled for Tuesday was cancelled due to the blizzard. The meeting could not be rescheduled until February 11<sup>th</sup>. This will cause a significant crunch of the budgeting process.

## **Economic Development**

- Attended the January Lewiston Career Center Job Fair; interviewed all participating companies with regard to current employment needs, employment opportunities, existing economic conditions, emerging workforce trends, and overall business growth climate in the Lewiston/Auburn region;
- Preparation and production of Downtown Auburn "Geo-Spatial Sector Priority Work Plan" Concept for City Council presentation, review and policy direction;
- Attended 1/13 Auburn Planning Board Meeting to provide status update of (1<sup>st</sup> Draft) Downtown Auburn/New Auburn Form-Based Code product; (1<sup>st</sup> Draft) Form-Based Code product schedule for Planning Board workshop presentation on 2/10;
- Conducted the Downtown Auburn Monthly Connective Session on 1/14; Downtown Auburn Monthly Connective Sessions shall be not be continued for upcoming year;
- Administered & finalized contract document between the City of Auburn and POWER Engineers, Inc. for the construction of the Dingley Pooled Wetland Mitigation Site as part of the overall Auburn (Industrial) Enterprise Park construction project; prepared and submitted Federal EDA Quarterly Progress Report on Industrial Park construction, proposed Dingley Pooled Wetland Mitigation Site construction contract with POWER Engineers, Inc., and provided telephone update to EDA Regional Project Engineer on status of Auburn (Industrial) Enterprise Park & Dingley Site status;
- Engaged in Downtown Auburn/New Auburn Form-Based Code design, composition, production, and upcoming 2/10 Planning Board workshop session;
- Conducted building site visit and information-sharing to prospective developer for the 150,000 sq ft Lunn & Sweet Shoe Factory Building on Minot Ave;

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- Conducted Development Concept meeting with prospective developer representatives in Auburn City Hall for proposed acquisition & redevelopment of the 150,000 sq ft Lunn & Sweet Building;
- Conducted meeting with prospective developer in Auburn City Hall for the historic Engine House building at the corner of Court & Spring St.; contacted, scheduled and met with Camden National Bank Facilities Director to discuss “shared parking” opportunities for possible Engine House redevelopment;
- Conducted visitation and full campus/department tour of Maine Central Community College with Diane Dostie-Dean of Corporate & Community Services;
- Assisted new owner with the repurposing of the Crystal Springs building/property for new business entity resulting in the creation of 31 jobs;
- Assisted in the prospective relocation of an Auburn-based business into a currently vacant Downtown Auburn commercial property to support local business retention and possible expansion;
- Supported existing loan restructuring/refinance of an existing New Auburn business to support local business retention and stabilization;
- Composed, produced and delivered new lease agreement with Power Construction, Inc. at Auburn Intermodal Facility;
- Assisted, supported and administered (over a 4-yr. period) in partnership with UNITIL the successful completion and operation of expanded natural gas line infrastructure to the south Auburn District;
- Assisted in communications & attended the Ribbon Cutting Event for A&L Laboratory;
- Prepared for & participated in the Auburn Sports Tourism discussion group meeting;
- Conducted review of and prepared report on the current Community Little Theater Lease Agreement;
- Drafted new Lease Agreement between the City of Auburn and the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad Co.;
- Supported the refinance of the current commercial loan between LAEGC and The Firehouse Grill restaurant;
- Conducted follow-up conversations with prospective buyer & commercial property broker for Historic Engine House;
- Composed, completed, and submitted 1<sup>st</sup> Working Draft of Downtown Auburn/New Auburn Form-Based Code Regulations for Planning Board Workshop scheduled for 2/10;
- Conducted follow-up status discussions with US EDA Project Administrator & Power Engineers, Inc. with regard to design & construction contract for Dingley Pooled Wetland Mitigation Site project;
- Received official notification from Maine Historic Preservation Commission & US Dept. of the Interior of approval and listing of the Downtown Auburn Main & Court St. National Historic Preservation District;
- Attended the Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner;

**Fire**

- Crews continued BLS update training taught by Capt. Flanagan

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- Chief Roma and DC Allen attended meetings in preparation for the Blizzard which hit the city on 1/27/15. In addition there was a second meeting for the public safety departments to outline their response plans.
- Chief Roma and DC Allen attended an “After Action Briefing” regarding this week’s past Blizzard.
- FPO O’Connell performed an occupancy inspection for several local businesses.
- Chief Roma, DC Allen and FPO O’Connell attended a meeting regarding departmental needs and concerns for a proposed Country Music Event which may be held at the Auburn/Lewiston Airport.
- Crews continued training on Ice Rescue equipment and techniques. Also Crew did training on SCBA use and air management drills.
- Lt. Jon Woodhead continued to provide fit testing for all personnel required to wear a respirator.
- Crews responded to numerous calls during the Blizzard. Fortunately the snow was light and fluffy, so there were no wire down calls
- For the week of January 22<sup>nd</sup> to January 28<sup>th</sup>, we responded to 85 calls for service. These include, but are not limited to: 1 fire alarm call, 3 fire calls, one cooking, one vehicle and one trash fire, 57 Emergency Medical calls, 12 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 6 with injuries, 7 service calls and 5 Hazardous Condition calls. We provided no mutual aid and received no mutual aid during this period. We did provided 1 EMS Mutual Aid call to Greene for UAS during this period.

### **Human Resources**

- The City of Auburn is recruiting for Firefighter/Paramedics to staff up the EMS Program for the Fire Department and for an Equipment Operator for the Public Services Department to fill one vacancy.
- Ray Lussier, Safety Coordinator attended meetings to prepare for Storm Juno and attended a debriefing meeting after the storm.
- Ray Lussier attended a meeting to discuss and plan for a mass gathering event.
- Staff reviewed the Human Resources Department section for the City’s Continuity of Operations Plan specific to pandemic emergencies.
- Staff provided a new employee benefits orientation and enrollment for an employee at the Norway Savings Bank Arena who is transitioning from part-time to full time employment.

### **ICT**

- Collaborated with Planning and Economic Development Department to create a map for a potential development opportunity. Current workflows can be confusing and seem to be creating redundancies. After completing the time-sensitive assignment, staff met with Planning to discuss ways to plan for and improve the process for the future. Recommendations will require further discussion involving changes to work flows and methodologies.
- Attended Gulf Island Dam planning meeting at Androscoggin EMA.
- Staff had a follow-up meeting with Randy Berry and Joanne Potvin from Androscoggin EMA to discuss ways that the agency could improve data gathering and distribution prior to and during an emergency using GIS and spatial technologies. Randy recently obtained a GIS Certificate from the University of Maine, expanding their agency's GIS capabilities. Followed up with Ray Lussier on recommended next steps. We agree that if we

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can assemble the interested parties to list out and prioritize the many opportunities we can begin to explore potential funding/grant opportunities.

- Attended the Maine Real Estate Developer's (MEREDA) annual conference in Portland. The focus was to see how other local and regional economic development organizations are utilizing maps, mapping data, and Internet technologies to promote their region. Gathered samples of brochures and promotional materials and talked to a number of real estate developers. Auburn has more technology available to citizens and developers than most other regions, but we have the potential technology to do more -- specifically to create map-based electronic brochures using ArcGIS Online. Provided a report to City Manager with thoughts and suggestions.
- Met with Public Works to outline a plan for expanding GIS capabilities and self-sufficiency within the department.
- Staff have been meeting to develop the Budget for next fiscal year, FY16.
- We had several short network interruptions last Friday. Unfortunately, they were self-inflicted. Because of not reading the fine print, I failed to realize that updating our virtualization tools would trigger automatic reboots of each of our servers! Once begun, we were committed and there was no way to pause the process until off-hours. The interruptions were brief and we're not likely to make that (particular) mistake again!
- The planning and design of our more robust phone system was cut short by the weather situation this week. We will be resuming next week with a plan to add some redundancy into our phone system, and to give us more tools for managing the Public Safety extensions (Fire and PD).

### Planning

- Budget, Budget – With the deadline 1 week away for next year's department budget submittal to finance we are working to meet the deadline.
- The heavy snow has this week seems slowed permit activity but increased code complaints regarding blocked entrances and emergency exits.
- A more detailed weekly update will be provided next week.

### Police

- The department handled 631 calls for service this week. Officers conducted 120 motor vehicle stops and 25 field interviews. Officers investigated 75 offenses of which, 9 of which were felonies, generating 18 arrests, 18 criminal summonses and 3 juvenile arrests. Officers responded to 47 motor vehicle crashes.
- Detective Syphers, through hard work and diligence arrested Andrew Franco for the Attempted Armed Robbery of Rainbow Federal Credit Union and the Armed Robbery of Gowell's Market. Franco is currently being held in at the Androscoggin County Jail on \$50,000 cash bail.
- Sgt. Eric Audette is coordinating the next Drug Take Back Event. This event will be the first without direct involvement of the Drug Enforcement Agency.
- John Banville, Claire Barclay and Amanda Tierney attended a customer service class at Maine Municipal Association.
- The agency currently has 25 participants in this month's Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) class.

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**Public Services**

- 2015 MPI Project Broad Street Mill & Fill- bids on 1/29/15.
- 2015 Demolition Project- building walkthrough for abatement on 1/29/15.
- 2015 Reconstruction Project- design phase.
- 2015 Reclaim Project- documents being prepared.
- Management team met with crew in preparation for the Juno Blizzard of 2015.
- Crews were out if full force during the blizzard plowing.
- Crews were out scrapping roads, clearing snow from sidewalks and the fire stations to ensure travel was safe for all essential vehicles.
- Mechanics performed vehicle maintenance on all City vehicles in need.
- Crews continue working on repairing plow blades, tire chains and sign work.
- Crews were busy restocking the sand and salt shed as well as sidewalk tractors.
- Excavation Technician investigated all emergency dig safe calls, as well as billing for street opening.
- Management team will meet yet again in preparation for this next storm coming in Thursday morning.
- The crew did a stellar job getting the community through a major event
- The crew was put on mandatory shift extension the day after the storm to deal with snow removal issues around the schools
- The crew continues snow removal on the main arterials to improve traffic flow and eliminate sight distance issues at intersections.

**Recreation**

- Registrations continued for Adult Dodgeball. The fast-paced and action-packed game of dodgeball is back! Teams will participate in a 6 week regular season, culminating with a single elimination playoff tournament. Space in this program is limited, signup today!
- Youth Indoor Soccer, ages 4-7 continued. In this six week program, players will be introduced to the basic techniques of soccer in a fun and positive environment. Emphasis will be on learning through fun games and small-sided play. Other skills such as communication and sportsmanship will also be incorporated. Currently, a total of 46 players are registered for the program.
- Practices and games continued for 1-6<sup>th</sup> grade youth basketball players. Currently, a total of 170 players are registered in this age group.
- Practices and games continued for 7-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth basketball players. Currently, a total of 100 players are registered in this age group.
- Practice and game schedules are available online for both youth and adult basketball:  
[www.teamsideline.com/auburnme](http://www.teamsideline.com/auburnme)
- Adult Men's basketball games continued. A total of 24 teams are registered in the league this season. Approximately 288 players participate in this league.
- Adult Women's basketball games continued. A total of 6 teams are registered in the league this season. Approximately 72 players participate in this league.
- Pickleball has continued to be a big hit as week 17 of the program continued. Pickleball is a tennis-styled sport that is played on a badminton-sized court indoors or outdoors. The "Pickleball" is a plastic ball with holes that is served, volleyed, and rallied back and forth over a net using a wooden paddle. As of Thursday, there have been 300 participants, with new members coming in each day of the program. Pickleball will take place every Tuesday

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and Thursday, 9:00am-11:00am in the Hasty Community Center Gymnasium. The fee is \$2.00 for Auburn Residents and \$3.00 for Non-Residents.

- Youth open gym continued. This free after school program is for Auburn students and runs Monday-Friday from 2:30 – 4:15 PM.
- The 2015 Auburn Winter Festival will begin on Friday, February 6th and conclude on Sunday, February 8th. Festival events and activities take place at a variety of locations. Some activities include: sledding, snowmobile rides, skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, ice skating, ice sculptures, torchlight parade, music and more! Information on activity schedule and event locations are available on the city Winter Festival webpage. Join us at the Winter Festival Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Auburn2014WinterFestival>
- Auburn Recreation is pleased to present Maine Red Claws Game Night! Get ready for the best basketball in New England right in your back yard with the NBADL Maine Red Claws. If you have never been to a Red Claws game, this is the perfect opportunity to take in some high-level basketball. Buy your discounted \$6 tickets at the Auburn Recreation Department, but don't wait, we have a limited amount of tickets available. Game day is Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 7:00PM at the Portland Expo Building. Transportation is not provided for this event.
- Haven't been skiing or snowboarding before and want to give it a try? This opportunity is a great way to do so at a discounted rate! Auburn Recreation is pleased to offer discounted Lost Valley all-day lift tickets for the price of \$25. Regular cost is \$40. To purchase tickets, stop by the Auburn Recreation office, Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm.
- Auburn Recreation is also offering Portland Dine Around Memberships for the discounted rate of \$25! Regular cost is \$29.95. This membership includes many options – new locations, old favorites, and many opportunities to try something different. By becoming a member, you will have access to discounts at over 300 restaurants, entertainment & sporting venues, more lunch promotions, more weekend usage, and more coupons! The best part is, this membership can pay for itself with only 2-3 times of use. For more information, or to purchase your membership, stop by the Auburn Recreation office, Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm.
- Staff continued work on the FY16 budget.
- Planning for upcoming youth and adult programs continued.