

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 September 4, 2015

Assessing

- Tax bills were mailed and the Assessing staff has been fielding numerous calls and walk in inquiries from taxpayers.
- Karen & Joe have been finalizing the appeal report for Prospect Hill Golf Club
- Katelyn has had two residential inspections and is working on loading the sales data from the of July Declarations of Value and updating the address changes in the CAMA system.

Auburn Public Library

- The Library will be closed on Mon., 9/7, for the Labor Day holiday. The Library will resume its Fall/Winter hours schedule on Thurs., 9/8. This means that the Library will be open until 8 p.m. on Thursdays and 5 p.m. on Saturdays.
- We have scheduled a mini-book sale for Sat., Sept. 19th. We will open our book sale storage room to customers who can search the shelves and boxes for great book treasures.
- As a pilot library for the Maine State Library/Cornerstones of Science STEM program development grant, the Library has been awarded a grant from the Burnham Trust for Cornerstone's "Healthy Citizens, Healthy Communities Project," which is designed to address the need for reliable child development and health information for families and to bolster sustainable connections between libraries and community health professionals. The grant is in the form of a loanable science kit called "Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds," which most likely will consist of daypack filled with hands-on activities, child and adult literature focusing on key health issues, and some of the scientific tools used by doctors during a child's visit to their office. The grant also includes a loanable microscope.
- June Roberts-Sherman has left the Library for a full-time teaching position in the graphic arts department at CMCC. We will miss June's cheerful presence and amazing skills. We are happy to announce that Heather Runnells will assume June's hours.
- Congratulations to Myra Ellrich, Collection Services Assistant, on the 20th anniversary of her joining the APL staff. The Library is fortunate to have her on our team.

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- The Library would like to thank David Higgs and his dog Maggie for their service in our “Read to a Dog” program. This program encourages children to read to a certified therapy dog in order to boost reading skills and build confidence in reading aloud. David has retired and is relocating. We are working to find another team to allow us to continue the program.
- Children’s librarian Debbie Cleveland is working with trustee Doris Bonneau to continue our very successful French language program. We are planning more interactive sessions and loanable language kits.
- The Maine Humanities Muslim Journey program that we are sharing with the Lewiston Public Library has been successfully launched. Approximately 50 people attended the first film showing. The book discussion group has 26 participants with a long waiting list.
- Marty Gagnon, Adult Services Librarian, attended a meeting for public libraries participating in this year’s Camden Conference satellite program. APL was one of the first public libraries to offer an Conference affiliate program.
- Suzanne Sullivan, Assistant Director, has started a science fiction book discussion group. The first meeting will be on Sept. 24th and the selected book is “The Martian” by Andy Weir.
- Suzanne has worked to add “TixKeeper” to our calendar. This platform will allow our customers to make reservations online for our museum/park passes and our devices such as the telescope and sewing machine.
- Our updated website is a success. Traffic is up nearly 10% over the same period in 2014. Individual page views have increased by 14%. Both phone and desktop use have increased, while tablet use stayed flat.
- Donna Wallace, Teen Librarian, attended the monthly PAL board meeting. She also participated in the review of candidates for their program coordinator position.
- Mamie Ney, Director, has spent the week in Augusta as part of the Maine State Library team participating in the Point of Light’s Foundation “Service Enterprise” training sponsored by the Maine Commission for Community Service. The program is designed to establish best practices for using volunteers in a non-profit organization. The Library relies on volunteers to help with everyday tasks and at special events like our book sales.
- The Children’s Department is hosting an African drumming program on Sat., 9/12, at 2 p.m., featuring Portland drummer Annegret Baier. The program is free and open to the public. It has been made possible in part through the annual contribution of the Fletcher Foundation.
- 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.

City Clerk

- We Issued 6 birth certificates, 61 death certificates, 10 marriage certificates, 5 marriage licenses, and 17 disposition permits
- Issued 20 garage sale permits
- Issued 2 new business license and 3 renewals
- Received 5 renewal business license applications and 2 new applications
- We continue to work on staffing for the November election

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- We received 24 petitions and validated 104 signatures
- Prepared the 9/8/2015 Council agenda packet
- Received 1 banner request

Community Development

- The loan portfolio generated revenues of \$54,486 for the months of July and August. Loan funds disbursed during this same period totaled \$46,893.
- Two Security Deposit loans were awarded in August expending \$613.00 of HOME Program Funds and \$83 of Gorman Funds.
- Yvette Bouttenot met with two prospective HOME Buyers who have committed to enrolling in the Home Savings Plan. Both applicants will participate in homebuyer counseling as they prepare for homeownership.
- Reine Mynahan attended training on accessing data from the census website.
- Reine and Yvette participated in a HUD Webinar for training on HUD's changes towards grant based accounting. In years past HUD followed the first-in, first-out method of dispersing funds from the letter of credit. As older year grants were spent out, requests for reimbursements would then come from the next year grant. In years past, the funds were pooled into one lump sum for budgeting purposes and we were not concerned about which program year an activity was funded. Now, the year will need to be identified with the activity. It will be a bit more challenging to track projects, especially rehabilitation projects where not all funds are spent. We intend to manage this through the Munis accounting system.
- The property at 132 Hampshire Street has undergone a transformation this past year. The property was purchased for \$5,000. The building was solid, but not habitable. Repairs included replacement of electrical, plumbing and heating systems, windows and doors, roofing and siding, and all interior surfaces—essentially a substantial rehabilitation effort. The property has been placed on the market for sale to an income qualified buyer.

Economic Development

- Attended Festival Plaza (development history & future programming) meeting with former Mayor Lee Young, Asst. City Manager D'Auteuil, Purchasing & Facilities Mgr. Boulanger, Recreation Dept. Specialist McLoughlin;
- Developed and issued public release for Downtown Auburn Neighborhood Architectural & Urban Design Walking Tour scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 10th, 6:00PM-7:30PM in advance of upcoming Downtown Auburn Neighborhood "Model Street-Model Block" Program;
- Facilitated and participated in L/A Museum Board of Directors (Business Development) Delegation visitation to Lowell, MA, conducted meetings with Directors of Lowell National Park, Boot Cotton Mill Museum, Tsongas Industrial History Center, New England Quilt Museum, National Streetcar Museum, American Textile History Museum & Whistler House Museum regarding heritage-based tourism strategies & trend, fundraising & capital campaign approaches, museum building public-private development models, museum/educational engagement practices, local economic development partnerships, etc.;
- Conducted local retail business visitations and participation outreach (discounts & promotional item) for upcoming Kora Shrine NSA Convention, local retail businesses

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visited include Old Farmhouse Bear Necessities, Orphan Annie's Antiques & Collectibles, Tripps Primal Farm & Kafe, Maine Gourmet Chocolates, JT Reid's Gun & Cigar Shop, Axis Natural Foods, Four Seasons Farm Market, Republic Jewelry & Collectibles, Goldworks Fine Jewelry, Gee & Bee Sporting Goods, Louie's Clothing & Accessories, Lamey-Wellehan Shoe Store, Juliet's Clothing & Accessories, Dag's Bait & Tackle Shop, Quilt Essentials, Musicians Hub & Wallingford's Orchard & Fruit;

- Conducted review of (modified) SCI Management DRAFT Land Lease Agreement for submission to SCI Management & review at upcoming City Council Executive Session on 9/8;
- Scheduled and participated in TD Bank New Market Tax Credit conference call discussion & information exchange for proposed Medical Tourism Center & additional urban development & redevelopment prospects;
- Engaged in review of Power Engineers Field Report for next phase plantings & wetland restoration at Dingley Polled Wetland Mitigation Site Project;
- Attended LEGC Loan Committee meeting;
- Conducted discussions with Mark Cenci, Wetland Consultant for Ron Adamian regarding 63+ acre parcel owned by Adamian, engaged in research and document location/review for 1999 wetland delineation work to assist with ongoing marketing, sale and redevelopment of Adamian parcel;
- At request of Lincoln Jeffers, Lewiston Economic Development, located/reviewed and providing copies of Auburn Mall Area TIF Agreements #13, #14, & #15;
- Engaged in detailed review and ongoing design & production work for Downtown Auburn/New Auburn Form-Based Code in preparation for 9/15 Auburn Planning Board Meeting;
- Participated in comprehensive internal staff review of Form-Based Code with Planning Director Cousens & City Planner Greene in prep for final submission to Auburn Planning Board;
- Scheduled and met with Bill Tracey, Senior VP Auburn Savings Bank regarding bank partnership in upcoming Downtown Auburn Neighborhood "Model Street-Model Block" Program;
- Scheduled, met with and engaged in GIS strategy & production session with Rosemary Mosher, Geospatial Database Mgr. regarding launch of Downtown Auburn Neighborhood "Model Street-Model Block" Program;
- Prepared materials, scheduled and conducted weekly City of Auburn Kora Shrine NSA Convention Coordinating Team Meeting;
- Met with & scheduled meeting with Mellissa & Ken Moore of 207 American Grill Restaurant (34 Court St.) to discuss overall downtown business climate, restaurant experience, upcoming partnership opportunities, economic development assistance, etc.;
- Conduct final follow-up & confirmation of Kora Shrine NSA Convention discount & promotional item participation with Auburn local retail businesses;

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- Discussions with Travis Dow of “Coupons in L/A” & “Menus in L/A” regarding design, scheduling & production of Auburn retail business pull-out promotional piece for Kora Shrine NSA Convention bags in coordination with Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce;
- Discussions & updates with John Gendron of Gendron & Gendron & Darrell Gilman of SD Cole Construction Inspectors regarding status of completion of Auburn Industrial Park roadway, (final paving completed week of 8/31);
- Engaged in preliminary formulation & production of Downtown Auburn Neighborhood “Model Street-Model Block” Program financial participation framework;
- At request of Maura Moody of LAEGC, provided Auburn municipal “input on sites, links, etc.” for the upcoming LAEGC Small Developers Boot Camp event brochure;
- Participated in meeting with John Holden LAEGC, Linc Jeffers City of Lewiston, Roland Miller regarding Beijing investors group and ongoing development/investment prospects;
- Attended L/A Artwalk follow-up meeting conducted by Mayor LaBonte, Office of City Manager & L/A Arts, Inc. at Auburn Public Library;

Finance

- Working with the auditors, answering various questions, providing information requested.
- Met with Jeremy Gatcomb from the Ingersoll Turf facility to answer his questions and help him understand cash handling, purchasing and other processes he will need.
- The tax office has been busy with customers, end of the month car registrations, processing tax payments and monthly reports to the state.

Fire

- FPO O’Connell and DC Allen performed final C of O inspection at CMCC and the FPO also did a walk thru of the old Club Texas for a potential new occupant.
- DC Allen performed an inspection of the Franklin School & the Pond Building at Pettengill Park.
- Chief Roma picked up our exchange fire cadet from the country of Poland this Week. Cadet Mateusz Cizewski is our third cadet from the country of Poland to intern with us for a month.
- Crews participated in navigating in zero visibility environments, utilizing the Maze Trailer on loan from the Maine Fire Service Institute.
- AFD and APD personnel had to rescue a toddler accidentally locked in an automobile on a hot day. AFD Crews utilized an emergency entry tool purchased by Chief Roma for this purpose. The child was safely removed with no damage to the vehicle.
- Crews began the annual hose testing as required by NFPA and the Department of Labor.
- Fire Department crews assisted the City of Lewiston with a structure fire on Old Green Road. Shortly after their return, crews had to respond to a small fire in an apartment building in Auburn. Crews also assisted the Town of Poland Fire Dept. with a mutual aid assist for a possible garage fire in that town.

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- For the week of August 27th to September 2nd, we responded to 89 calls for service. These include, but are not limited to: 62 Emergency Medical calls, 9 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 4 with injuries, 1 Child Rescue, 3 Fire Alarms, 7 service calls, 1 unauthorized burning of trash. We provided 2 mutual aid assists and received no mutual aid responses during this period. We provided 3 EMS Mutual Aid assists during this period.

Human Resources

- The Human Resources Department is assisting the Auburn Fire Department and Lewiston Fire Department with a joint recruitment for Firefighters/Paramedics. The application packets have been prepared and will be posted on the website soon. The ad has been posted. The deadline for submission of applications is October 2, 2015.
- Deb Grimmig attended a training hosted by Tyler Technologies on the MUNIS payroll/financial software system new reporting applications for the ACA (Affordable Care Act). The City must report health insurance coverage data on all employees in 2016 for the 2015 calendar year.

IT

- A power failure on Monday morning caused significant degradation of our operations. IN THEORY, our battery back-ups (UPS) should hold our servers at constant power until the diesel generator comes up to speed and is able to provide clean, reliable power. For some reason that we have not yet worked out, that didn't happen. When the batteries were expended, servers started crashing. And, data-sets started to be corrupted. The problems seemed small, and we scurried around to get things moving again as quickly as possible so that we could serve citizens at the counter. On Tuesday, a small partition on that server filled up and stopped our email server. It didn't seem a big deal, and it's happened before, so I cleaned it up and we went back to our usual routine. What I missed was that a 2 Terabyte partition that holds all of our emails was also filling at a rapid rate! As the server came across each corrupted area of the drive it made a log entry – back to itself on that same drive. The log files proliferated until they'd filled that volume and it all came to a grinding stop. Unfortunately, to efficiently remove files you have to have some free space on that volume. We didn't, and every time that we scraped up a little space a new log file was created to fill it. After bumping it up and down many times on Wednesday morning we finally reached the conclusion that there were no good options, and that we would have to take the server down. Thursday, around 5:30AM, we turned the corner, did one last orderly shutdown of the server and then brought it back into production! I spent the next few hours cleaning up some other services in other important processes, like Lucy and MUNIS, that had been affected by repeated shutdown/restart cycles. I'd like to thank all of our staff for their patience during this time, and John Bentley, of API Technology, who spent a sleepless night tending to the ailing server. We will be meeting soon with Electrical, Facilities and Safety (because of the elevators) to debrief and work up a plan to prevent this from happening again.
- Staff helped facilitate Lucy training for Public Services staff. Now that we're caught up on the versioning, we've discovered some pretty helpful functionality in Lucy that we had not been aware of prior to the training. Lucy's Trainer/Systems Programmer will be working on some draft Dashboards for PS staff to evaluate.

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- Staff went to Augusta to participate in the Governor's Task Force on Cyber Security. We may have an opportunity to tap into some University System resources to do a threat assessment of our wi-fi exposure. We'll need to find the right balance between protecting our assets while still keeping them available to our staff.
- Staff attended a workshop in Lewiston focused on using Census Data.
- Using a free application, users of MapAuburn can now view all of the City's maps on their smartphones or tablets. Distribution of information on how to download and use the app is in progress. One new application, created for this platform, will allow users to determine their location, determine nearby bus routes, and view route schedules (published by AVCOG).
- Staff worked with Public Services staff to create a field map and mobile application for use during a field investigation of Mt. Apatite.

Norway Savings Bank Arena

General

- Seniors Bingo held in Mezzanine

Ice

- Players Edge
- Men's League
- Women's League
- Shiny
- Public Skate
- Learn to Play
- Rousseau's Clinics
- Checking Clinic
- Shooting & Passing Clinic
- Gladiators
- LA Seniors

Partnership Meetings

- Evergreen Printing
- Maine Optometry
- Sam's
- Maine Chiropractic (Dr. Luc Dionne)
- Penmor

Marc's Meetings

- George Schott
- Sherwood Heights Open House
- Walton School Open House
- Wasburn School Open House
- Sports Management Class
- Brenda Espinoza ~ FPMWG

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Planning

- Downtown Auburn Transportation Center (DATC)- Eric Cousens and Doug Greene met with Lewiston Auburn Transportation Committee and Maine DOT in Augusta to discuss the bid for the DATC. The City Planner continues to work with Anthony Beaulieu in resolving an alternative design for the sanitary sewer line. The initial design was not feasible because of other utility obstructions in the way of making a gravity flow connection and proper depth to prevent frost damage. We learned this week that the construction bids were rejected due to an ambiguous bid form and will be rebidding the project in September.
- Form Based Code- The City Planner is finishing the staff review of the full Form Based Code draft. Additional revisions will be made prior to a submission to the Planning Board is expected to be reviewed at the next Planning Board meeting on September 15.
- New Auburn Riverway and Greenway RFP- VHB and the City Staff will meet on September 3rd to discuss the project scope, timeline and executing a contract.
- Ag District Study- Doug Greene was trained in a new ESRI presentation program that will be used in presenting the inventory report for the Agricultural District Study in Auburn.
- The 250 Hackett road junkyard cleanup us nearing completion. The cleanup is focused on TV screens and other materials that could be hazardous if left in place. The effort is funded by Maine DEP and is a major step towards correcting the issues at the property.
- Zack Lenhart has seen an increase in trash and debris complaints and unregistered vehicles in the downtown. Wallingfords Orchards and Ricker Hill Farm is now open for tasting and selling local hard cider. They did a great job creating an attraction that Auburn can be proud of.
- Planning Board- The City Planner and Alan Manoian presented material for the Form Based Code at an August 25th workshop. The next Planning Board meeting will be on September 15.
- Barker Mill Trail Extension- Doug is preparing an RFP to hire a contractor to construct the Recreation Trail Grant funded project. Every effort is being made to construct the trail this year.
- Other Activity- Doug Greene has been invited to attend the 2nd Annual Maine Summit on Aging in Augusta on September 15. Doug will be a workshop panelist on “Advancing New Models of Housing & Land Use”.

Police

- The department conducted a traffic safety checkpoint last weekend which yield ten criminal charges ranging from Operating After Suspension to Unlawful Possession of Scheduled Drugs.
- The department handled 826 calls for service this week.
- Officers conducted 336 motor vehicle stops, issuing 81 summonses, 4 arrests and 251 warnings.
- Officers investigated 88 offenses of which, 3 of which were felonies, generating 20 arrests, 35 criminal summonses and 3 juvenile arrests.
- Officers responded to 30 motor vehicle crashes.

Public Services

- 2015 MPI Project- Broad Street Mill & Overlay. Project complete, a few punch list items remain.
- 2014 MPI Project- Lake Street (Park Ave to the CUL). Complete.

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- 2015 Reclamation Project- Valview Dr, Summer St. (Park Ave to Mount Auburn Ave)
Valview Dr and Summer Street have been reclaimed. Gravel being added to Valview Drive, scheduled for base paving next week.
- Transportation Project at Great Falls- Water main extension completed. Sewer main extension remains.
- 2015 Reconstruction Project- Davis Ave, Seventh St and Tyler St. Tyler Street complete. Surface pavement on Seventh Street scheduled for 9/8. Box cut on Davis Ave to be completed this week.
- Perkins Ridge Road Culvert Replacement- Project starts 9/8. Detours scheduled. Project to be completed 9/30.
- Stormwater Management- DEP audit was held on 5/6/2015, waiting for feedback within 45 days.
- 2015 Demolition Project- 14 Newbury Street scheduled to be demolished next week.
- Crews were working on Maple Point, Old Farm Hill Rd., Valley St, Poland Rd. repairing driveway aprons.
- Crews were busy mowing the mall area, Union St., Washington St, near the Welcome signs, Center St., Pettengill Park, Main St, Raymond Park, Norway Arena.
- Crews were busy with cleaning up vandalism around the Riverwalk and other parts of the City
- The Hot Top Patching crew has been out and about the City checking and patching pot holes.
- Our sign shop was busy repairing old and faded signs around the City as well as replacing ones that were damaged due to accidents or vandalism on Pond Vie, Burns, Whitman Spring, Center, First Flight and Lake St to name a few.
- Crews were busy weeding and watering flower beds around the City
- 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.
- As always crews were busy completing trash runs around the Mall/Veterans Bridge Area, Riverwalk Area, Chestnut Park and many more.
- 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
- Roadside mowing at the Ash Dump and the Landfill as required by DEP
- This week the fleet crew had 20 work orders for APS three of them were Police Department. At this time 13 have been completed for Auburn Public Services and 3 for the Police Department.
- The Fleet crew are still busy working on open work orders
- The welding shop has been working on a sander for the 1 ton dump truck. At this time a parts list is in being produced in order to fix, resurrect for final installation to be put back into service. The welding crew also put together a new sander for the upcoming winter season.
- The Operations Managers and Management Team have begun looking into plow equipment, making a list of what needs to be done.