



**GARDINER CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**



Meeting Date	12/09/2020	Department	City Council
Agenda Item	4.k Review and Accept Monthly Reports from City Manager and Department Heads		
Est. Cost	n/a		

Background Information	Attached are the monthly reports from the City Manager and Department Heads.
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Requested Action	'I move to accept the November 2020 monthly reports from the City Manager and Department Heads.'
City Manager and/or Finance Review	The City Manager recommends the above action.
Council Vote/ Action Taken	
Departmental Follow-Up	

City Clerk Use Only	1 st Reading _____	Advertised _____	EFFECTIVE DATE _____
	2 nd Reading _____	Advertised _____ w/in 15 Days	
	Final to Dept _____	Updated Book _____	Online _____

NOVEMBER 2020

MONTHLY
CITY MANAGER
&
DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Monthly Report for City Manager's Office

Christine M. Landes, City Manager

November 2020

Summary of Month in General Terms:

The EOC continues to meet bi-weekly to address COVID-19 issues that arise. A COVID policy has been drafted and sent to the 12/9 City Council meeting.

Department Head meetings were held weekly for three of the four Tuesdays in the month.

Nine team members attended 8 hours of Implicit Bias Training conducted by Mindbridge.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

A discussion with CNB was held to talk about parking needs in the city. This conversation will be ongoing.

I met with Johnson Hall and KVCOG in regards to the Northern Borders grant funding. This will be ongoing. (Mechanic Street will be upgraded as part of this grant.)

A sidewalk committee meeting was held and the PW Director will analyze the list for updating and a meeting will be scheduled in January.

Personnel Updates (promotions, absences, needs, etc.):

I listened in on the interviews for Captain and Lieutenant of the Fire Department.

I was on vacation Thanksgiving week.

A harvest potluck luncheon was held this month.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

The Mayor and I met with Councilor-elect Sergent to review Council items.

I attended the Board of Appeals and Cobbossee Watershed District Meeting.

Monthly Report for _____ Economic Development/Planning _____ (Department)

Department Head _____ Tracey Desjardins _____

Month _____ November _____ Year _____ 2020 _____

Summary of Month in General Terms:

The department continues to work with Gardiner Main Street and the businesses regarding Covid as well as fielding calls for potential new businesses looking to locate in Gardiner. There has been an upsweep in calls for people looking at downtown buildings and other vacate properties. I am projecting we will see an increase in upper level rentals in the downtown area in 2021.

Libby Hill continues to have activity. During this month, 28 interested parties viewed the listing and/or asked more information about the property.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2020 Community Enterprise Program: Phase II of the project continues to move forward. The Council has appointed an Advisory Committee for the CDBG project. The project continues to be on track with RFP's to come out in the spring of 2021.

Gardiner was successful in receiving a \$33,750 Coastal Communities Grant for the purpose of a Downtown Master Plan. We received six bids on October 30, 2020. Committee members are will conduct interviews on December 3, 2020 with follow-up interviews the week of December 7.

Keep ME Healthy Grant: Gardiner received \$37,735 COVID grant through the Maine Department of Health & Human Services for addressing safe practices related to the pandemic. The city has expended the grant funds in accordance with the grant. The closeout report is due date was extended to December 16, 2020. We are still distributing PPE to the Gardiner businesses as well as the CEO continues to work with the businesses and staff in regards to following the Governor's Order. There were five Covid related complaints addressed in November. This involves the CEO to visit the establishment to address and mitigate the complaint. The CEO also offers educational resources to the businesses.

During the month of November, the planning department issued 29 permits with an added revenue around \$1,822.00. This is including building, plumbing and general permits. The CEO also conducted 18 final project inspections and received seven (7) complaints.

The Planning Board met on November 10, 2020 via Zoom. There were two applications on the agenda and they were:

1. Preliminary Sub-Division Plan Application for Iron Mine LLC expansion of Mobile Home Park. Planning Board had many questions and decided to schedule a site walk on December 1, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. This would allow board members to have a better visual of the site and expansion plan that is before them.
2. Preliminary Sub-Division Plan Application for Gardiner Green Dresden Avenue housing development. The applicate did not meet the requirement of two public notifications in the paper; therefore, this application will be heard at the December 8, 2020 meeting.

The Ordinance Review Committee met on November 16, 2020 via Zoom to discuss:

1. Finalize amendments for barking dogs. The committee approved for the Planning Board to review the Land Use and Council to review the Codes. Both items will be on an early 2021 agenda for possible adoption.
2. Tiny Homes was also on the agenda and the committee asked Mark Eyerman to make some changes to the language and bring back to the committee in December.
3. Marijuana – the committee reviewed the current Land Use Ordinance and made some changes that stem around increasing the distance between establishments as well as odor control. The board will continue the discussion and amendments in December.

Board of Appeals met on November 19, 2020 via Zoom for a training session with City Solicitor Jon Pottle. This training session was available for BOA & Planning Board Members. The session was very informative and productive. Jon followed up with a one-page summary of general rules of ordinance interpretation that may be a helpful resource for both committees. Currently there is a BOA hearing scheduled for December 24, 2020 regarding the Con Edison Solar Array project slated for West Hill Road. The City Solicitor will be present for this hearing.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

The city has teamed up with Kennebec Valley Council of Governments to submit a letter of intent for the Working Communities Challenge Grant in Southern Kennebec County, which includes Gardiner, Hallowell, Augusta, Chelsea, Farmingdale, Randolph, Pittston & West Gardiner. This project also include multiple non-profit organizations, like KVCAP, Affordable Housing, Boys and Girls Club of Kennebec Valley, Kennebec Valley YMC Augusta just to name a few. The initial letter was due on December 1, 2020, with a Design Grant Application due the end of January if we move forward to the next round. The goal of this project is to enhance an ecosystem of essential services, ensuring that everyone can thrive and participate in our communities by addressing barriers to economic vitality such as access to affordable and safe housing, transportation, youth services and childcare, and diversity and inclusivity across Southern Kennebec County.

The Working Communities Challenge advances local collaborative efforts that build strong, healthy economies and communities in northern New England’s rural towns, regions, and smaller cities. With a focus on economic opportunity for communities and residents with low incomes, this unique three-year grant competition is supported by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, State Government, national and local philanthropy, and private sector employers.

New Businesses/News:

With the new Governor’s Mask Order it was decided to host a “Coffee with the Chief” for the businesses. This is an opportunity for them to ask questions as well as learn the tools available to them when it comes time for patrons following the mask order. The first session was held on November 23, 2020 with a second session to be held on December 7th. Although we did not have businesses participate in the first session, the group was able to come up with some ideas for signage along Water Street to remind people to wear mask on public ways.

Monthly Report: Public Works Department

Department Head: Jerry Douglass

Month: November 2020

Summary of Month in General Terms:

- PW crew spent most of the month doing miscellaneous projects including ditching work on Marston Road, and Capen Road.
- Spent a couple days mixing some salt with sand – we are good to go!
- We did some drainage relief work over on Harden Street in hopes of dumping water over bank to keep it from running down winter street onto summer street onto water street
- With the amount of rainfall this month crew has spent a fair amount of time chasing water and sewer issue
- Public Works Director has 75% of road surveys done in the Road System Management Software Program

Building & Grounds:

- McGee still working on mold abatement project behind City Hall
- McGee finished 95% of the drainage behind city Hall
- Buildings and Grounds crew has spent a lot of time this month putting up Christmas Decorations
- Fulfilling request for odds & ends
- Cleaning of buildings is ongoing

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

- PPE for COVID-19 is well stocked and monitored
- Public Works crew continues to disinfect common areas, handles, knobs etc

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be aware of:

- Phil Hodgkins last day of working was Dec 1st and is now considered retired
- John Cameron has been promoted to full time mechanic.
- Will be hiring equipment operator (John Cameron's old position) internally and will soon be posting for a truck driver.
- Have an employee out for 24 days because family member in same household tested positive to Covid-19

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Fire & Rescue

Department Head: Chief Rick Sieberg

Month: November **Year:** 2020

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Total CFS (calls for service):	261
EMS:	254
Gardiner:	96
West Gardiner:	30
Richmond:	41
Farmingdale:	26
Litchfield:	18
Pittston:	20
Randolph:	11
Chelsea:	10
Other:	2 (Augusta, Dresden, Bowdoinham)
Fire:	16

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

- We now have rapid COVID tests for use on essential City employees.
- PPE stock is healthy. LT. Thompson has paired up with APEMS allowing group purchasing of PPE.
- Making preparations for COVID 19 vaccine distribution. It is expected EMS will be used to administer vaccinations as we did during H1N1.
- Working on securing a Medical Director.
- The AFG Grant will be opening soon. Gathering information on the process.

Personnel Updates (promotions, absences, needs, etc.):

- Andrew Santheson has been promoted to Captain.
- Justin Lodolce has been promoted to Lieutenant.
- Accepting applications for full time Firefighter/Paramedic.
- Adding one more call Firefighter. We will have 8 call Firefighters.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

- Finding qualified full time personnel remains to be a challenge.

Monthly Report for Gardiner Police Department

Department Head: Chief James Toman

Month: November 2020

Summary of Months in General Terms:

- Calls For Service - 637
- ACCIDENTS - 16
- ARRESTS/Criminal Cites – 12
- TRAFFIC TIX – 3

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

- Covid-19 PPE compilation on going
- Significant COVID mitigation strategies are now in effect – significant reduction in citizen contacts, self-initiated activities, & traffic stops, etc.
- Evidence/property room management project under way

Personnel Updates (promotions, absences, needs, etc.):

- 0 vacant patrol positions
- 1 Officer is on light duty until further notice (out since 8/14)
- 1 Supervisor missed 13 – 12 hr shifts (156hrs) due to illness, the rest of the department combined to miss 32 hours
- Officers took a total of 112 hrs of vacation time

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

- All GPD officers received N95 fit testing and 1 hr of training on its proper usage
- Sgt. Pilsbury and Officer Quintana attended a 16 hr property/evidence management class. They are now both certified in property and evidence room management
- Chief Toman in collaboration with the Econ Dev office and Gardiner Main Street hosted a 1 hr, coffee with the Chief zoom meeting on 11/24. This program is designed for Gardiner merchants to participate in a Q&A on mask mandates etc. Another opportunity is scheduled for 12/7 at 9 am.
- All Officers at GPD have received an additional 2 hours of training on the following topics – Situational use of force, Officer Wellness, New law/case law updates & Law Enforcement approach to substance abuse disorders.
- Chief Toman participated in an 8 hr implicit bias class during the week of 11/9
- During a traffic stop, officers seized 17 1/2g of methamphetamine as well as over \$2100in cash

Monthly Report for November (Library)

Department Head Anne Davis

Month November Year 2020

Summary of Month in General Terms:

We continue to see an uptick in the amount of people entering the library. Currently, we are opened to the public Monday – Friday (10am – 5pm) with our takeout window opened until 5:25pm and 6pm on Wednesdays.

Upon entry people are asked to use hand sanitizer and to leave a name and phone number for CDC contact tracing purposes. Masks are mandatory with no exceptions. Our staff willingly goes out to cars or meets people outside that may have reservations about entering the building or using the window service.

Our digital subscription with Hoopla continues to grow exponentially as COVID-19 becomes more aggressive. Last month (October) 252 digital audiobooks were downloaded; 40 digital comic books were accessed; 151 Ebooks were read; 120 movies were streamed; and 112 television shows were watched. This usage is up over 200% from last year at this time.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

I have purchased the Chromebooks and Mifis that I mentioned in my previous report. They have been purchased with grant money. Jessica, a part-time librarian, has undertaken the job of creating a technical brochure that should help non-tech users be able to use the devices when they get them home. My Board of Trustees has approved a draft lending policy that is similar to our circulation of e-readers.

In December, I hope to re-open the Hazzard Room for use so that our large print books, our newspapers and our magazines are easily accessible. At issue is the length the virus stays active on surfaces. In order to open this room, we had to rent outside storage space to keep our items safe and dry. When COVID hit, we were advised by our professional leadership to remove all toys, brochures, chairs, couches, etc. to discourage close contact.

This week I hope to put up a giving tree so that donations may be given to our local food pantries.

I am still waiting to have a carpenter come in and renovate the back entrance so we can offer takeout service in a warmer environment (install windows that open) and allow for easy and safe passage for people entering the building.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

I would like to use this entry to simply say thank you to the wonderful employees at the library. Each day they come to work to offer the best library services in the state of Maine. They have helped people with questions we don't often hear as people are looking at how to use new technology (Chromebooks) and old technology (copiers and fax machines) as our community members struggle to stay in touch with their family and their neighbors. They are working with families looking to homeschool their children and they offer good conversation over the phone or in person to people who are feeling scared and isolated.

Monthly Report for November (technology)

Department Head Anne Davis

Month November Year 2020

Summary of Month in General Terms:

This month I worked with leadership to purchase and install software that offers real-time closed captions to our public meetings. I am especially grateful to Mayor Hart for offering up the assistance of one of her employees as I tried to get it integrated. I believe it is now available to all meetings. The software that we purchased comes from Rev.com and it appears to be very accurate.

I also continue triaging employee issues with software, hardware and lost files. I have also become the “go to” tech support for many of our residents as they try to learn how to go about joining virtual meetings and virtual programs. I am happy to help.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

The upgrade to the library’s wireless network continues. I have decided to go with devices that work with our Sonicwall firewall as that product offers the best access to usage statistics. I hope to make the signal strong enough so that people may access it from their cars and from outside should they be too nervous to enter the building. This access will be 24/7 and it will be part of the Maine School and Library Network (MSLN) and not part of the City of Gardiner network.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

Beginning at the end of this month, I will begin discussions with City Manager Landes about her plans for technology services in FY21. Once a decision is made, Manager Landes may ask Council to create an ad hoc committee to help with an RFP for services and/or job descriptions. I look forward to helping in anyway that I can so that we make a smooth transition of these services.

We will also begin the RFP process to replace many aged and obsolete copy machines found throughout the organization. The current contract with A-Copy has been extended multiple times and it is now time to look at how that service is delivered to our staff members.

As is always the case, please do not hesitate to contact me with any technology questions you may have regarding your access to City services and City meetings.

Monthly Report for: Front Office/Finance
Department Head: Denise Brown
Month/Year: November, 2020

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

The election went as smoothly as possible in light of the challenges that COVID posed. There were a dozen new citizens who volunteered to work at the election. The City is fortunate to have citizens dedicated enough to get involved. Appreciation goes out to the School Dept for allowing us to utilize the gym for this important event.
55 tax foreclosure notices, and 79 sewer lien notices were sent out in the mail in November.
Sewer bills went out the first week of November.
The Tax Collector sold one tax acquired property (TAP) at 56 Marks Lane with the buyer agreeing to clean the property up. This gets a very old TAP back on the tax rolls.
There were 45 applicants for the Tax Discount Program, with 30 qualifying, and a total amount of \$11,667 paid out. Last year we had 38 recipients (\$15,910).
There were 8 GA clients seen during the month of November.

Personnel Updates (promotions, absences, needs, etc.):

I assisted with the Fire Department promotional process on Nov 20 th . There were two internal candidates for the Captain position and two internal candidates for the Lieutenant position.
I worked on the Earned Paid Leave policy for part-time employees, as required by the State of Me. This requirement is effective January 1, 2021.

Financial:

The City was notified that there will be no increase to the health, dental, and vision insurance premiums in January. This is great news for our employees. However, the City does fully fund a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) for the employee's deductibles and maximum out of pocket expenses, which are increasing from \$4,500 to \$5,000 for the single plan insurance and from \$9,000 to \$10,000 for the family plan insurance. We did budget for a 10% increase to the insurance premiums so I believe there will be no negative impact in FY21.
ArtDogs has paid off their City loan and there are three remaining loans for a total principal due of \$70K (Johnson Hall, Isamax Snacks, and The Stone Turret).
We received 100% reimbursement (\$1,080) from the State Elections Bureau for the new drop box at City Hall instead of the anticipated 80%.
We received the Federal portion of the 1 st COVID reimbursement request in the amount of \$18,285.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

25 employees received \$20 Hannaford gift cards purchased with wellness funds we receive from the Maine Municipal Employee Health Trust (MMEHT) each year for participating in the health insurance program.
City employees were invited to participate in a fall bingo game with \$25, \$50, \$75 and \$100 gift cards being given to lucky winners (also funded with the wellness grant).
On November 18, city employees participated in a Harvest Luncheon, with lots of great Thanksgiving themed food.

TO: Christine Landes, City Manager Mayor and Council
FROM: Douglas E. Clark, Wastewater Director
DATE: December 2, 2020
RE: Wastewater Activity Report For November 2020

South Gardiner Manhole Replacement Project

Bids were received on Friday November 6 for replacement of the manhole structure in South Gardiner. The amounts were well over what we have budgeted plus the time frame for completion appeared to be too stringent, so we decided to go out to bid one more time with a completion date of November 30. Only two contractors responded with amended bids and they were still too high so I recommend waiting until spring then going out to bid once more when hopefully the market improves. \$18,500 is set aside in a carry forward account from last year plus we could supplement that a little from the PW O&M line in the WW budget if it is available at that time.

Upgrade Project

The bid opening date was pushed back one more week from November 18 to the 25 at the request of a bidding contractor and the City through HT granted the request. The Engineers then recommended that the bid date be pushed back once more to December 9 which we agreed to in order to grant the maximum amount of time for potential bidders to gather information and respond. This latest extension will not affect the construction schedule nor the compliance plan agreed upon with DEP. Our DEP Inspector Jim Crowley is being advised of project progress.

Rainfall

The dry spring, summer and early fall pattern we have been in was suddenly reversed on Monday November 23 with 2.64 inches of rain falling in about 10 hours. 292,467 gallons (69.3% of capacity) of mixed sewerage and rainwater were diverted into the new CSO/RTB (Combined Sewer Overflow/Retention and Treatment Basin) tank at the Maine Ave. Pump Station then pumped back into the system when flows dropped later on. Before the tank was built this flow would have gone directly into the river with no treatment. The RTB provides basic screening and primary treatment satisfying EPA's Nine Minimum Controls Policy for CSO impact abatement.

Quickly on the heels of that storm were 3.33 inches of rain on November 30 resulting in 415,395 gallons of CSO flow filling the tank to capacity then continuing on to pass another 6,335,768 gallons out to the river (once tank capacity is reached then the excess flow goes into the river but still receives the same primary treatment) and while it may seem futile to capture only 6.2% of total flow it is the "first flush" or the worst initial part of the discharge which contains the highest concentration of pollutants that still receives the primary treatment. That which is left is very dilute and poses much less of a threat to water quality. As we are fond of saying in the environmental world, "The solution to pollution is dilution".

We went into a separate CSO mode at the plant on both occasions too and 100% of that flow receives primary treatment as well. At the peak of the 11/30 storm I calculated we had 7.81 million gallons per day instantaneous flow entering the plant or 5425 gallons per minute. That volume of flow would fill a tractor trailer tanker truck every 99 seconds.

The ground is saturated now and we have yet another wind and rain event forecast for this upcoming weekend.