

City of Auburn, Maine

Office of the City Manager



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
RE: Weekly Report
DATE: Weeks Ending December 6, 2013 and December 13, 2013

Assessing

- Karen Scammon and Brian Sloan worked on processing the 801 BETR – Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement applications for business personal property. These returns need to be processed by our department. The businesses need to file the returns to the state by the end of December.
- Staff worked on the presentation material for the council Orientation.

Library

- The Board of Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Weds., the 20th. The annual financial audit has been completed and a clean opinion has been issued by the Library's auditors, Austin & Associates.
- The Library now has a functioning microfilm reader to assist its customers in doing historical research.
- Children's Services is making plans to bring Lego activities to the Library in the new year.
- Deb Cleveland (Children's Services) and Donna Wallace (Teen Services) attended an excellent anti-bullying workshop sponsored by Advocates for Children.
- Mamie Anthoine Ney completed the Chamber of Commerce's Androscoggin Leadership Development Institute.
- The Teen Advisory Board will meet on Friday, Nov. 22nd, at 4 pm.
- The next session of Great Decisions: Foreign Policy Discussion Group will take place on Tuesday, Nov., 26th, at 2 pm. This meeting's focus is NATO.
- The Library will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 28th, for the Thanksgiving holiday. The staff at the Library wishes everyone a happy and safe holiday. If you need last minute meal suggestions and/or recipes, be sure to check out our various holiday book displays.
- 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.
- The Board of Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Weds., Nov. 20th. The annual financial audit has been completed and a clean opinion has been issued by the Library's auditors, Austin & Associates. The next meeting will be held on Weds., Jan. 20th, at 7:30 a.m.
- The Library now has a functioning microfilm reader to assist its customers in doing historical research.
- Children's Services is making plans to bring Lego activities to the Library in the new year.
- Deb Cleveland (Children's Services) and Donna Wallace (Teen Services) attended an excellent anti-bullying workshop sponsored by Advocates for Children.
- Mamie Anthoine Ney completed the Chamber of Commerce's Androscoggin Leadership Development Institute.

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Weeks Ending 12/6 and 12/13, 2013

- Mamie Anthoine Ney attended the annual Maine InfoNet Public Library Directors Symposium at Colby College on Nov. 22nd. The theme for this year's meeting was innovation and makerspaces.
- Children's Services provided crafts and stories for the Festival of Lights on Dec. 4th. The event was held at City Hall and was very well attended.
- The annual gingerbread workshop, a gift of the Masonheimer family, will be held on Sat., Dec. 7th. Pre-registration is required.
- The weekly online skills classes continue. The classes take place each Friday in the computer lab at 10:30 a.m. December's class is Navigating the Internet.
- "Know the 10 Signs - Early Detection of Alzheimers," an interactive workshop, will be held on Thurs., Dec. 12th, from 5 to 6 p.m.
- Local legislators have been invited to meet with State Librarian Linda Lord and the boards of the Lewiston and Auburn libraries on Tues., Dec. 10th at our library.
- 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.
- This past week has been a very busy one for the Library. Debbie Cleveland, Donna Wallace, and Mamie Anthoine Ney attended a day-long workshop sponsored by Cornerstones of Science, an organization dedicated to bringing quality science programming to public libraries in Maine and select cities around the country.
- The Library participated in the trade fair for city councilors and school committee members on Thurs., Dec. 5th and was a stop for the councilors/committee members on Sat., Dec. 7th, tour of the City.
- The "Navigating the Internet" classes started on Fri., the 6th, and will run through the end of the month.
- The Masonheimer Family and crew on Sat., Dec. 7th, gave the Library a gift of a fantastic gingerbread house making workshop for children. It was well attended and the houses were all unique.
- Also on Saturday, the Androscoggin Chorale of the Maine Music Society performed a "flash mob" of Christmas carols to the surprise of everyone. The "Sun Journal" published a video of this and the gingerbread houses at <http://www.sunjournal.com/news/lewis-ton-auburn/2013/12/07/gingerbread-houses-flash-mob-auburn-public-library/1463660> or <http://bit.ly/1j0j5Os>
- The Library was one of the local organizations to participate in the displays for the City's inauguration on Monday evening, Dec. 9th.
- Maine State Librarian Linda Lord along with the Maine State Library's Director of Reader Services Jamie Ritter visited the Library on Tues., Dec. 10th. Included in the discussion about the services that the Maine State Library provides local public libraries were Sen. John Cleveland, Rep. Mike Beaulieu, and Rep. Wayne Werts from Auburn. Lewiston legislators attending were representatives Michel Lajoie, Nathan Libby, and Peggy Rotundo. Lewiston Public Library Director Rick Speer also visited. Members of the Auburn Public Library and Lewiston Public Library boards also attended.
- Director Mamie Anthoine Ney attended a meeting of the Lewiston Auburn Good Food Council on Weds., Dec. 11th.
- A workshop on understanding the Affordable Care Act will be held on Mon., Dec. 16th, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.
- The Youth Orchestra of Lewiston-Auburn will present a holiday program on Thurs., Dec. 19th, at 6:30 p.m.

CDBG

- Jayne Jochem of the City of Lewiston and Yvette Bouttenot met with TD Bank representatives Sharon Brobst and Marcel Turcotte to discuss how the Homebuyer Program and TD Bank's loan products can work together to offer our homebuyers with streamlined financing. We also discussed ways of doing client outreach to promote our programs to the general public.

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- The Community Development Department received 12 proposals for funding for public services and 1 capital project request. The total of the requests is \$169,535.
- Reine Mynahan met with a potential customer who is interested in starting a business. This individual was assisted with resources to begin the business planning process to better define her idea and put numbers to the business concept.
- An appeal was received by an applicant whose loan request was denied.
- The Community Development Loan Committee reconsidered an appeal of an application that had previously been denied. With new information about the cash flow of the building, the committee found justification to change their vote and approved the application. This loan is for a 3-unit building that needed substantial upgrading where the majority of improvements were on the exterior of the building. The loan is for \$52,835 with a private match of 25% coming from a bank. This could easily have been a project under the Curb Appeal Program.
- The Public Services Committee had their first meeting to get organized for the upcoming review and selection of public service agencies. Selected proposals will be carried in the new budget. This is a six-member committee made up of 3 staff (City Manager, Director of Social Services and Community Development Director), two members of the Citizen's Advisory Committee, and the Director of the Auburn Library. The committee will be meeting in early January to interview the 12 social service agencies who applied for funding. This is the first time that we will conduct interviews in an effort to better understand the agency's proposal and clarify any questions we may have.
- The Social Services office began accepting applications on November 1st. To date we have closed on four loans for a total of \$3,750.

Finance

- The Public Works Heating Replacement bid was awarded to NASON.
- The facilities manager has been working with staff to make sure that the Ingersoll Arena is secure for the winter.
- The FY 13 Audit has been through technical review with the auditors. There were a few minor changes that were necessary to 2 of the statistical tables. I am waiting to receive the final copy, so that I can send it to Council and prepare the printed copies. I also need to prepare the paperwork to send the report to the GFOA (Government Finance Officers of America) for review.
- The Finance Director has been updating the budget sheets and CIP information in preparation of work on the FY15 budget and capital improvement proposals.
- Jill Cunningham had a baby boy, Jameson Paul, on Sunday, December 8th. Mother and baby are doing well.
- The Finance and Tax Offices were closed to the public on Thursday, December 12, 2013, due to a major software upgrade to MUNIS (our accounting software.) We will be open for business as usual on Friday morning.

Fire

- Prevention: For the week of November 28 to December 4, there was no life-safety inspections conducted due to Thanksgiving.
- Emergency Responses: For the week of November 28 to December 4, we responded to 69 calls for service. These include, but are not limited to 2 structure fires; 43 emergency medical calls including 4 motor vehicle accidents with injuries and 12 calls where we provided advanced life support; and 1 hazardous conditions call. We received mutual aid once during this period.
- Prevention: For the week of December 5 to December 11, there were 7 life-safety inspections conducted on businesses and 1 life-safety inspection done on apartment buildings. Out of the 8 inspections done, 5 were not in compliance. The fire department also hosted two station tours – one for an alternative school and one for a community group called “Community Works” – dedicated to developing challenged adults with disabilities. The alternative school included 4 people; the Community Works group included 5 people. We also hosted a Citizens Fire Academy informational table at the Inaugural.

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- **Emergency Responses:** For the week of December 5 to December 11, we responded to 61 calls for service. These included, but are not limited to 1 structure fire, 36 emergency medical calls including 3 motor vehicle accidents with injuries, 1 water & ice-related rescue, and 1 hazardous conditions call. We received mutual aid once during this period.
- A structure fire at 118 Hampshire revealed this multiple occupancy building to be in violation of numerous fire and life safety codes. An electrical fire in a wall was quickly located and extinguished by responding units. However, during this operation, the building was found to be home to a number of unlicensed occupants living in an attic space as well as numerous exiting and electrical issues being present. The building was ordered to be vacated until the issues found could be resolved. Had this fire occurred during the night time and not have been noticed as quickly as it was; there is a high probability that the numerous occupants in the attic would have become quickly trapped by the fire with no exit available to them.
- The rescue of a dog that had fallen through the ice on Taylor Pond received both local and national news coverage. "C" Platoon received a call for a dog trapped in the pond in the early morning hours of Monday, December 9. A decision, based upon an assessment of the conditions and risk factors to personnel resulted in the rescue of the dog by FD personnel. The dog was recovered suffering from severe hypothermia and exposure. She (a Rottweiler) was immediately upon removal off of the pond warmed with blankets and her labored breathing was supported with supplemental oxygen. She was taken by the FD to an animal hospital in Lewiston where further treatment was administered. The dog has now made a complete recovery. Members utilized the same level of safety, knowledge, skill and training in making this rescue just as if it were a human victim. All local media outlets picked up on a news release put out on the incident and NBC took and distributed the story nationwide. We also receive several complimentary emails from citizens and others. See below.

Hello,

We just saw on the news where your fire department personnel rescued a dog that went through thin ice. Please forward appreciation to your people not only for their daily service, but going way above and beyond in rescuing the pooch. We are dog owners and lovers and it is great to see the caring and bravery to step up for all creatures in need.

Also, with the constant bad news in the world, this was an example that there can be good.

*Thank You,
Jaye Jackson & Carolyn Gaul
Windham*

Thank you for being the kind of people who will go out and risk rescuing that dog from the pond, yesterday. I thought it was an admiral demonstration of heart and character.

*Sincerely,
Linda Thorn*

Health and Social Services

November's billing was done this week for General Assistance, we spent \$8,793 in assistance. This is \$1,419 less than in October. We also saw fewer families.

Human Resources

- December is an extremely busy month for the Human Resources Department due to annual open enrollments for the health, dental and vision plans. Chris Mumau and Deb Grimmig met with the Public Services crew to facilitate the open enrollment process for that Department.

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- The Human Resources Staff is proceeding with the open enrollment for the members of the MSEA bargaining unit who opt into the new PPO 500 Plan. In addition to meeting with employees individually, the HR Department is holding meetings with the Service Representative from Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust on the new plan. Two sessions were held last Friday and two more are scheduled for next week. New open enrollment periods will be held as new union contracts are signed which contain provisions for changing health insurance plans.
- Deb Grimmig held a new employee orientation and benefits sign-up for a new employee with the Public Services Department.

ICT

- ICT compiled materials and equipment for our Department 101 sessions. We provided maps, data and various visual aids to help departments communicate their goals, mission and accomplishments to City and School elected officials.
- Configured a server to administer all operations at the Norway Savings Bank Arena
- ICT responded swiftly and efficiently to a major software failure that prohibited users from accessing their stored files. After extensive troubleshooting, the cause was determined to be a failed snapshot process in the VM Ware software. The problem was identified fairly quickly, but the failure occurred on a 2 terabyte storage device which slowed the recovery.
- ICT resolved the “drive by download” issue at Public Services which allows telemetric data from the trucks to be digitally transferred and analyzed by Public Services staff. This analysis determines and measure quantities and usage of materials.
- The first computer was configured and delivered to the Norway Savings Bank Arena and assisted in configuring their copier/printer.

Ice Arena (Norway Savings Bank)

- CONSTRUCTION UPDATE:
 - Front Exterior Siding is completed
 - Rink 2 Ice is installed
 - Rink 2 Flooring in starting 12/12/13
 - Hebert Construction is developing punch list items for finalization
 - Monitors are being installed for display of locker rooms assignments and advertising.
 - Mezzanine Bathroom has been completed
 - Mezzanine Flooring is being prepped for sealant
- 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:
 - \$194,500 in annual sponsorships has been secured.
 - \$15,000 in contracts pending,
 - \$25,000 in proposals under review.
- Rink 2 opening with occupancy review and certificate of occupancy on Tuesday, December 17th, 2013. Fire Marshall, City Electrical Inspector, Buildings and Codes Inspector will arrive to review plans, as-builts, and review systems checks for the facility.
- Rental partners have been cooperative and understanding of the growing pains of opening a dual surface facility one sheet of ice at a time. Partners have moved ice times, coordinated with other facilities and users to maximize the ice time, and develop programming plans to maximize use, and minimize disruption to all youth, adult and high school hockey teams.

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- Continuing to work with Norway Savings Bank on décor and build out of signage and branding in the Arena.
- Ferris Music Service has installed video and arcade games in Rink 1, awaiting occupancy of mezzanine and Rink 2 to supply pool tables, air hockey and a series of 6-8 electronic video games.
- Canteen Services has installed concession vending machines in Rink 1, awaiting occupancy of mezzanine, and Rink 2 to supply additional machines.
- Pepsi Co, has delivered and installed 2 vending machines in Rink 1, and we are awaiting occupancy of mezzanine and Rink 2 to supply additional machines.
- Office Furniture has been installed, preparing for official move in.
- Phones have been installed. The direct Arena number is 207-333-6688
- Contract negotiations have begun for the build-out of the Concessions kitchen, conference room/tavern space. Private investor has come forward to develop and hire appropriate staff for investing in opening a restaurant style concessions and multi use tavern/conference room at the Arena. More details to follow upon review of contract by Legal Counsel, and city staff. Construction is scheduled to begin on Concessions kitchen as soon as contract is executed.

Meetings are scheduled for the development of Grand Opening events for late January. Norway Savings Bank, Arena Staff and others are gathering plans for an Open House.

Police

- The department handled 427 calls for service this week. Officers conducted 55 motor vehicle stops, 11 field interviews, 19 adult arrests and 2 juvenile arrests. Officers investigated 83 offenses of which, 8 of which were felonies, generating 20 criminal summonses. Officers responded to 57 motor vehicle crashes.
- Officers presented 16 felony cases to the Androscoggin County Grand Jury this week. All of the cases presented were issued indictments.
- Auburn has seen a spike in catalytic convertor thefts over the past several weeks. A method of operation on the part of the suspect(s) has been identified and some additional leads have developed. Detectives will be working with other law enforcement agencies due to similar incidents occurring in a large geographical area in central/southern/coastal Maine.
- The new parking permit system had been implemented. Permit parking areas have been assigned a letter and each permit will have a corresponding parking tag that will need to be hung from the vehicle's mirror. Administrative Assistant Claire Barclay and Selective Enforcement Office Mike Chaine have worked hard to get this new system implemented.
- The department has been working with the owners of Naral's to address a recent spike in calls for service to their business. One of the issues identified was the large crowds drawn in when they have outside entertainment. Naral's will be hiring two officers when they host outside entertainment.
- A full audit was completed on the evidence storage facility with 5607 items inventoried.
- Officers have been extremely busy with fatal traffic crashes this week. Imprudent speed and poor driving conditions are believed to have contributed to a fatal crash on Riverside Drive on Monday. 20y/o Tara Chase was killed when her vehicle crossed into the opposite lane and was struck by another vehicle. On Wednesday, 77y/o George Cole was killed as he crossed Minot Avenue in front of Clover Manor. Cole was struck by a pick-up truck traveling eastbound. The accident remains under investigation.
- Sgt. Gary Boulet coordinated our resources for the Festival of Lights parade. A need identified for next year was the lack of public restrooms and trash receptacles available for use.
- The department handled 428 calls for service this week. Officers conducted 71 motor vehicle stops, 10 field interviews, 17 adult arrests and 3 juvenile arrests. Officers investigated 65 offenses of which, 11 of which were felonies, generating 15 criminal summonses. Officers responded to 48 motor vehicle crashes.
- CRO Poulin's Science through Cooking class at Franklin School prepared food for the City of Auburn Inaugural Celebration.

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- As a result of the fatal traffic crash involving a pedestrian on Minot Avenue, officers will be meeting with the residents of Clover Manor to stress the importance of using the crosswalks and the best time of day to use them. Clover Manor has placed reflective jackets at all of the exits for residents to utilize. They will also be placing reflective tape on all of their walkers, canes and wheelchairs.
- A 15 y/o juvenile has been charged in connection with a BB gun incident involving a school bus on Stevens Mill Rd. The juvenile fired the BB gun at the passing school bus, striking a window, breaking it. The juvenile was charged with Reckless Conduct with a Dangerous Weapon. 46y/o Steven Fecteau was charged with Hindering Apprehension for significantly interfering with the investigation.
- Support Services met with Public Works to review logistics for the Vista Dr Christmas Light Show. Staff is attempting to contact Dr. Loggins for further details on the show.

Public Services

- Installing Christmas lights
- Prepare for Tree Lighting
- Maintenance/routine on city equipment (vehicles) – to functional and stable condition for upcoming winter season
- Hot patching work around the city
- Recycling operations ongoing
- Banner preparation and installation
- Installation of parking signs
- Plowing/sanding/salting of roads
- Restock sand/salt
- Build/repair winter chains
- Ditch line work (reshape)
- Staff participated in torch safety training; and loader orientation
- Storm Drainage Mapping
- Organize Parks Building
- Plowing/sanding/salting of roads and sidewalks
- Restock sand/salt
- Winter plow/chain build and repair
- Recycling operations ongoing
- Maintenance/routine on city equipment (vehicles) – to functional and stable condition for upcoming winter season
- Repair basketball hoops
- Tree work
- Storm Drainage Mapping
- Staff participated in winter work out wellness training
- Road maintenance operations

2014 Project Status:

- 2014 Paving Project bids 12/12/2013
- 2014 MPI Project being advertised and available 12/16, bids 1/2/2014
- Turner Street ADA Ramps is in agreement process with MDOT
- 2014 Reconstruction Project in design phase
- Stormwater permitting ongoing
- Neighborhood meeting for MPI project 12/17

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Recreation

- Staff completed and submitted draft CIP budget.
- Staff completed and submitted 2014 Public Services Funding Application through the CDBG program.
- Staff attended Holiday Celebration/Parade of Lights meeting in Lewiston.
- Youth basketball practices began this week. A total of 281 children are registered in the program, which is an increase of 22 players compared to last season.
- Men's basketball began this week with a total of 23 teams registered in three leagues. This is an increase of two teams compared to last season.
- Registration continued for Women's basketball.
- Youth Pillo Hockey concluded on Sunday.
- The 2013 Twin Cities Holiday Celebration/Parade of Lights took place on Wednesday evening. The Auburn Public Library offered story time and free arts and crafts in Auburn Hall prior to the parade start. The parade began in Lewiston this year and proceeded to Auburn's Festival Plaza for the tree lighting, menorah lighting, comments from Mayor Labonte, Mayor MacDonald and Rabbi Katzir, pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus, wagon rides, refreshments and music provided by Dionne Entertainment. A total of 33 different floats/groups participated in the parade this year.
- Staff attended the Council "trade show" on Thursday.
- Women's basketball began on Thursday with a total of 7 teams registered. This is an increase of one team compared to last season.
- Youth basketball begins games on Saturday.
- Youth basketball practices continued throughout the week.
- Registrations opened for youth indoor soccer & skating instruction session II.
- Staff attended a Winter Festival meeting on Wednesday.
- Public Works staff began repairs to height adjustment systems on two basketball hoops in the Hasty gym.
- Women's league basketball games began on Thursday.
- Replacement of the boiler at Hasty Community Center began on Thursday.
- Youth high school division basketball games began on Friday.