

City of Auburn

To: Mayor LaBonté and the Auburn City Council
From: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
Subject: **OCTOBER** Monthly Reporting – *Fire, Police, Finance, CDBG, Health & Social Services, Planning, Permitting & Code, ICT, and Human Resources*
Date: November 30, 2012

Fire

Prevention

- In October, there were twenty-five Life Safety Inspections conducted by the fire companies in seventeen businesses and eight apartment buildings. Out of those inspections sixteen businesses and seven apartment buildings were found not to be in compliance with the fire code.

Training

- In October crews conducted motor vehicle, live fire, refresher training. Fires in motor vehicles can pose significant hazards to the crews trying to extinguish them beyond the hazards of gasoline, plastics, or oils. In addition firefighters may be confronted with shock absorbing bumpers which may release striking them; gas struts used to open windows and hatch backs which can become projectiles, and any chemicals the vehicles may be carrying.
- Crews also conducted individual company drills. These are utilized to hone skills and help the company officer identify weaknesses in the team that need to be addressed.

Public Relations

- October is Fire Prevention Month and the Fire Department held its annual open house. While the turnout was good, it was off from previous years. We attribute this to the Dempsey Challenge and the Fairview School Harvest Festival being on a different weekend this year.
- In addition to the open house we conducted several tours and made several site visits. We use these opportunities to speak with the kids about fire safety and allow them to see and hear what a fully dressed out firefighter looks like.

Emergency Responses

- In the month of October, the fire department responded to 282 requests for emergency service. These requests include, but are not limited to, three fires in a building, 183 emergency medical calls, nineteen false alarms, and thirty-one motor vehicle accidents. The city did not receive mutual aid from other communities but did provide aid twice.

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Mutual Aid was provided to the City of Lewiston and Town of Poland both for building fires.

Police

Operations

- The Department responded to 2124 calls for service in October.
- Officers made 81 physical arrests, issued 115 criminal summonses and processed 341 offense reports, of which 32 were felonies.
- Officers issued 74 traffic citations and 311 warning for various traffic offenses.
- Officers responded to 151 traffic crashes in October, of which 109 required accident reports.
- The new WatchGuard Mobile Camera Systems were installed in the patrol fleet during October. The systems are performing extremely well
- A Selective Enforcement Officer (SEO) role was implemented on each patrol team. The SEO's responsibilities include assisting officers with investigative follow-up on cases as well as specialized traffic enforcement as time allows. The goal of the SEO is to reduce officer's caseloads and reduce the number of cases referred to Criminal Investigations for simple follow-up.
- Officers responded to 385 North Auburn Rd for an armed suicidal male. Officers were able to safely evacuate the male's grandmother from the residence before he barricaded himself in the house after firing shots at the officers. With the assistance of the Maine State Police Tactical Team, Dylan Brockway was taken into custody without incident after an 8 hour standoff. Brockway was charged with two counts of Reckless Conduct with a Firearm and one count of Creating a Police Standoff.

Training

- Officers' Madore, Johnson and Ham attended a three-day Advanced Criminal Interdiction training at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.
- Detectives' Moore, Syphers, Westleigh and Officers' Chaine, Cousins, Carll & McCamish attended a one-day Advanced Terrorism for First Responders at the State Fire Marshall's Office.
- Chief Crowell, Deputy Chief Moen, Lieutenants' Cogle, Watkins & Harrington attended a two-day "Navigating the Leadership Challenge" seminar in Concord, NH.
- Detective Westleigh and Officers' Chaine & McCamish attended a one-day HazMat Technician refresher course in Augusta. This is an annual recertification for their role on the Androscoggin COBRA Team.
- Officer McCamish attended a one-day Tank Truck Rollover training in Skowhegan.

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- DEA Task Force Agent Elie attended a five-day Interview & Interrogation Techniques training in Methuen, MA. This training was paid for by the Drug Enforcement Administration.
- All members underwent a vehicle operations policy refresher training in preparation for the Emergency Vehicle Operator's Course practical training to be held in November.

Community Outreach

- Chief Crowell and Lieutenants' Cougle & Watkins attended the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Conference in San Diego. Chief Crowell accepted the IACP's prestigious Civil Rights Award on behalf of the department for the department's work on promoting awareness of Human Trafficking. The cornerstone of the department's awareness efforts is the Annual "Not Here" conference, hosted by the Auburn Police Department. This year's event was a huge success with well over 200 participants from across the state in attendance. The list of speakers and presenters was exceptional, and the APD partnered with many local organizations and agencies to make this award-winning event possible.
- Challenge Coins have been distributed to our staff. As part of a community policing-funded initiative, these coins will be presented by our employees to members of the community who they feel have gone 'above and beyond' or are in some way deserving of special recognition. Upon presentation of a coin to a community member, the officer/staff member will submit a memo to the chief explaining the circumstances, at which time the employee will receive another coin to present and the chief will send a letter of appreciation to the coin's recipient.
- October saw the launch of our newest session of the Citizens Police Academy. Fifteen community members are participating in this twelve-week series of informational classes which are taught by department staff who volunteer their time and expertise.

Finance

- The Finance Director worked on the FY12 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and sent it to the auditors for their review.
- The tax collector processed abatements and supplemental taxes issued by the Assessor.
- The Facilities Manager/Purchasing Agent position interviews took place. We chose the top 2 candidates and did second interviews. We made a conditional offer to the top candidate and pending completion of background check and pre employment physical we will work out the details of the offer. We hope to have the person on board by the end of November.

CDBG

- Reine Mynahan attended HOME Underwriting Requirements and CHDO Capacity Issues which focused on implementation changes in the 2012 HOME Appropriation Law. Yvette Bouttenot participated in a webinar on the Uniform Relocation Act. Hal Barter

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attended the Renovate, Repair, and Paint class to update the lead certification. This makes it possible for him to conduct lead clearance testing rather than having us contract for this service, a savings to the program.

- Staff looked at three properties in the target areas to consider for purchase under the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The Neighborhood Stabilization Program Committee authorized the purchase of a single family home; however, negotiations were not successful.
- The Community Development Loan Committee met twice in October. They approved 5 loans and denied one. Four of the approved loans were emergency repairs totalling \$33,900, and one was a full-house renovation for \$25,000.
- Hal Barter assisted a client who received a Community Development loan 12 years ago. All 38 of the replacement windows which had been installed through the program had issues ranging from very serious such as broken sashes to more minor operational issues. Hal contacted the window supplier to see what could be done and was successful in getting, at no cost, all necessary replacement parts. Needless to say, the client was pleased. She was of the impression that windows would have to again be replaced.
- The Boys & Girls Club building at 43 Second Street is a City-owned building. The exterior brick surface was damaged by an auto accident last summer. Community Development staff assisted the Finance Department to prepare bid specifications, obtain bids, and manage the construction of improvements.
- As a continuation of our efforts to promote the Homebuyer Program, Yvette Bouttenot conducted an information meeting with case managers at Auburn Housing Authority. The training will help managers to identify people in the rental housing program who may be in a position to purchase a home.
- The Community Development Departments of Auburn and Lewiston and Auburn Housing Development Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create a partnership for promoting home ownership. This partnerships allows both Cities to utilize the 15% reserve that can only be accessed if there is a project or program with a Community Development Housing Organization.
- Four loans were approved for security deposit assistance.

Health & Social Services

- The H & SS department paid in welfare assistance a total of \$14,177 in October 2012 compared to \$8,288 in the same month in 2011.
- We took in 121 applications compared to 99 in October 2011.
- We assisted 10 household which have timed out from TANF (exceeded their 60 months) for a total of \$2,869.
- Workfare was completed by 9 people for a total of 255.5 hours, and a value of \$2,044. The majority of the workfare was completed at the Parks department.

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- Five hundred gallons of oil was issued for heat out of the Community Cords fund in October for 5 families. In addition GA purchased 100 gallons of oil for one household

Planning, Permitting & Code

- During the month of October the Department processed 85 building, electrical, sign and plumbing permits. The permits resulted in the collection of \$8,379.00 in fees for work with an estimated construction cost of \$1,112,337.00. The number of permits and monthly revenue was down from last month and we are starting to see the seasonal reduction in construction permitting. As of November 2nd we were 33% of the way through the fiscal year and have seen about 34% of our anticipated construction value reported on permits.
- As of November 2nd we are about 33% through FY 13. Our expenses are at 29% but billing is usually a couple of weeks behind so some expenses have yet not been accounted for during that period. Revenues are at approximately 62% with most of that from building permit revenues which were at 85% of the projected annual total. While we are ahead of projections currently on revenues and anticipate an above average year if this continues, that will typically be corrected somewhat by the slower winter months.
- On Tuesday November 20th, staff opened the survey on whether a Property Maintenance Code should be considered for Auburn. As of today we have already collected 62 responses and will share the information with the Council for the December 10th workshop.
- During the month of October, the Planning Department made additional progress with respect to a years-long effort aimed at conducting a joint land use study (JLUS) in collaboration with the Maine Army National Guard for the area surrounding that entity's Auburn training facility. The committee members have been confirmed and will be appointed soon. The steering committee will be meeting on December 5, 2012 at 2:00 at the Maine Army National Guard Training Facility on Mt. Apatite Road.
- The Code Compliance Officer, Planning and Assessing Assistant position has been offered to a qualified candidate and we expect to confirm acceptance this week. We currently have two vacancies and we are interviewing for the Planner position in the next couple of weeks. The past month has been challenging with reduced staff and response times on complaints and other projects have been delayed.
- During the last four weeks we tracked 22 new property specific Code Requests resulting in 13 new enforcement actions. A total of 53 request cases were closed this month and 8 of those were from the new cases opened this month. A common approach for internal building complaints (no heat, internal plumbing, etc.) is to contact the property owner and agree on a compliance time and then to inform the complainant of the agreement. We ask that the complainant, who is affected by the problem, to inform us if the repairs are not completed. This approach saves a follow up inspection and allows staff to move on to new complaints. This month was a "clean up month" for those

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complaints and 45 of the cases closed were due to no responses from the complainant as noted above. Cristy Bourget conducted 14 sanitation inspections including lodging, mobile vendors, restaurant and takeout facilities.

- Many departments did what they could to assist the Clerk's office with this years' election and the Planning and Permitting Department was no exception. Four staff from P&P assisted at a total cost of \$575 in wages for training and assistance time.
- On Friday, September 28, 2012 we started a customer service survey for our inspection / field staff. Responses were slow so we extended the review time. We will close that survey on November 28th and evaluate the results.

ICT

- Coordinated install of WatchGuard software for Auburn Police Department to allow wireless data transfers and integration to Auburn local network.
- Rebuilt and updated tax lobby kiosk to allow greater public access to the city's online services.
- Configured email access to a special account for the public to report on near-miss incidents on Route 4 (route4nearmiss@auburnmaine.gov).
- Using existing resources, ICT configured a new PC in the ice arena. Previously, every time there was a change in ice time schedules, an employee would need to reprint a color-coded schedule and post. Now employees are able to view the schedule online, saving time and color ink supplies.
- Due to the harsh environment at Public Works, optical devices fail pretty regularly. Instead of repairing the internal components, ICT has found a more cost effective solution by supplying PW employees with external devices. Aside from the cost savings, this solution also eliminated any downtime for PW employees.
- ICT identified an issue with Adobe Acrobat installs. When a user is prompted to update Adobe, an install of Chrome is automatically set as a default download. Users were experiencing failures in operations which required Internet Explorer as a browser. Programs such as Voter Registration, Hunting/Fishing licenses and car registration renewals were all affected. Once identified, ICT immediately remedied the failure.
- Attended ESRI seminar on ArcGIS. This seminar covered a number of new software upgrades, including ArcGIS Online, a new way to publish our maps online.
- Through discussions with the Maine office of GIS, James W. Sewall Co., and Kappa Mapping, the cities of Lewiston and Auburn completed a comprehensive review of options for jointly participating in a state-wide aerial photography project (along with AWSD and Androscoggin County). Funds for an aerial flight are already budgeted. Options are currently in review.
- Completed the first draft of a new Auburn Street Map and Auburn Street Atlas. We have circulated both to a number of key departments for review and comment. Further distribution will occur in the next few weeks, once preliminary review is complete.

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- Created a new, clearer version of the Auburn City Seal.
- Worked with Lewiston to perform a compression and general clean-up of our shared GIS file server.
- Mapped School Bus Routes
- Mapped Building Permits for FY2013 to date, and created a series of maps showing commercial and residential permit patterns within the city.

Human Resources

- The City of Auburn was awarded the Gold Level Award from the American Heart Association for meeting certain criteria for employee fitness. This is the fifth year that the City of Auburn received this award and in 2007, the City of Auburn was the first community in the State of Maine to be recognized for our wellness programs. Chris Mumau, HR Assistant worked with the Wellness Team to pull the data together and to submit the application.
- I attended several outstanding sessions at Maine Municipal Association Convention including: Influencing through Integrity, Importance of Employee Assistance Programs, Collaborative Programs through the University System, Effective Bargaining and the Role of Elected Officials and Municipal Managers.
- Recruitment is on-going for the City Planner. We are in the final stages of filling the Codes Officer and Facilities Manager positions.
- Ray Lussier, Safety and NIMS Coordinator, attended a two day course on “Responding to Bombings”. This training was provided by the federal government in Auburn and was free for all public safety officials.
- Ray Lussier participated in a planning session with public safety and other key officials to prepare for Hurricane Sandy.
- The Cities of Lewiston and Auburn held a joint Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic recruitment during the month of October. The Human Resources Staff assisted Lewiston Chief LeClair and Auburn Deputy Chief Low with the Physical Agility Test for Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic candidates. Both Departments now have a certified list of 61 qualified candidates from which to hire over the next year as vacancies become available.
- Contract negotiations are on-going with the following unions – M.A.P. (Maine Association of Police) for the Patrol/Detective/Corporal Unit, M.A.P. for the Lewiston/Auburn 9-1-1 Telecommunicators, M.A.P. for the Police Command Unit and M.S.E.A. (Maine State Employees Association) for the General Government Employees. The Firefighter contract was ratified by the membership and approved by the City Council.