



**TO: Mayor and City Council**  
**FROM: Howard Kroll, City Manager**  
**RE: Weekly Report**  
**DATE: Week Ending December 18, 2015**

### **Assessing**

- Maine law requires income verification every five years on all Farmland special land use parcels. Letters have been sent to eight owners who are due to report. In addition, three parcels in the Farmland designation have transferred ownership. New applications must be filed in order for the land to remain in the classification. Information on the program and applications have been sent to these new owners. As of April 1, 2015 there were 46 parcels in the Farmland special land use classification.
- Approximately 4900 taxpayers take advantage of the Homestead Exemption. The legislature has changed the amount of the Homestead Exemption, currently \$10,000, over the next two years to \$15,000 in 2016 and \$20,000 in 2017. The loss in revenue to the City due to this change has been estimated and provided to the Finance Director.
- September deeds and declarations of value have been loaded in the CAMA system and proofed. All deeds and declarations that have been received to date are loaded in the system.
- Staff met with the developer of Colonial Ridge condominiums to discuss values and plans for expansion. An extensive analysis was done on comparable condominium values to determine whether any adjustments were warranted for the 2016 tax year.
- Form 801 BETR reimbursement applications continue to come in and are processed as they are received.
- Staff enjoyed the employee luncheon.

### **Auburn Public Library**

- The Board of Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Weds., 12/16. A new staff employee cell phone/telephone/social media/internet policy was adopted.
- The Library received a donation of 30 poinsettias from Whiting Farm. They have brought wonderful holiday cheer to the Library.
- The Library has added two books to its collection on Chinese business etiquette. If you're interested in learning more about the Chinese language, please visit the Library's website to learn more about our online language program, Mango.
- Speaking of websites, we have been having problems with access to our website. It has been down twice within the last 24 hours and three times within the last week. Our website is hosted by NetworkMaine, which is now a unit of the University of Maine that provides Internet connections and website hosting for libraries throughout the State. If the on-going problems cannot be solved, we will look into commercial alternatives.
- Our thanks to the Wallace family, trustee Doris Bonneau, and Rabbi Sruli Dresdner of Temple Shalom Synagogue and his wife Lisa for their excellent holiday programs this past week. The Gingerbread workshop, the French Christmas, and Hannukah concert programs were very well attended.
- The Library will close at 1 p.m. on Christmas Eve. We will re-open on Monday, 12/28, at 9 a.m. We will close at 1 p.m. on New Year's Eve and re-open on Saturday, 1/2, at 9 a.m. We wish all our friends and customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
- There will be lots of special programming, especially for children, during the holiday school break.
- 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**

- We Issued the following:
  - 9 birth certificate
  - 55 death certificates
  - 5 marriage certificates
  - 2 marriage licenses
  - 13 disposition permits
  - 2 taxi driver license
  - 10 business license
- Received 2 business license applications
- Prepared the 12/21/2015 Council Workshop packet

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- Received 235 petitions (An Act to Raise the Minimum Wage and An Act to Establish the Fund to Advance Public Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education, and an Act to Legalizing Marijuana, an Act to Amend the Laws Governing Welfare, an Act to Require Background Checks for Gun Sales). Staff verified approximately 310 signatures
- Worked on approximately 100 new voter registrations, and voter registration changes and sending Voter Registration Acknowledgement cards
- The 42 day post election campaign finance reports were due on December 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff worked on gathering information regarding Boards and Committee

### **Community Development**

- An application was submitted for an emergency affecting the home's heating system.
- Six HOME Security Deposits loans have been approved for a total of \$4,636 and one from the Gorman Funds in the amount of \$500.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fair Housing Poster Contest is underway for students at the Auburn & Lewiston Middle School. The contest is offered as a fair housing activity to engage students, teachers and parents in understanding the National and State Fair Housing Laws.
- Installation of the fence and water meter at the Webster Street community garden are complete.
- Prepared changes to the loan program guidelines incorporating a new approach with forgivable loans.

### **Fire**

- Staff attended a plans review meeting with Planning and Permitting.
- Staff performed a license inspection at Lost Valley.
- Crews performed 5 Company inspections with 2 of these License inspections.
- Crews participated in the "Truck Load of Christmas" program on Saturday & Sunday.
- Crews participated in Ice and Cold Water Rescue training.
- Crews performed ongoing 6 month probationary testing for our three new firefighters.
- Staff performed a final C/O for Agren's 3<sup>rd</sup> floor renovations.
- Staff reviewed a possible change of use for a building on Sacred Heart Place.
- Staff and Firefighters participated in the Annual Holiday Luncheon.
- For the week of December 10<sup>th</sup> to December 16<sup>th</sup>, we responded to 75 calls for service. These include, but are not limited to: 2 Cooking Fires, 1 Vehicle extrication, 48 Emergency Medical calls, 4 Motor Vehicle Accidents - all with

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injuries, 5 hazardous condition calls, 9 service calls, 4 Fire Alarm calls and 4 False Alarm calls. We provided 1 mutual aid assist to Lewiston and received no mutual aid responses during this period. We provided no Paramedic intercept during this period.

### **Health and Social Services**

- I've been taking advantage of the low clients by purging no longer needed forms, files and papers. I came across a bill for 100 gallons of oil from November 2014 which was \$278, compared to this week I paid a bill for 100 gallons \$156.
- Started working on FY 2017 budget which I expect to go down compared to FY 2016.
- Staff attended training in Augusta on Friday. An explanation of the new Central Maine Power, AMP program was provided as well as information on Maine Housing's new program to expedite homeless people into permanent housing.

### **Human Resources**

- Staff met with the new ICMA RC (International City Manager Association Retirement Corporation) Account Representative for Maine and New Hampshire. Of the items discussed were topics for retirement planning workshops scheduled for February.
- Staff participated on interview panels for Community and Economic Development Director and Recreation Director.
- Recruitments are underway for Public Services Supervisor and Project Manager.
- Safety Coordinator conducted an evaluation of fall hazards at the Recreation Building, Norway Savings Bank Arena, and the Ingersoll Turf Facility.

### **IT**

- Several weeks ago, the contractor delivered the final geodatabase of base mapping data derived from our most recent aerial flight. Staff completed quality control checks on this data and began the process of integrating the data onto our server.
- Delivered three specially prepared GIS databases to a contractor working on a project for the City in New Auburn.
- Staff worked with Tyler support to upgrade the Vehicle Registration process in MUNIS.
- Our website designer made the prototype of the new website design available to the web team. We'll be evaluating and modifying as needed.

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- Staff configured and delivered a new laptop to Public Services, to replace one that had been irreparably damaged. An outdated PC in the General Assistance office was also replaced this week.
- New access cards were made for the new Council and School Committee members. Also for staff who's cards needed to be replaced or updated.
- The new Seniors Programming Specialist position in Rec will require a new PC and phone. We expect that we'll be able to draw those from this year's replacement plan.
- Along with a number of the new programs we're adding in the GFTV 2016 season, we have also added 2 new shows highlighting and talking about Veteran issues. One is called the American Veteran and the other is Battle Zone. We acquire these military programs from DVIDS which is a media distribution site organized and run by the United States Military. All of the media on this outlet is created and produced by professionals and there is a plethora of programs available on the distribution site dealing with all kinds of topics. We will now be running 3 programs acquired from them: "In The Fight, "Battle Zone" and "The American Veteran". Moving forward we plan to take a look at other programs that we can add to our program line up on GFTV.
- GFTV staff have finished editing the College For ME luncheon that we shot on December 3rd at the Hilton Garden Inn. That program will soon be available for viewing.
- Staff worked with Lewiston MIS staff to try to resolve a technical problem with the video feed coming from Lewiston City Hall.

## NSBA

- General
  - Merrymeeting Behavior Health Meeting ~ Tavern
  - Retirement Party ~ Mezzanine
  - Potential new hire for our part time position – Pending physical and background check
- Ice
  - Men's League
  - Women's League
  - High School/Middle School Practices & Games
  - Public Skate
  - Maine Gladiators
  - LA Seniors
  - LA Seniors Elite

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- Marc's Meetings
  - Bridgton Academy ~ Mike Warde
  - Winterfest Rink Measurement
  - Planning Committee
  - Diane Jackson
  - St Dom's Winter Classic
  - Gary Rousseau ~ Spring Summer Planning
- Partnership Meetings
  - Sysco
  - GoZone Fitness
  - NuImage Awnings
- Jason Ops Tasks
  - Ice Maintenance
  - Olympia Maintenance
  - Rousseau's Hockey ~ Spring Summer Planning
  - Part Time Staff Position Interviews
  - Bridgton Academy ~ Mike Warde
  - Winterfest Rink Measurement
  - Planning Committee
  - Continued Ice Scheduling
  - (Schedule Flexed due to staffing)

## Planning

- Two Code Compliance staff attended training Monday and Tuesday for the 2015 International Building Code(IBC) transition from the current 2009 International Building Code ( IBC) and the 2015 International Residential Code ( IRC) transition from the current 2009 International Residential Code( IRC). Both codes will be update this summer by the State and construction in Auburn will be required to follow the new codes.
- The Contract for the Downtown Auburn Transportation Center has been awarded subject to one last contractor certification requirement and a construction schedule will be established soon. Staff met with abutters to coordinate a plan that will minimize construction impacts to businesses and residents. The last remaining item to be decided will be coming to Council to decide if we install a pumped sewer line to serve the transportation center or if we fund a larger sewer project that would serve other future development sites. Staff will recommends the latter but the Council will need to determine if the additional expense is a priority at this time.

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- The New Auburn Riverway and Greenway design, engineering and permitting project is set to get underway on January 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm with a kickoff public meeting at the Boys and Girls Club. If you know anyone from New Auburn or someone that likes to recreate on or near the rivers please tell them about the opportunity to design a signature urban waterfront village and park and vibrant downtown center. The project could incorporate things like the St. Louis Bells, urban whitewater kayak or surf wave viewing, ADA accessible fishing, carry-in boating opportunities and other gathering spaces. Please show up and bring your ideas.
- There's a lot of other efforts continuing this week that have been mentioned in recent weekly reports but we are running out of time for submitting the report and additional details will be in next weeks report.

### **Public Services**

- Crews were busy obtaining tree removal quotes and inspecting several complaints around the City for damaged/infested trees
- Crews checked and cleaned out Beaver issues
- Basin cleaning continues around the City
- Crews were busy cleaning out the Highway Garage in lieu of an inspection for Hearing Conservation
- Crews attended a Wellness Class
- Staff continue to assist the Electrical Department
- Staff continue to assist the Assessing Department
- Crews prepared and assisted in the Annual Holiday Luncheon
- The 2016 reclamation Project is out to bid due 12/22/2015
- The One Ton Rack Body with Plow bid is out due back 12/17/2015
- The Four Wheel Drove One Ton Dump Truck with Plow is out to bid and due back 12/17/2015
- The New Loader is out to bid and due back 12/22/2015
- Crews were out inspecting basin top trouble spots within the City
- 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 out and about doing spot checks on each run.
- The fence has been installed at the Community Garden Lot, 61 Webster St.
- The hot patching crew were busy around the City, as well as checking out N. River Rd.,
- Crews were busy removing bamboo around Moulton Park area as well as Bonney Park

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- Crews were busy screening loam all last week.
- 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, some areas of interest were Old Carriage Rd, Seventh St. Whitman Spring Rd. and any other areas of interest.
- 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.
- Two man crew continue to assist cleaning the Recreation Building as well as the Arena.

### Recreation

- Winter Festival – Winter Festival planning is going well. A couple of the key players met with the Plan Review Committee yesterday morning and presenting the idea of bringing everything down to festival plaza as well as a more in depth look at how we are going to pull off the Ice Rink. The final plan will be to get it right in Festival Plaza, pushing our Ice sculptor over slightly but still allowing him a space to do his thing in front of the rink. A list of confirmed events was sent over yesterday. We have also added to advertisements this year as well. Flyers went out to schools this week. We will be launching a paid facebook advertisement to get the word out as well. We will be doing an interview with Gleason Radio January 8<sup>th</sup> at 7am. We also will be using the road signs to get dates and basic information to people.
- Youth Basketball – Games have started. Last weekend went smoothly. No issues or concerns of any kind.
- Adult Basketball – Everything is still going well. No issues or concerns of any kind.
- Vacation Day Camp – Registration is still open for this program. We currently have 11 signed up but I expect that number to increase next week. This program will be open December 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> from 7:30am to 5:30pm. It will be broken down into 6 time segments throughout the day involving group activities, individual activities, turf activities and an art each day. This program is \$65.
- Ski and Snowboard Clinic – This program has been very popular. We currently have 22 kids registered and I expect that number to continue to increase through next week. This program is offered to kids who are learning to ski or snowboard from beginning to expert. It is \$85 to register, with an additional option of rental equipment at \$65.



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- Family Formal/Father Daughter Dance – We are still currently working on funding for this program. It will be held February 20<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 9pm at the Norway Savings Bank Arena. The cost will be \$25 per parent/child duo.