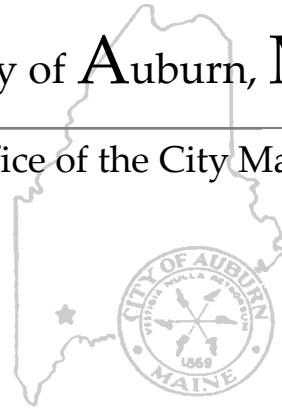


City of Auburn, Maine

Office of the City Manager



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
RE: Weekly Report
DATE: October 11, 2013

Assessing

- All of the staff is in the field working on the quarterly property reviews for the month of October. To date we have inspected and loaded 562 properties. Zach is working in the CDBG target areas of the city for his property reviews. As part of the shared resources agreement, the Planning Department has provided Zach to assist us with this project. Thanks to the great weather, we are on schedule with this project.

Auburn Public Library

- The Library hosted a session of the City's community conversations on Tuesday, Oct. 8th, which was attended by approximately 30 people
- The Library hosted an economic growth/business development panel for the Chamber of Commerce's Androscoggin Leadership Development Institute (ALDI). Roland Miller (City of Auburn), Lincoln Jeffers (City of Lewiston), Lucien Gosselin (LAEGC), Susan Hall (The Vault, Lewiston), and Jim Wellehan (Lamey Wellehan, Auburn) were the panelists.
- Director Mamie Ney received a grant from TD Bank to cover the cost of her participation in the Chamber's ALDI.
- The Library will host a Teen College Night on Thurs., Oct. 22nd, from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.
- The Library will have a book sale on Saturday, Nov. 2nd, from 9 am to noon.
- Continued collaborations with the community include Literacy for ME, College for ME, Auburn School Department, and SCORE.
- 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

- Letters were mailed out to the Board and Committee appointees letting them know of their appointments and asking them to come in to the Clerk's office to be sworn in.
- Junkyard permits were mailed out to 5 of the 6 Junkyards. The 6th Junkyard permit will be considered at the November 4, 2013 Council Meeting.
- Interviews were conducted with candidates to fill the Warden positions and we continue to work on staffing the polling places. Approximately 45 election officials have been hired leaving approximately 20 more positions to fill.

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- Sue attended the Androscoggin and Kennebec County Clerk's Association meeting Wednesday evening (October 9th).
- Absentee voting for Auburn nursing homes/assisted living facilities has been scheduled and will take place over the next few weeks.
- Staff has issued approximately 100 absentee ballots.

City Manager

- A free Medicine Disposal Day has been scheduled for Saturday, October 26 from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Medicine can be brought to one of two different locations: Farwell Elementary, 110 Farwell Street, Lewiston or Bedard Pharmacy, 359 Minot Avenue, Auburn. Bring your expired, unused, and unwanted medicines including prescriptions, over-the-counter meds, veterinary medications, vitamins, and homeopathic treatments.

CDBG

- I attended a 4-day Lead and Healthy Homes training. The most dramatic presentations were by a nursing school instructor and an elementary school principal who had both done research for their PHD dissertation on the connection between lead exposure of children and cognitive impairment. They spoke of the permanent damage that children with elevated blood lead levels experience throughout their lives, and how no school can absorb that burden. It was shocking to find out that a very low level of elevated blood lead level causes permanent damage. Many communities have established a rental housing standard for lead before an apartment can be rented.
- I also accumulated great ideas for redirecting Community Development housing efforts including integrating the healthy homes principles into our rehab program's home assessment tool, and information about Anti-Blight Ordinances that have been widely used in other communities as a mechanism to improve the quality of housing.
- One of the Curb Appeal projects had setbacks this week that had to be immediately addressed. The scope of work for the porch repair at 250 Main Street including re-facing the decking and railings; however, upon removing these surfaces a new set of problems were exposed. The removal exposed deteriorated porch framing caused by water damage that ran into the home. The correction required replacing flooring and framing within the dwelling unit. Further, as the contractor demolished a another section of the porch, they exposed a retaining wall that was being undermined, and created a risk that the driveway wall would collapse. The porch work came to a standstill until Hal could figure out what to do, find new contracts, price out the extra work, and get that portion done so the porch repairs could continue. Many of our rehab projects run into these type of complications.

Engineering and Public Works

- Preparing City vehicles for the upcoming auction 11-24-2013; removing decals, moving equipment to airport etc.
- Prepping for Dempsey Challenge this weekend, mowing, litter patrol, weeding islands etc.
- Prepping islands for Paving
- Grade Gravel Roads ongoing
- Ditching and culvert work being done.
- Maintaining Ball fields ongoing
- Paving and patching operations ongoing.

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- Recycling operations ongoing.
- Mowing/Weeding around the City.
- Basin cleaning around the City.
- A section of sidewalk on Court Street is being repaired by excavators.
- South Main Street Reconstruction: The contractor is finishing the curb installation and is paving in driveways. The surface layer of pavement is scheduled for Monday, Oct 14.
- Helm Bridge : The contractor has installed the rip rap slopes and is preparing to start the construction of the new bridge abutments.
- Court Street Brick Retaining Wall: The brick façade on the retaining wall in front of 370 Court Street is continuing to pull away from the concrete with a large portion collapsing onto the sidewalk. PW has cleaned up the fallen bricks.

Finance

- I have been finishing up some items for the auditors, working on the annual financial report and working with Joe Cuetera, Financial Advisor, on the FY14 General Obligation Bonding. I am pulling information together for the Official Statement.
- The Tax Office collected a total of \$19,707,206 in property taxes during the month of September.
- Facilities/Purchasing has been working with Public Works, Recreation and the Fire Department on the natural gas conversions and all work related to those projects.

Fire

- Fire Prevention Week is in full swing! Numerous tours of the stations as well as supervised fire drills at the schools have been keeping the companies busy. FD open house is next Saturday at Central Station from 12 noon through 4:00 pm. Come on out and spend some time with YOUR FD! This will be a very kid friendly event and great for the entire family! Hope to see you then.
- Prevention: for the week of October 3 to October 9, there were 3 business and 2 apartment life-safety inspections conducted by the fire companies. Out of those inspections, 4 were found not to be in compliance with the fire code.
- Emergency Responses: for the week of October 3 to October 9, we responded to 69 calls for service. These include, but are not limited to 2 apartment building fires, 1 highway vehicle fire, 1 storage fire, 38 emergency medical calls, and 8 hazardous condition calls. There was no mutual aid calls during this period.

Health and Social Services

- This Social Service office is feeling the effects of the federal shut down. With the temporary layoff of the federally funded DHHS staff who are “Disability Determination” officers. This office can expect a delay in determining disability (Supplemental Security Income, SSI and Social Security Disability Income, SSDI) for the 66% of our clientele who are pending a disability.

Human Resources

- The staff provided employee orientation for the new Recreation Specialist.
- The staff has been meeting weekly with the Wellness Team to help coordinate the Employee Wellness Fair scheduled for October 29th.

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- The staff is working with Joshua MacDonald, Arena Manager with the job posting for vacancies at the Ingersoll arena and staffing up for the Norway Savings Bank Arena.
- Ray Lussier, Safety Coordinator is finalizing the Emergency Action Plan and Procedures for the public visiting the new Ice Arena.
- Ray Lussier is also updating the Hazardous Communications Program to meet new federal regulations pertaining to chemicals in the workplace.

ICT

- ICT participated in Network Group Policy training. This feature of Microsoft Windows Server allows administrators to standardize the user interface. This increases ICT's ability to protect the network from external threats.
- The target location for the network back-ups is in the process of being upgraded to increase storage and stability.
- Auburn is sharing its archived 1998 aerial photos with the Maine State Office of GIS to help build a historical statewide data repository.

Ice Arena

- CONSTRUCTION UPDATE:
 - Front Exterior Framing is Finalized awaiting Siding and Sign installtion
 - Rink 1 Bleachers are installed
 - Rink 2 Bleachers are being installed
 - Ice Cube Installation is almost complete
 - Interior Walls, electrical, mechanical and plumbing work continue
 - Rink 1 Boards and Glass arrive Monday 10/14/13
- Continued to establish relationships within the community and attend client meetings focused on sponsorship/advertising and partnerships. Several contracts are pending, awaiting execution, and several proposals are out for review. To date:
 - \$125,100 in annual sponsorships has been secured.
 - \$15,000 in contracts pending, \$10,000 in proposals under review.
- Naming Rights Sponsor was secured and released on Tuesday. Arena shall be known as NORWAY SAVINGS BANK ARENA. Contract was secured for 10 years, at a value of \$770,000.
- Conversations have begun for those interested in concessions operation, the development of an REFI for concessions and lounge services is being finalized and should be released 10/11/13
- RFP for Gaming and Vending services has been retured. Canteen Servcies has been awarded the bid for Vending. We are still looking for a Gaming vendor..
- Cabling, Telecomm, and data contracts are being executed for technological needs of the facility. Phones and Data drops provided by New England Communications
- Marketing plans continue to adjust as we develop the website, social media and electronic announcements.
- Lists of needs for Office Furniture, Copier, and Arena Supplies have developed and many items have been planned for or ordered.

Planning

- ATRC Technical committee is working on a recommended a package of improvements to signalized intersections in Auburn and Lewiston that will now go to the ATRC Policy Committee for final appropriation of \$1Million of funding. After internal discussion we determined the need to shift some additional funds to Auburn's downtown portion of Court Street in lieu of some Minot Avenue and Hampshire/Turner Street improvements. Auburn staff worked on that at the ATRC Tech Committee meeting this week and we were informed that the proposed changes did not qualify for the funding based on the ATRC Policy Committee appropriation. We will hear from the Policy Committee in two weeks to see if the funding can include the desired intersection improvements.
- The Planning Board reviewed two projects at the October 8th meeting. The projects include the Lake Auburn Community Center proposal and a minor subdivision amendment at Simpsons Beach Road. Both projects were approved with some conditions to ensure compliance with the zoning ordinance and to address concerns that were expressed by residents.
- Zack Lenhart, Code Compliance Office is in his second week of serving the Assessor's office full time for the month of October. This arrangement takes one full time Planning and Permitting Staff away from his normal duties and makes it difficult to keep up with code complaints and housing issues. Please be aware that we will make sure that safety issues are prioritized but we are starting to get a back log of other complaints. They will be addressed as quickly as possible but some will remain until November when we are back at full staff.
- The new City Planner, Doug Greene, is back for his second week on the job and learning about Auburn. The Community Conversations meetings have been helpful for getting to know the community and Doug is quickly getting up to speed and putting his skills to use for Auburn. Feel free stop by and welcome Doug to our City.
- The New Auburn Transportation and Land Use Steering Committee met Thursday October 10th and continues to work towards improving economic opportunity and transportation for New Auburn.

Police

- Patrol responded to 422 calls for service this week. Of those 24 physical arrests were made, 118 were motor-vehicle stops and 31 were motor-vehicle crashes.
- The State of Maine released a motor-vehicle crash report and Auburn is ranked the 4th highest with a five year average of 1082, Portland had 2664, Bangor 1328 and Lewiston 1122.
- We conducted a speed detail, issuing numerous citations at West Auburn Rd and North Auburn Rd.
- A citizen complained of speeding traffic on Allen Ave. The speed trailer was placed and it showed the average speed to be 16 mph. No further resources will be deployed at this time.
- The speed trailer has been placed on Hotel Rd near the new bridge. The widening of the bridge has resulted in complaints of traffic speeding.
- Sgt. Schmicks and Sgt. Audette attended a two day training on "Investigating Complaints of Officer Misconduct".
- Officers Hammerton and Richardson attended an 8 hour training titled "Effective Interaction with Youth".
- Command staff attended an 8 hour leadership training. The title of the training was "Bullet Proof Leadership".

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- Chief Crowell and Lt. Cougle attended an eight hour training on labor management relationships and collective bargaining.

Recreation

- New Rec. Specialist Joseph Crocker officially started on Tuesday October 8th. Was a former Program Aide for the Saco Parks and Recreation Department for the last three years.
- Auburn Running Club was recognized at the October 7th City Council Meeting for winning the Track and Field State Championship this summer. Boys team came in second and the girls team came in first overall, with a total winning score of 367; 28 points ahead of second place Poland.
- Planning started for all adult and youth winter programs. Flyers will be updated and distributed to the schools starting the week of October 14th.