



**TO: Mayor and City Council**  
**FROM: Howard Kroll, City Manager**  
**RE: Weekly Report**  
**DATE: Week Ending September 2, 2016**

### **Assessing**

- The Tax appeal hearing before the Board of Assessment Review was held on Tuesday, August 30th in Council Chambers. Joseph St. Peter, staff appraiser, presented for the Assessing Department in his first residential appeal hearing. The taxpayer filed on a claim of overvaluation. The compelling evidence prepared and presented by Joe won a unanimous decision in favor of the Assessing Department. Congratulations Joe!
- April deeds and declarations of value have been loaded into the CAMA system. Staff has begun to load May.
- Staff has received the 2015 Tree Growth Roster from the Maine Forest Service. The spreadsheet is proofed and updated each September and any changes necessary are made for the current tax year. It is due back to the Forest Service by September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff is putting together the final report for the tax appeal hearing (2015 valuation) for Cascades Auburn Fiber to be held on Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in Council Chambers.
- Inspections have been scheduled for the large special purpose industrial facilities in the city. International Paper, Conform Automotive and General Electric have been scheduled for early September inspections. Pioneer Plastics has been contacted and will be inspected as well. It is very important that these special use properties be inspected to assure the property record cards are up to date and accurate. It is also very important to ensure equitable assessments among this special class of properties. Cascades Auburn Fiber and Tambrands are also special use properties but both have been inspected in recently.

### **Auburn Public Library**

- Just a quick reminder: The Library will be closed on Mon., 9/5, for the Labor Day holiday. We will resume our Fall/Winter hours schedule on Tues., 9/6. We will be open on Thursday evenings until 8 p.m. and Saturdays until 5 p.m.
- The ArtWalk/Book Sale and Red Table Picnic events on Fri., 8/26, were very successful. Holding a Friday evening event went over well. The Saturday portion of the book sale was steady. Our next Friday event is the September ArtWalk on the 30<sup>th</sup> which will feature a local quilt artist. Samples of the quilts will be displayed throughout the month beginning next week.
- Join our APL Fall Reading Challenge! Customers are invited to read as many books as possible from Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> from 35 different categories. The person who reads the most books during the contest period will win four new books of their choice (restrictions apply). Please check out our contest display on the first floor near the elevator.
- Save the dates! We will soon begin hosting our Pulitzer Prize 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary programs which have been funded by the Maine Humanities Council. On Mon., 9/19, at 6:30 p.m. historian Erin Bishop will speak on the history of American political cartooning. On Tues., 10/4, at 7 p.m. the Library will host Mike Keefe of Denver, CO. Mr. Keefe is a Pulitzer-winner and will address a wide range of topics both political and cultural. The series concludes on Mon., 10/17, at 6:30 p.m. with George Danby of the "Bangor Daily News." Mr. Danby will share from his book, "The Essential Danby," and talk about the process of developing a given cartoon and what he believes to be the appeal of political and social cartoons.
- Safety training by our safety officer was conducted for new hires and those who had not previously received training. We are in the process of updating our safety manuals.
- Upcoming programs include:
  - Teens! Safe Voices – Thurs., 9/8, at 3 p.m. Teens! Stop by the Teen Space and visit with Safe Voices. On the 2nd Thursday of each month, join Whitney for some great information and conversation on relationships, along with crafts or games to share! This program is just for teens, ages 12-18. Location: Teen Space Teens!
  - KIDS! Sweet Peas – Mon., 9/12, at 10:30 a.m. Join Miss Heather on the story quilt as she leads our lap-sit program for children ages 24-36 months and a parent. We'll share stories, songs, rhythm instruments, finger plays, and flannel board fun. This program is held weekly. No registration required. Location: Children's Room
  - The Irish of the Androscoggin – Mon., 9/12, at 6 p.m. Local historian and author, John Henderson will present his new book, "Na Eireannach Na

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hAndroscoggin: The Irish of The Androscoggin.” His newest book goes deeper into the story of the Irish in Lewiston and Auburn than did his previous work and has been expanded to cover Lisbon, Minot, Poland, Wales, Leeds, and Greene. New topics include Irish women, newspapers, John Murphy homes, theater, the military, and more. The new book also presents ten boldly colorful plates of Lewiston and Auburn architecture closely associated with the Irish and created by the author himself.

- Follow the Library on Facebook or link to our website at [www.auburnpubliclibrary.org](http://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org) for more information about all of our programs, new books, library news, and online registration.

### City Clerk

- We Issued the following:
  - 3 birth certificates
  - 46 death certificates
  - 9 marriage certificates
  - 7 marriage licenses
  - 15 disposition permits
  - 14 garage sale permits
  - 1 business license (1 renewal)
- Received 9 business license applications (renewals)
- Received 9 Voter Registration Applications
- Completed the minutes of the 8/15/2016 Council Meeting
- Posted the agenda for the 9/8/2016 Finance and Administration Council Committee and completed the minutes of the 8/11/2016 meeting
- Submitted the Voting Place Report to the Secretary of State’s Office for the November 8, 2016 Election (the deadline to submit is 9/9/2016)
- To date, we’ve received 70 requests for absentee ballots for the November election
- We continue to work on staffing the polling places for the November election. We’ve filled 53 positions but still have several left to fill.
- The deadline to submit applications for this round of appointments was Tuesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>. We’ve received 18 applications.
- A planning meeting was held last week for The Election Day of Hope which is a food drive to benefit the hungry in our area during this year’s November election. The food drive is co-sponsored by Skelton, Taintor & Abbot and The Sun Journal). They would like to set up a donation table at each polling place in Lewiston and Auburn to collect non-perishable food items which will be donated to Hope Haven Gospel Mission, the Trinity Jubilee Center, and to the food

pantries operated by the Lewiston and Auburn public schools. Both Lewiston and Auburn City Clerks were invited to attend. Staff was unable to attend in person but did participate by conference call.

### **Economic and Community Development**

- The staff met with a Rodman Road property owner and his engineering representative who is interested in constructing a new commercial building.
- The Staff and representatives from the Androscoggin Land Trust met on site to view property with potential for land conservation.
- Staff has been working with ALT and Recreation Department on the Riverday Planning. ECD staff was unsure of planning an event like this but it is clear that we have some talented and enthusiastic Staff at the Recreation Dept. that are doing the heavy lifting.
- The Staff met with a property owner in New Auburn to discuss the future impacts of the New Auburn Village Center redevelopment plan.
- The City Planner presented an update on the New Auburn Village Center Plan to the United New Auburn Neighborhood Association. Also of great interest to the group was a discussion of a proposed development on Loring Avenue by developer Kevin Bunker.
- The City Planner completed and submitted a grant application to the Maine DOT for a Transportation Alternatives Program. The grant if awarded would be for a total of nearly \$500,000 and would fund the majority of the planned New Auburn Greenway.
- Staff met with the owners of the St. Louis Church to discuss the draft Adaptive Re-use ordinance.
- Staff has been working to keep up with regular demands while also dedicating substantial time to getting public notices and information together for the workshop that was recently scheduled for September 6<sup>th</sup> at Walton School to discuss housing policy and two proposed developments. The housing and mixed use developments are proposed for 37 Loring Avenue and 62 Spring Street.
- The efforts to clean up downtown neighborhoods, labeled the "Street Sweep Effort," continue and have been quite effective. This week CCO Bourget has been working in the Spring, Academy, School, Pleasant, Myrtle and High St. area. There were 7 new violations for trash & debris or unregistered/uninspected motor vehicles. 14 cases opened in previous weeks have been corrected and closed voluntarily. Only 3 Notices of violations and one citation of \$105.00 for unregistered/uninspected motor vehicles were sent out. For the most part people have been understanding and appreciative of the effort to clean up their

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neighborhoods and that they were asked for voluntary compliance and allowed time for corrections before any formal enforcement actions.

- Staff met with DECD to discuss amending the Downtown TIF to remove 62 Spring Street, creating a new TIF to replace the 62 Spring Street parcel as a stand-alone TIF, creating a stand-alone TIF at 37 Loring Ave and creating a Workforce Development Initiative component to City TIFs.
- In the month of August we have committed a total of \$460,135 in HOME Funds with a combination of homeowner rehab projects, a Co-op Housing Project in Lewiston and a Special Acquisition/Rehab/Sale Project in Auburn. The Auburn HOME Consortium was at risk of losing federal funds based on requirement that HOME funds must be committed within 24 months of the date of the grant agreement. With the commitment of these funds we not only met the requirement but exceeded the shortfall amount of \$405,000.
- The 2016 Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Grant has been approved by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. This year the City will receive \$511,800 in CDBG funds and \$323,700 in HOME funds to meet the goals outlined in the Action Plan. HOME funds are shared with Lewiston.
- CDBG & HOME Loan Programs took in \$33,766 in program income for the month of August. Funds disbursed in the same period totaled \$11,150.
- Staff met with the MDOT Commissioner and the MDOT Director of the Rail Program to discuss opportunities for the Intermodal Facility.
- The City Electrician has been busy repairing School clocks for flashing school zone lighting. With only one person maintaining City electrical infrastructure, traffic signals and doing electrical inspections for permits we are contracting out what we can but falling behind on maintenance and slower than usual to respond to non-emergency requests.

### **Fire**

- Crews responded to 2 fire calls.
- Staff performed 2 final C/O inspections
- Crews performed stand by coverage during the L/A Bridge Run 5K.
- Crews assisted as needed during the Balloon Festival.
- Staff attended a workshop on Federal Firefighter grant writing and grant requirements.
- Last week, staff met with the Maine State Fire Marshal's representative in regards to an upcoming court trial. The trial was cancelled as the other party agreed to our compliance directive.
- Crews did 7 Life Safety Inspections, 5 were for Auburn Schools.

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- Crews participated in training with the Maine Fire Service Institute's "Mobile Fire Alarm and Sprinkler" trailer.
- Staff and crews attended APD's sendoff to retirement of APD Officer Paul "Buddy" Caouette.
- Staff performed several follow up inspections.
- For the week of August 25<sup>th</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>, we responded to 83 calls for service. These include, but are not limited to: 2 fire calls, 60 Emergency Medical calls, 3 Motor Vehicle Accidents - 2 with injuries, 3 Hazardous Condition calls, 7 Service calls and 2 fire alarm calls and 2 Citizen Complaints. We received 0 mutual aid responses during this period and we provided 0 mutual aid response. We provided 2 Paramedic intercepts and responded to Durham to assist with a vehicle accident with several injured.

## IT

- GFTV staff continued work on editing projects from the balloon festival. All editing is complete and some have been airing. Staff worked with GIS on a new camera that would provide 360 degree views of internal structures. The results were disappointing, due to a proprietary image-handling software package.
- Programming and file prep for the month of September is being completed.
- Staff receives frequent requests from engineers for our GIS data in CAD format. We have this data available, broken up into a grid of more than 400 sections that cover the entire city. In the past, we have loaded this data onto our server and provided a portal to engineers and others who request it. To reduce overhead on our internal servers, we have moved the files to our off-site data storage and created a new map layer that allows users to download the files by turning on a CAD layer in our MapAuburn parcel viewer. We have received positive feedback from engineers.
- GIS staff spent much of the week doing small tasks and cleaning up loose ends on data and projects – updating GIS software on several computers, assigning addresses and parcel IDs to new lots, troubleshooting software error messages, etc.
- Staff met with Finance and Tax staff to plan the transition to the new version of the MUNIS Financial software, and to prepare for the State requirement that we upgrade to laser printers for Motor Vehicle Registration.
- We've ordered a new hardware firewall to protect our traffic from the outside world. Our current Cisco ASA has gone end-of-life and is no longer supported. The new appliance, from Barracuda Networks, will handle our higher bandwidth requirements and will also provide some additional functionality in the form of high-security VPN access.

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**NSBA**

- Ice
  - Men's League
  - Women's League
  - Public Skate
  - Shinny
  - Private Rentals
  - Central Maine Elite League
  - L/A Seniors
  - Central Maine Community College
  - Fighting Spirits
- Marc's Meetings
  - Debriefing-Color Me Rad
  - Media Meeting - Townsquare
  - Food and Beverage Conversation
  - Maine Adventure Show
  - Martindale
  - Facility Rental – RV Show meeting
- Partnerships
  - HMS Host
  - Gladiator TV
- Sport Tourism
  - Savage Race
  - National Softball Federation
  - Roller Hockey College National Championship
- Jason Ops Tasks
  - Ice Maintenance
  - Building Maintenance
  - Olympia Maintenance
  - Ice Scheduling

**Police**

- The department handled 660 calls for service this week.
- Officers conducted 242 motor vehicle stops and 12 field interviews.
- Officers investigated 75 offenses of which, 13 of which were felonies, generating 43 arrests, 23 criminal summonses and 5 juvenile arrests.
- Officers responded to 27 motor vehicle crashes.

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### **Public Services**

- Townsend Brook Road- scheduled to be completed by 9/30/16. Base pavement has been placed, crews working on driveways and ditching/inslope.
- Pettingill Park- scheduled to be completed by 9/9/16. Surface pavement has been placed. Striping to be completed in the next couple weeks.
- Highland Avenue- scheduled to be completed by 9/30/16. Base pavement has been placed, crews working on curbing and sidewalks.
- South Main Street- scheduled to be completed by 10/28/16. Stormdrain and water main installation continues
- 2017 Hampshire Street Reconstruction- neighborhood meeting scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Ash Landfill forced sewer main- scheduled to be completed in 2016. Project in design phase
- Crack Seal Contract- project currently out to bid
- Park Avenue- Grondin has begun at the Summer Street end of the project installing drainage. The tree clearing for the project is scheduled to begin next week. The completion date for the project is August 2017.