

City of Auburn, Maine

Office of the City Manager



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
RE: Weekly Report
DATE: August 16, 2013

Assessing

- Renee worked with Patriot to create a report for the commitment book listing information on the businesses receiving the BETE exemption.
- Karen & Renee audited all the BETE applications in anticipation of a Maine Revenue audit.
- Karen began proofing and updating the Tree Growth Roster for the Maine Forest Service.
- Karen & Brian had 1 residential property inspection.
- Brian continued processing the 801 Business Tax Reimbursements for the year 2012 for our local businesses.
- Brian processed sign permits.
- Brian processed the July deeds.
- Brian & Karen began preparing the paperwork for the 2013 1-4 inspections.

Auburn Public Library

- Plans are underway for another series of the L/A Film Discussion Forum. This is co-sponsored with the Lewiston library. The series will begin on October 2nd and run monthly through the first week of March.
- Our summer reading programs are winding down. The Children's department will be starting a Young Engineers Club on Friday, 8/16. Adult services have booked programs through October. Please check our website for additional information.
- Our Maine authors display has proved to be extremely popular. Our circulation is up approximately 4% when compared with the previous year.
- The Library's partnership with BestBuy was recognized in a blog post on "TechSoup for Libraries," which is part of a global non-profit enterprise that provides technical assistance, such as software, at deep discounts to eligible non-profits.
<http://www.techsoupforlibraries.org/blog/partnerships-are-a-win-win-strategy>

City Clerk

- The Clerk's Office was open on Saturday for absentee voting. We were open from 8 A.M. until noon.

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- Wednesday August 14 was the second Secretary of State training session in Auburn on the new tabulating machines. I attended as well as 7 other Clerks.
- Thursday the 15th is the deadline to request absentee ballots. We are open until 6:30 P.M.
- The Clerk's Office will be short staffed for the next 6 weeks. I would like to ask everyone to be patient. It may take a bit longer to get a response to questions and inquiries. Thank you to everyone in advance for your patience.

Engineering and Public Works

- Test holes were dug on South Main Street to confirm construction was in accordance with the approved plans. We are waiting for results
- Main Street surface paving was completed; Elm, High and Academy surface will be completed by the end of next week.
- Turner Street was receiving final preparations for the surface paving which will occur next week
- Manley Road underdrain has been installed. The road will be reclaimed and paved next week
- The Hotel Road bridge is moving into place at approx 3-6 inches an hour
- Benches are being installed at EL Park
- A drainage issue on Center Street is being investigated
- Oak Hill Vault - we are waiting to hear back on estimates to demolish
- Downtown areas have been mowed and swept in preparation for the balloon festival
- Washington street shoulders were mowed

Finance

- The Finance Director continues to work on FY 13 year end, preparing the audit work papers and working on the financial report. I will be closing the fiscal year in MUNIS and finalizing everything within the next 2 weeks.
- The Tax Office has been busy this week with vehicle registrations at the counter and the Tax Collector has been going through old records and organizing the archived files that must be retained.
- The Facilities/Purchasing manager has had bid openings for crack sealing and the Helm Bridge project. He has also been working with the new arena manager on various requests for proposals.

Fire

- Acceptance testing of me fire hose in accordance with NFPA standards was done on all new large diameter supply hose.
- Members of the city council visited Central Station and took part in discussions on the operations and mission of the FD. We appreciate them taking the time to stop by!
- Water rescue equipment is being checked and rechecked in preparation for the upcoming balloon festival and associated activities on and around the river.
- The FD will provide standby safety monitoring at the fuel fill location for the balloons.

- Engine 3 was sent to Northeast for several repair orders including the major issue, the multiplex. Anyone who has been on Engine 3 lately, has noticed the lights coming on and off as well as the sensors alerting the crew that all the doors are open or ajar. After trying to narrow down the problem, the crew at NEEA discovered that the cab-lock pads (located on the bottom rear of the cab and are seen when the cab is raised) were severely damaged due to one of the pads being spun the wrong way. This caused the cab to be loose and **NOT** locked down, and also lifted higher on one side than the other. They have ordered the parts to fix the problem and have a tentative arrival date of tomorrow, Thursday, August 15th. Providing they receive the parts on time, we should have the truck back in service by the end of the day tomorrow at the latest. Again, that is IF they receive the parts tomorrow. Engine 3 will not be service ready until this problem is repaired. With that, the multiplex is **NOT** the issue this time.

The second work order that was worked on was the rear compartment tray and associated hardware. The repair was approved and the parts ordered, but this will need to be rescheduled at a later date when those parts arrive.

Obviously, the crews of Engine 3 will be using Engine 1 until their apparatus is repaired. Please find a list of equipment that was transferred below. Any questions can be forwarded to the Captain's office.

Health & Social Services

- Tammy Thatcher and I have been working on a new poverty tax abatement request to present to council soon.
- I have been trying to update the "No Heat" in winter protocol and trying to secure resources for eligible clients.

Human Resources

- Chris Mumau, Human Resources Assistant, attended a Safety Works Workshop on Work-Related Injury Reporting on the OSHA Logs.
- The City is in labor negotiations with four unions. Negotiations were held with two bargaining units this week.
- Department staff is conducting background checks and coordinating pre-employment physicals for five potential hires for the Public Works Department.
- Ray Lussier, Safety Coordinator, worked on the Airport Intermodal Terminal Exercise with the COBRA Team Leader; met with the Captain of the National Guard Civil Support Team to review the exercise and delivered a briefing to the Federal agencies to be involved in the exercise.
- Ray Lussier worked with Lewiston and Auburn Police, Fire and Public Works Departments on the Balloon Festival Operations Plan.

Ice Arena

- CONSTRUCTION UPDATE:
 - Interior masonry is almost complete (85%)
 - Mezzanine Framing and Drywall is being completed in Rink 1
 - Preferred Mechanical is scheduled to arrive on 8/19 to start warmfloor.
 - Telcomm and Data Drops have been determined.
 - Board Design has been finalized (door and bench locations)

- 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:
 - \$73,250 in annual sponsorships has been secured.
 - \$23,500 in contracts pending,
 - \$25,000 to \$35,000 in proposals under review.

- Naming Rights Sponsor has continued to be a priority; conversations continue to be held with regards to finding the right partner. Staff has developed and released a Request for Expression of Interest to seek out viable partners for Naming Rights and is awaiting responses. Several conversations continue with regards to certain interested parties.

- Beverage services RFP has been released, Bid opening date is scheduled for August 29th, 2013. Conversations have been had with regards to design and implementation in the facility with national vendors.

- Initial development for scheduling, staffing plans and operational procedures has been started. Final discussions with major tenants about time schedules. Site visits are occurring with Auburn PD and Safety Coordination to implement event planning details.

- Finalization/Design of space for Pro Shop Contract is ongoing. Principle agreement has been reached with Jamey Bergouin of Blue Line Sports to operate the Pro Shop at the Arena. Final details of contract and build out of the space are ongoing.

ICT

- The parking lot and parking zone mapping projects have been completed. These maps will help City staff better manage the City's parking areas and maximize efficiency and use.
- We have upgraded our software and firmware to prepare for the Network Security project. This involves getting all servers on the same version and platform. Some network outages have occurred through this upgrade, but ICT staff has responded quickly and minimized downtime while resolving these issues.
- Website Stats - July 15 – August 14
 - Approximately 7,000 unique visitors
 - Approximately 10,000 unique and returning visitors

- Top 10 visited pages:
 1. Home page
 2. Departments of the City
 3. Parks and Recreation Department
 4. WebGIS
 5. Bid Notices
 6. Police Department
 7. Tax Information
 8. Ingersoll Arena
 9. Job Opportunities
 10. Assessing Department

Parks & Rec

- Review of resumes for the vacant Recreation Specialist position continued throughout the week.
- Adult Co-ed softball playoffs wrapped up for the middle division. Co-ed softball playoffs are now complete.
- The Adult Men's softball league regular season concluded this week. Playoffs are scheduled to begin on Monday, August 19th.
- The second annual Auburn Recreation/Pat's Pizza Box Car Drive-in Movie Night took place on Friday, August 9th. Prizes were awarded for the best cars on the lot! Judging was based on creativity, materials used and appearance. This year's movie was "D2: Mighty Ducks" and was shown in the Hasty Gym due to inclement weather.
- The 3-6 grade football program began practices this week. Practices focus on player development and team assignments. During this week, players wear helmets only, as opposed to full pads, and there is no contact.
- The 2013 age 14 and under State Track meet was held on Saturday, August 10th. Our Auburn track & field team was the standout from a total of 34 teams competing in the event. The Girls team took first place edging out Poland by two points. The Boys team placed second to Scarborough by the narrow margin of 19 points. The Auburn delegation was the overall champion beating out Poland by 27 points. Congratulations to the athletes, coaches and parents on a fantastic season!
- Collaboration between the Recreation dept and Auburn Community Learning Center on a "Little Free Library" for Raymond Park took place this week. Little Free Libraries (LFL) are a community based literacy movement worldwide where both children and adults can borrow free books. These books are housed in small wooden houses perched on a post where often times you will see the quote "Take a book, Return a book" painted on the front. Students designed their LFL to represent the park with different scenes of the playground. The LFL is a place to grab a book, take it home, read it and enjoy it, then return it for another one. Keep an eye out for this community resource in the near future!
- Summer day camp concluded on Friday, August 16th. The 8 week program, which began on June 24th offered campers a variety of organized activities, games and arts and crafts. Campers also enjoyed beach days each week along with special excursions. Additionally, through coordination with the school department, each camper was offered free breakfast and lunch throughout the duration of camp through the federally sponsored summer food program.

Planning, Permitting & Code

- This week due to vacations and illness we have been down three staff for most of the week and as many as four on some days. We are not keeping up with demand for our services and people should expect delayed response times. We will be back on track next week.
- I am working on incorporating the Complete Streets policy references into approval standards for projects and subdivisions.
- The Planning Board met Tuesday night and reviewed two projects. The Becket School was approved at 31 Holbrook Road and the Lake Auburn Community Center proposal at 115 North Auburn Road was tabled pending additional information and updated plans to reflect recent improvements.
- Joint Land Use Study Policy and Technical Committees met Wednesday night - Leadership at Maine Army National Guard (MEARNG) has changed and they are no longer amenable to some of the draft recommendations that were established by the Policy Committee that included MEARNG Staff as stakeholders. The City and MEARNG want to ensure that we address the military and surrounding land use needs in a way that will improve the future for all involved - that has not changed. One of the main issues in this study area is the fact that the Auburn Suburban Little League has ball fields on Federal Property and the permission to do so has expired years ago. One solution that is being discussed is to trade land from the adjacent City owned Mt. Apatite Park for ownership of the ballfields. Before the Policy Committee can provide a solid recommendation for the Council to consider on this issue, we need to know what the land owner (Army Corp. of Engineers) would accept for a ratio of land. The Army Corp has not committed to a deadline but we are hoping to have the assessment from them in November. If we are going to wait as per the MEARNG request for that we will need an extension of the contract with our consultant and OEA for the grant. The MEARNG feels strongly about waiting and addressing this issue, including land swap ratios, as part of this plan. Ultimately, we would end up with a better and more defined plan as a result of the delay if we can use the additional information to determine a recommendation on this critical issue. The grant and study process so far has been challenging and sometimes heated, but it is doing what we set out to do - bring the City and MEARNG together to table and address the long overdue issues.
- New Auburn Transportation and Land Use Plan. The committee meeting was held on Thursday night and was well attended. The next public meeting will be September 5th. A location will be available next week and we will begin a substantial outreach and advertising effort.
- A contempt hearing for the illegal junkyard owned by Michael Farrell at 145 Eastman Lane has been scheduled for September 5th.

Police

- The department handled 491 calls for service this week. Officers conducted 117 motor vehicle stops and 19 arrests. Officers investigated 80 offenses of which, 10 were felonies. Officers responded to 36 motor vehicle crashes.
- Due to County Jail reductions, officers had to make two juvenile transports to Long Creek Juvenile Facility in South Portland. Each transport tied up an officer for approximately 2.5 hours.

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- A 21 y/o female was arrested for Aggravated Assault, Criminal Threatening and Violating Conditions of Release after stabbing a man in each hand during an altercation. The man was treated at a local hospital for minor injuries.
- Support Services is conducting our annual Junior Police Camp at the PAL Center. Kids are spending the week with SRO McCamish learning about all facets of police work and the Auburn Police Department.
- Detective executing a search warrant on a Washington St residence have recovered approximately \$45,000 in stolen property that has been linked to burglaries in several cities and towns.