



**TO: Mayor and City Council**  
**FROM: Howard Kroll, City Manager**  
**RE: Weekly Report**  
**DATE: Week Ending November 6, 2015**

### **Assessing**

- Real estate sales transactions are now posted to the Assessing website and will continue to be updated on a monthly basis.
- The first meeting with representatives from Assessing, Engineering, IT and Planning was on Wednesday, November 4th. Meetings will be held periodically in order to ensure these departments are using the most efficient way for information to flow and all pertinent information gets to the departments in a timely manner.
- Address changes are now loaded once a week on Monday and new deed transfer information on Tuesday. Keeping the addresses up to date is especially important for the Tax Collector for the purpose of resending returned tax bills.
- Business Equipment Reimbursement applications continue to be submitted on a daily basis. Processing turnaround time is 2-3 days depending on the size of the account.
- The Tax commitment and Valuation Statistics Report has been assembled and will be delivered to the Mayor, City Council members, City Manager, Assistant City Manager and Finance Director in the next couple of days.
- Taxpayer requested property inspections as well as permit verification inspections continue weekly.

### **Auburn Public Library**

- RED TAG book sale clearance! – This Sat., 11/7, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. LAST CHANCE! We are clearing out the books from our last book sale, and they are going cheap! All books marked with a red tag will be \$1 for a bag or box! There are still some great books available. Don't run out of reading material this winter! This is a great chance to stock up. We will also have newly donated used books still in boxes available at regular book sale prices for adventurous shoppers.
- The Library will be closed on Weds., 11/11, for Veterans Day.

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- The Library will delay its opening until Noon on Friday, 11/13, for staff training.
- The library's elevator malfunctioned on Tues., 11/3, stranding a customer on the ground floor. She called 9-1-1 and the fire department responded promptly and got her out without any problem. The AFD returned about an hour later to assist us with getting a customer down from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Our thanks for the wonderful response and job they did. The elevator was secured until Maine Elevator Services repaired it in the afternoon. A broken bolt was to blame.
- Great Falls TV has moved some of their program equipment into the Library on a temporary basis. Unfortunately we are not suited to host them permanently but we have talked briefly about how we can work with them to create interest in GFTV and our media lab.
- The Library will once again be participating in the City's Winter Festival which is scheduled for Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup>. We will offer a special storytime, a family movie, snowpeople making, and assistance with maintaining the Festival's Facebook page.
- The Library has updated its display case on the second floor at Auburn Hall. It is an announcement of the NASA exhibit that will be with us in the Spring.
- Upcoming programs include:
  - Blue Star Flag Program – Thurs., 11/12, at Noon: In honor of our servicemen and women, Frank Roma from the City of Auburn will be at the library to talk about the Blue Star Flag Program. The City of Auburn has a special program to honor residents who are waiting for a loved one to return home from defending our nation's freedom. Family members of servicemen and women who are currently deployed overseas in combat areas are invited to receive a Blue Star Flag to hang in their homes as a symbol of support from the entire city for their service. Please join us to find out more about this special program.
  - Meditation Class – Sat., 11/14, at 11 a.m.: Take advantage of this free meditation class to help rejuvenate your mind and body after a busy week. This program is held weekly in our local history room.
  - KIDS! Chewonki Owls of Maine – Sat., 11/14 at 2 p.m.: Please join us for a program all about the owls of Maine presented by The Chewonki Foundation on Saturday November 14th at 2pm in the Androscoggin Community Room. This program is best for children in kindergarten and up.
  - Dear Mom: Around the World with the Air Transport Command during WWII – Mon., 11/16, at 6 p.m.: Thomas Bennett presents a touching tribute as the Auburn Public Library continues to honor our veterans. Bennett will share his father's letters to his mother and accompanying

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photographs in discussing his father's circumnavigation of the globe as part of the U.S. Army Air Corp's Air Transport Command during the WWII.

- Teens! DIY Takeover – Weds., 11/18, at 4 p.m.: We're taking over the Teen Space! Join us on the 3rd Wednesday of each month for a new project -- from duct tape art to photography, create your own video games or make your own magnetic poetry. If you have ideas for future DIY activities, please let us know! This program is just for teens, ages 12-18. Location: Teen Space
- 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

- Set up voting locations with the Public Services Department on Monday
- Batched absentee ballots for processing
- Tuesday was Election Day – voter turnout was approximately 27%
- Worked on post election duties;
  - Certified election results
  - Sent letters to the elected officials
  - Election staff payroll
  - Thank you letters to election staff
  - Clean out Wardens bins
  - Enter in new voter registrations
- We Issued the following:
  - 11 birth certificate
  - 59 death certificates
  - 2 marriage certificates
  - 0 marriage licenses
  - 23 disposition permits
  - 4 garage sale permits
  - 1 new cab driver permits
- Received 3 business license renewal applications and issued 5 licenses (renewals)
- We still continue to work on sending change of address confirmation cards to voters who were mailed post cards last month that have come back as undeliverable
- Worked on approximately 40 voter registration/voter change cards and updated that information in the Central Voter Registration system
- Worked on the November 16, 2015 agenda

### **Community Development**

- Auburn Water District will be contributing the labor to complete the installation of the water line that will service the Webster Street Community Garden. The savings is \$440.
- Community Development and HOME program income for the month of October was \$50,502.
- Staff met with 2 potential Homebuyers. One is considering relocating to the area and the other is hoping to purchase the home they are currently leasing. Staff also met with one customer interested on an economic development loan.
- Three Security Deposit loans were approved totaling \$2,255.
- Prepared a response to the Department of Housing and Urban Development in an effort to reduce the amount of HOME funds that will be de-obligated because funds were not committed within the 24 month period. The amount of expected to be de-obligated has now been reduced to \$9,443. This amount will be reduced from the City of Lewiston's set aside.

### **Finance**

- Helped the City Clerk's Office with the processing of Absentee Ballots on election day.
- Received proceeds from bond sale.
- Various staff members worked at the polls on voting day. Three from the Tax Office, 1 from Assessing, one from Finance (other than the Director) and our maintenance employee.
- The Tax Office has processed the following transactions for the weeks ending October 30th:
  - Motor Vehicle Registrations (Counter) - 387
  - Motor Vehicle Registrations (Online) - 36
  - Registered 8 ATV's and 2 Snowmobiles, 1 Boat, Issued 17 hunting/fishing licenses and 2 dog licenses.
- Received a list from the State of Auburn residents that recently had their dogs vaccinated. The list was checked against our records and 64 owners were notified that they need to license their dogs.
- Reviewed proposals for updating the key system at City Hall.
- Monitoring the work on the Central Fire Station floor repair.
- Coordinating the clean up of the Parks Garage.

## **Fire**

- Staff completed plans reviews with several planning and permitting departments.
- Staff met with WolfPack Fitness to discuss options for their new fitness business and preparation for Planning Board approval.
- Crews participated in Live Fire Training this past week, utilizing the department's training building.
- Crews responded to and extinguished a second alarm house fire on the Hatch Road. This was the home which replaced a previous house destroyed by fire caused by a lightning strike in 1999.
- Staff and crews worked with and assisted contractors in the repair of AFD Central Station's main floor. Work is ongoing.
- Staff met with the consultant for L/A 911 this week.
- Crews participated in Confined Space training this past week.
- For the week of October 29<sup>th</sup> to November 4<sup>th</sup>, we responded to 97 calls for service. These include, but are not limited to: 1 second alarm structure fire, q vehicle fire, 2 grass fires, 59 Emergency Medical calls, 4 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 1 with injuries, 9 hazardous condition calls, 12 service calls, and 8 Fire Alarm calls. We provided 0 mutual aid assists and received 1 mutual aid responses during this period. We provided 1 Paramedic intercept and 1 EMS transport in Lewiston for UAS, 1 EMS transport for Lisbon Emergency and 1 standby service for the ELHS football playoff game.

## **Health and Social Services**

- We received a reimbursement check from SSI in the amount of \$691.25 for the assistance provided to a client while he was waiting for his disability to be approved.
- General Assistance billing was done this week. We paid out \$8,058 in assistance for October. Number of unduplicated applications processed was 43.
- Workfare completed for October is as follows: 34 hours for a value of \$272, done by 4 people.
- The office closed for a few hours on Tuesday to help with elections.

## **Human Resources**

- October and November are the months for training. Staff attended an HR Day hosted by a number of State agencies that provide services to employers including Unemployment Compensation, Workers' Compensation, Safety consultation and Workforce Development, Research and Data. Staff also attended a seminar on Mental Health and Substance Abuse in the Workplace.

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- Maine Municipal Association hosted a workshop for area municipalities, local districts and counties on the new IRS reporting requirements for health insurance offered to full-time employees and the affordability of insurance plans offered. This will be a very intensive effort to meet the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for submission of information to employees and March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for submission of information to the IRS.
- Recruitments are underway for Economic and Community Development Director, Recreation Director, Assistant Arborist, Olympia Operator/Ice Arena Manager, Police Officer and Deputy Public Services Director.
- The Safety Coordinator provided a program on trench safety at the Annual Maine Safety Council Conference.
- Staff has been assisting with meetings with employees for the Charitable Giving Campaign.

## IT

- Working with the Planning Department, staff created a GIS data layer for use in the presentation of Form Based Codes to the Planning Board. Working with sketch maps that were previously created by planning and economic development staff, we created a data layer within our GIS data structure that conforms to Auburn's current data standards.
- Staff participated in a discussion regarding workflows associated with updates to our GIS parcels, our Patriot assessing system and our enerGov permitting system. The workflow around this process is crucial to our permitting system. Currently, there are a number of delays around this process, which cause confusion for staff and the public. Getting information into GIS in a timely manner is one of the crucial pieces, and the group developed several new workflows that will, hopefully, address the identified problems. Staff will follow up in the coming months to assess progress.
- Staff responded to several requests for additional information on our MapAuburn website. As a result, we have created one new application, which focuses on Zoning. As we bring additional shore-land and other zoning layers into MapAuburn, we will update this application.
- The Great Great Falls TV move is well underway! The distribution equipment is mounted in its racks in the City's server room, and Monday night's meeting was successfully broadcast. NASA TV is up and running on Channel 7, and the link to Lewiston City Hall is up and tested. Bare-bones studio equipment is stored at the Auburn Public Library, ready for the resumption of studio production. The staff are still working out of packing boxes, but we expect to have their office space configured soon.

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- The fiber connection to the Airport is mostly set, all that remains is the interior work. I toured the site with the consultant that will be doing the install, to familiarize us both with the scope.
- The department purchased battery back-up units for the Tax Clerks' workstations. These will provide a few minutes of power to their computers in the event of a power outage, so that they may perform orderly shutdowns of their equipment. This, along with a redistribution of generator resources, should allow for continuity of operations during outages like the one last week.

## NSBA

- General
  - Merrymeeting Behavior Health Meeting ~ Tavern
- Ice
  - Players Edge
  - Men's League
  - Women's League
  - High School/Middle School Practice
  - Public Skate
  - Maine Gladiators
  - LA Seniors
  - LA Seniors Elite
- Marc's Meetings
  - Quebec Trip
  - Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast @ NSBA
  - Norway Savings Bank Event
  - Norway Savings Bank Advertising Meeting
  - Planet Hockey (Hockey Camp in July)
  - Katie Lachapelle (Girls Hockey Camp)
  - Dave Gonyea (CMCC Hockey Program)
- Partnership Meetings
  - Hilton Hampton
  - Central Maine Orthopedics
  - Martindale
- Jason Ops Tasks
  - Ice Maintenance
  - Olympia Maintenance
  - Dehumidifier Maintenance
  - (Schedule Flexed due to staffing)

## Planning

- Permits – It has been a busy month for permitting. In the past 60 months we have had only 3 months that hit or exceeded 100 permits issued in a given month; They include May 2012 (101 permits), July 2015 (100 permits) and October 2015 (107 permits). Last year we had the best year for new construction *value* tracked in permits since prior to 2008 and this year still looks strong in the number of permits but is not as strong in new construction value. It seems a lot of people are building or renovating but many of the projects are smaller on average than previous years. With all of the projects currently in discussion we expect to still have a strong permitting year after the spring and early summer permits are in.
- Form Based Code-The Staff is finalizing the final draft Form Based Code and accompanying graphics. The final draft will be presented at a public hearing at the November 10<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting. We had planned to try to get this to the Council immediately after a Planning Board hearing if they recommended approval, however, the Council will be changing during the review process and it would not be good for the process to workshop with the current council and go to public hearings with the new Council. This will be on hold for a full review by the new Council.
- Staff met with the representatives for WolfPack Fitness on Wednesday, October 28 and then joined with the Fire Department and Code Enforcement, on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> to meet on site to resolve issues for the WolfPack Fitness application that will be heard by the Planning Board at their November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- On November 4<sup>th</sup>, the City Planner participated as a panelist at an Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce Leadership Development Institute class on Agriculture, and spoke to the group about the future of Auburn's Agricultural district.
- The Plan Review Committee is looking at ways to improve the Plan Review Process and make the process smoother and more predictable for staff and applicants. The next Plan Review Committee will meet on November 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff is working on a number of business relocations or moves to Auburn.
- There was a significant structure fire at 358 Court St., on the corner of Court and Fairmount Ave, on October 10, 2015 that left eight people homeless. The building was secured from entry by the property management company but a lot of debris remains scattered on the property. Staff contacted the property management company to see if the exterior debris could be picked up quickly. Initially the site could not be disturbed until the fire investigation was complete. They explained the owner is not in town because he is active military and was still waiting on word from the insurance company before contracting someone to



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clean-up the property. We are working to have the exterior cleaned asap while we wait for the insurance approval for clean up and demolition of the remainder of the site.

- The Planning Staff is continuing to resolve issues in an effort to get under contract with a consultant in order to begin work on the New Auburn Riverway and Greenway design and construction documents.
- Current interdepartmental reviews coordinated by the City Planner include:
  - New parking lot at Hartt Transportation.
  - Additional parking area for K and R Auto at 900 Center Street.
  - A renovation of a building for a new Urgent Care facility at 539 Center Street.
  - Preliminary plans for the new park and ride facility at the I-95 interchange.

### **Police**

- The department handled 635 calls for service this week. Officers conducted 144 motor vehicle stops and 16 field interviews. Officers investigated 58 offenses of which, 7 of which were felonies, generating 13 arrests, 22 criminal summonses and 6 juvenile arrests. Officers responded to 48 motor vehicle crashes.
- Det. Syphers is investigating a burglary that occurred in Auburn at Mac's Seafood. Working together with the Androscoggin Sheriff's Department and the State Police the investigators identified the suspect and recovered stolen property from approximately twelve different burglaries in the Androscoggin and Kennebec County area. Only one of the burglaries occurred in Auburn. The suspect identification was possible by Officer Katherine Avery, who conducted a field interview with the suspect in the area of Mac's Seafood.
- Det. McCormick issued Webster's Trading a letter advising them of their failure to comply with their second hand dealers permit. The letter also advised future incident will result in legal action and possible revocation of their permit.
- Officer Chaine and PEO Banville attended ACO training in Augusta.
- Chief Crowell and Deputy Chief Moen attended a Criminal Justice Advisory Board Meeting at Central Maine Community College.

### **Public Services**

- 2015 Reclamation Project- Valview Dr, Summer St. (Park Ave to Mount Auburn Ave) Touch-up work and driveways to be paved and completed next week.
- 2015 Reconstruction Project- Davis Ave, Seventh St and Tyler St. Davis Ave- sidewalks and driveways to be completed next week.
- Stormwater Management- Continuing compliance on Permit Year 3.
- Ditch work continues on out skirts of outer South Main

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- City's Green Space Litter pick-up – Every morning crews scan the downtown area for any litter/debris, clean up cemeteries, trash up when mowing city area green spaces, remove trash on Union Street Bypass, Minot Ave, Washington St.
- Crews were busy picking up numerous items left on the side of the road (debris, T.V.'s, mattresses, tires etc.)
- Sign work around the city continues; replacing and or fixing faded and damaged signs.
- Staff members attended a Maine Local Roads training in Augusta
- Crew were busy repairing the Oak Hill Cemetery
- The hot patching crew were busy working around the City filling any broken pavements and or pot holes
- The basin crew were busy painting lines on Monroe, Jefferson and East Hardscrabble areas, trying to complete as much as possible prior to winter
- In preparation of the new Salt Brine machine, crews were installing the new pad at the Public Works Garage
- Crews were busy setting up and taking voting booths around the selected locations
- As part of the MS4 requirements staff performed outfall sampling
- Crews removed and replace the cross culvert on Marston Hill Road
- Crews were busy sweeping leaves throughout the City
- Crews were busy working on playgrounds
- Staff began installing Holiday lights around the City
- Crews were busy removing a tree on Valview Dr.
- The Excavation Technician was busy marking out dig safe's, inspecting both private and street excavations, reviewing and issuing Fill, Drive Opening permits as well as billing and continues GIS work and did two days of outfall research.
- Between 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> shifts 21 work orders came in this week, 17 APS, 3 for PD and 1 FD
- The Mechanics completed most for APS, all 3 for PD, and are evaluating the FD battalion chiefs vehicle. Should have it written up by Friday.
- The welding crew is finishing smaller projects.