

# City of Auburn

To: Mayor LaBonté and the Auburn City Council  
From: Clinton Deschene, City Manager  
Subject: January Monthly Reporting - *Public Works & Engineering, Parks & Recreation, Library, Assessing, and City Clerk*  
Date: February 15, 2013

## Public Works and Engineering

- **Productivity-** APW processed 613 Work Orders and closed out 462 work orders with a balance of 151 work orders still open (and new) for the Month of January. Of the 613 Work Orders 252 were processed by our Fleet Services Team closing out 214 leaving 38 on-going repairs/pending repairs. Fleet services is working hard to keep up due to the fact they are down 2 mechanics.
- **Update-** The Month of January several more storms events with several resulting in accumulations that required 'snow picking' operations. Snow Picking is when our crews go out around the City to pre-determined locations that need snowbanks removed so visibility can be increased at intersections, cars can park along business areas and streets. Many areas require snow to be removed b/c if another significant amount of snow falls there will be no place to plow the new snow.
- **Special Events-** The Public Works department worked with the Parks and Rec department setting up for the Winter Festival at Lost Valley. The PW crews moved hundreds of tons of snow for the Festival to use for different events.
- **Facilities-** **APW building experienced more mechanical breakdowns with the building's heating system resulting in more repairs. Old building = high maintenance costs.**
- **Winter Operations**
  - We had several winter events at the beginning of the month and then the temperatures warmed up melting the majority of snow.
  - During January PW outfitted three 1 Ton trucks with hopper sanders. Hopper sanders fit in the back of the trucks and allow the operators to sand/salt areas that they plow. The 1 Ton trucks plow narrow roads/streets, parking lots and narrow dirt roads. Without the Hopper sanders these trucks could only plow not treat slippery conditions, for that another larger truck would have to come out and sand/salt. Now these 1 Ton trucks are more efficient on their routes and the larger trucks are not pulled off other routes to sand/salt. We will be assessing the performance and impact throughout the rest of the winter.
  - During the month of January we utilized the third shift crew to pick up abandoned Christmas trees around the City. We assigned one person to this operation and that

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individual collected 376 trees throughout the City. The PW department does not do a citywide tree pickup, we have collection points (3 locations) for residents to drop off trees for disposal (we collected 616 trees at these locations). However, if we did not pick up these abandoned trees around the City we would be plowing them over during storms, getting them stuck in the sidewalk snow-blowers and would have to pick up all the pieces come Spring Time due to the mess. So doing the pickup at night, behind the scenes allowed for us to take care of an issue.

- **Tree Trimming Operations-** these operations were limited this month while the crew removed Holiday Decorations around the City. Some nuisance, hazard and ROW issues were addressed during the month. The tree crew also chipped many Christmas trees that were dropped off around the City, in total the tree crew chipped 616 trees that were dropped off at 3 different locations throughout the City.
- **Paving and Patching Crew** – The crew was able to hit many potholes throughout the City this month because of the mild weather at the end of the month. The mechanics were able to repair the HotBox making the patching operations more efficient and effective. **The Sign Crew**
- **The sign crew** has been creating/installing special sign requests, repairing and fixing damaged signs as well as systematically replacing all the out of compliance street signs throughout the City.
- **Trainings**
  - PW had a Wellness Class on ‘Eating right when money is tight’. This class is a part of the City’s Wellness program.
  - Crew members were trained on the new Hopper Sanders to ensure proper usage, maintenance and care.
- **Recycling Operations-** during the month of January we collected 45.93 tons of recycled material. This is a decrease for the month over last year’s January numbers by 1.76 tons. This lower number may have been impacted again by the Holiday (new years) falling during the week, whereas last year it was on the weekend, so nothing was skipped. Also, we have had numerous issues with the old recycling trucks continually breaking down. These breakdowns have limited our ability place the spare truck at MMWAC because it was needed for the daily runs. Without a truck at MMWAC we miss collecting material there and when the trucks both breakdown we lose the ability to collect all together. Though in these instances we use other trucks to collect the material and that impacts our totals to a degree. Hopefully once the weather begins to turn warmer the trucks will have fewer weather related issues, until then PW will do all that it can to provide this service.
- Staff continues to work with the Lewiston/Auburn Bike-Ped Committee on the development of a Complete Streets Policy for adoption by both Cities.
- Staff is also working with ATRC’s Bike-Ped Advisory Committee on a 5 year update to long range facilities plan Bridging the Gaps.
- Dig safe location requests have slowed down now that winter is here. The work has been centered on notifying utility companies when their trenches are in need of repair.

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- Rivershore Housing: Framing work has begun.
- The Main Street Overlay project is being prepared to go out to bid.
- 2011 Neighborhood Project(Winter, Summer, Dennison)- Project to be completed next spring after the Auburn Water District has completed their work.
- The Turner St Sidewalk Improvements project is being prepared to go out to bid.
- A utility meeting was hosted by staff with all the utility companies within the City to coordinate this summers' upcoming work.
- The Engineering Department received the new vehicles purchased as part of last years' budget. Staff is working to setup the interiors to accommodate all of the needed tools.

### **Parks and Recreation**

- Winter programming (youth and adult basketball) and special event planning continued throughout the month of January. Youth indoor soccer also began with a total of 50 kids ages 4-7 registered. Other programming also began during January including skating instruction session II with 51 participants registered as well as, pre K/K instructional basketball with 26 children registered. Planning for Wednesdays in the Park performances also began.
- Planning for the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Festival continued throughout the month. The work of securing donations, activity partners and schedule planning all took place with the Winter Festival Committee. The event ran from January 25<sup>th</sup> through February 3<sup>rd</sup> this year with a variety of activities being offered for people of all ages to enjoy. The weather during the festival was touchy with a few warm days and some rain mixed in. The last weekend of the festival brought back colder temperatures and plenty of people enjoying the free and low-cost activities. The aim of the festival is to encourage people to get outside and enjoy the winter season. It's a chance to try an activity you've never tried before, or one you haven't done in a long time.
- Budget preparation continued through the first half of the month on the parks and recreation operating budget.
- Wright-Pierce was selected as the vendor to perform the athletic fields needs assessment. This assessment will seek to outline what recreation facilities are available city-wide, what activities and scheduling are taking place and assess the needs/demand of the community. Wright-Pierce held stakeholder meetings with a number of public and private organizations in an effort to gather information for the assessment.
- An effort to catalog parks, athletic fields, cemeteries and trail systems utilizing GIS mapping was discussed during the month of January. These facilities are in the process of being mapped with our GIS software. The GIS mapping will provide the public with a comprehensive listing of all available recreation, public space and cemetery information.

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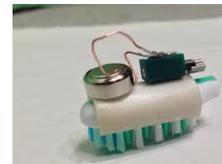
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It will also assist staff to have inventories on hand for maintenance planning and capital improvement planning as well as, developing a facilities master plan.

- The parks department performed maintenance during multiple winter storm shifts which consisted of plowing, sanding, snowblowing, and sidewalk maintenance. We have collaborated together with public works to ensure that sidewalks, winter relief lots, and the immediate area around Auburn Hall receives the needed attention during winter storm events. Along with winter maintenance, the parks department began the process of updating annual BOL training. Preventative maintenance on seasonal equipment also took place during the month of January. Infrastructure maintenance such as park bench repair and picnic table repair also took place.
- \*\*\*Work on the Twin Rink facility continued throughout the month. Meetings focused on the design and layout of the new arena took place with the general contractor, the architectural firm, the City's consultant and City staff.

### Library

- Library Board President, Dick Trafton, has announced the retirement of Director Lynn Lockwood on July 1. The search for a new Director has begun with job postings on state and national sites. Applications are due by February 23.
- The Library's annual Farmer's Market, one of its most popular events, will be held on Friday, February 22 from 4:30 to 6:30. In addition to seventeen local vendors the event features live music, activities for children and baby goats, courtesy of Joe Grey.
- The new DIY Tween Programs are proving very popular with the designated age group (9-12). Both programs have been filled, and the next, making Bristle Bots (toothbrushes donated by a local dentist), promises to be a hit also.
- In pursuit of our goal to help develop a strong workforce by providing access and instruction in the use of new technologies to the general public—many of whom have no other means of accessing these new technologies— we have formed a team to investigate the feasibility of creating a makerspace in the Library's old book storage room. We have also been in conversation with someone who is involved in the creation of a Maine Makerspace and is interested in helping us to acquire the necessary equipment and in providing outreach classes through APL.
- Auburn Public Library, Beacon Hospice, Edward Little High School, and L/A Arts are collaborating to present a performance and discussion of *A Finished Heart* on Thursday, March 7, at 6 p.m. The event is open to the general public, with a special invitation to high school students.



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- The Thursday night small business information series has been well attended. Five more sessions will be offered including Doing Business with the Government; Analyzing Your Competition; and Marketing through various channels.

#### **Assessing**

- Tax Abatement Appeal – The Board of Assessment Review ruled in favor of the Assessing Department on the January 9<sup>th</sup> tax appeal. This appeal was a four unit multi-family property located at 82 Hampshire Street.
- The department's activity for the month was centered around permit inspection reviews, updating ownership information from the deeds and addressing abatements.

#### **City Clerk**

- In January, the Secretary of State's Office ran reports to identify potential duplicate voter records in CVR (the Central Voter Registration system) statewide. There were 71 potential duplicate voter records identified in Auburn. All necessary corrections were made before the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.
- All ballots and election materials from the November General Election were removed from the blue tamper-proof containers and sealed in corrugated boxes in accordance to 21-A §698 and will be retained until after the September 6, 2014 retention deadline.
- On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Council voted to hold the School budget Election on June 11, 2013.