



**GARDINER CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**



Meeting Date	01/17/2024	Department	City Manager
Agenda Item	5. Department Head Reports		
Est. Cost			

Background Information	<p>Please see the attached reports</p>
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Requested Action	
City Manager and/or Finance Review	
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 _____

Monthly Report for: Economic Development

Department Head: Melissa Lindley

Month/Year: December 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms:

The month began with well attended community celebrations – the ArtWalk and Tree Lighting events, and the Main Street parade which brought the largest number of participants and the biggest crowd yet for the event. I worked with Main Street to help support its grant-funded temporary pop-up market which brought five smaller businesses into one location over the holidays. It was a great way to expose these merchants to Gardiner as a possible option to open their own business here, and to also fill an empty storefront.

Unfortunately, there was also the major storm which brought city-wide power outages, downed trees, and the highest flood waters since 1987. The downtown building and business owners suffered significant losses from the flooding, the loss of power, and from heating oil contamination. It was definitely a challenging time for what is the busiest time of the year for many of our merchants. Our city staff worked closely with Gardiner Main Street and others to support those impacted in any way we could. The Maine Business Relief Fund has been established which may help some. Other financial supports may come at a later date, which I will share if they become available.

Having the Gardiner Current mobile app was especially helpful in quickly getting notices out about the storm. Please continue to spread the word to community members about it, so that more people can receive these update notifications on their phones.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

Brownfields Assessment Grant: As I noted in last month's report, our contract with Ransom Consulting was nullified due to the original October 2022 RFP process being out of compliance. This halts any work on our Brownfields grant until a new contract is secured with a consultant. I worked with our EPA representative to create a new RFP, and that was posted and shared this month, with proposals due January 11.

A review team from the Economic & Community Development Committee will make a recommendation to the Council in the selection of a Brownfields consultant, and once approved to move forward, a new contract will be made. This is an unfortunate pause in the Brownfields work, but I was able to turn it around quickly, and I hope to get back to work soon.

Libby Hill Business Park: Both Lot 12 and Lot 25 are listed for sale. Island Properties received planning board approval to build three buildings and a laydown area for Smokey's Greater Shows.

1 Summer St: the remaining city-owned lots on the former TW Dick site are listed for sale for \$125,000. We are engaging in conversations with a very interested developer.

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

The Economic and Community Development Committee been discussing priorities and aligning them with potential grant funding opportunities.

The Downtown Sidewalk Committee did not meet in December. Next meeting will be January 8th at 10am.

A ribbon cutting event was held at Spindleworks Gardiner on December 1 to celebrate their opening at 221 Water Street.

Many department heads are attending regular planning meetings for the Great Race event coming to Gardiner on June 30th and organized by the KV Chamber. This will be a major event bringing thousands of people and will also require a lot of volunteer support during the event.

Monthly Report for: Front Office/Finance
Department Head: Denise Brown
Month/Year: December 2023

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

December Activity					
270	MV Transactions	\$82,647	Permits		
157	Tax Payments	\$134,898	1	Building-Business/Commercial	\$116
737	Sewer Payments	\$187,508	6	Building-Residential	\$429
62	IF&W Transactions	\$3,628	0	Demolition	\$0
35	Vital Records	\$252	0	Home Occupancy	\$0
13	Ambulance Payments	\$2,136	0	Excavation	\$0
102	Dog Transactions	\$383	0	Sign	\$0
2	Victualer/Liquor License	\$100	0	Street Opening	\$0
8	Notarial	\$40	0	Driveway Entrance	\$0
1	Mariage	\$40	3	Plumbing	\$230
4	General Assistance	\$7,392	0	Septic	\$0

Dog licenses expired Dec 31. January is a courtesy month with late fees starting on February 1. We will publicize this with web postings, mailed notices, and the electronic message board.

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

The Front Office group enjoyed brunch at Dave’s Diner and a sock exchange to celebrate the holidays. On behalf of the front office staff, I would like to thank the Mayor and City Councilors for the time off during the holidays, the holiday brunch, and the Christmas bonus.

Financial:

FY25 Budget work has begun with the Finance Director working on the wages and benefits spreadsheet and with Chief Sieberg on the Ambulance Budget so that he could provide budget numbers to some partner communities. All Department Heads will begin their work in January. The Quarterly Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the second quarter of FY24 is attached. If you have questions, please call or email.

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

None to report at this time.

City of Gardiner

Quarterly Statement of Revenues & Expenses as of December 31, 2023

FY24 Revenues	FY24 Budget	Received Thru Dec 31	% of Budget
Property Tax Revenue	8,173,662	4,653,296	57%
Homestead Exemption	414,798	293,282	71%
BETE Reimbursement	185,477	185,477	100%
State Revenue Sharing	1,297,305	703,262	54%
Excise Tax and Vehicle Registration	1,200,000	540,651	45%
State Local Road Assistance Program	72,000	84,248	117%
Veterans/Tree/Snowmobile/Solar	20,300	19,574	96%
General Assistance Reimbursement	24,500	15,491	63%
Penalties and Interest	55,000	24,293	44%
Licenses and Permits	73,000	33,224	46%
Fees and Fines	47,500	18,335	39%
Library Fees	128,470	128,470	100%
TWC Franchise Fee	68,000	0	0%
Ambulance Rental Reimbursement	10,000	10,000	100%
Audit/Events/Tech Reimbursement	41,515	40,515	98%
First Park	25,000	0	0%
Investment Earnings	150,000	127,079	85%
Sale of Property/Unclassified	12,000	13,369	111%
Due from WasteWater Fund	139,581	139,581	100%
Due from Revolving Loan Fund	10,000	10,000	100%
Use of Fund Balance	500,000	0	0%
Carryforwards	159,000	0	0%
Total Revenue	12,807,108	7,040,146	55%

Total revenues is slightly higher than at this time last year.

Revenue Variance Notes:

Excise is slightly low. However, we recognize large fleets in the spring. Some State revenues are high due to the timing of funding. Library fees have been paid in full by all member towns. We will receive cable franchise proceeds in Jan. and First Park proceeds in June. Interest rates continue to be favorable. The sale of property is reflective of the summer sale. Transfers and reimbursements from other funds have been made.

FY24 Expenses	FY24 Budget	Expended Thru Dec 31	% of Budget
General Government	927,984	507,571	55%
Legal	45,000	28,367	63%
Workers' Compensation	146,474	35,352	24%
Property & Casualty Insurance	92,000	102,947	112%
Contingency	30,000	17,762	59%
Technology	144,997	88,103	61%
Police	1,602,371	730,987	46%
Fire	918,449	462,902	50%
Fire Hydrants	328,146	78,130	24%
Ambulance Services	190,479	190,479	100%
Buildings & Grounds	502,149	229,941	46%
Public Works	1,835,904	788,676	43%
Public Library	563,948	241,158	43%
Economic Development	221,085	108,439	49%
General Assistance	41,188	31,432	76%
Community Programs	157,232	147,898	94%
Total Municipal Appropriation	7,747,406	3,790,146	49%
Overlay	18,718	0	0%
County Appropriation	466,106	466,106	100%
Education Appropriation	4,574,878	2,283,747	50%
Total Expenditures	12,807,108	6,539,999	51%

Total expenses are right where they should be for this time of year.

Expense Variance Notes:

WC is low only due to timing of payments. The Property Insurance coverage is due to a higher than anticipated renewal increase. Fire Hydrants is low, as only one quarterly payment has been made. Gardiner's share of the Ambulance Service has been paid in full. General Assistance is trending high again even though we increased the budget. Community Programs is high due to timing of annual payments. County Taxes have been paid in full.

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Public Library

Department Head: Dawn Thistle

Month/Year: December, 2023

Summary of Month:

December was a busy month at the library. We hosted a vibrant ArtWalk night on December 1st: our third and busiest of the year. We featured a very happy painter in the Reading Room, as well as an author, Chrysalis Place, and a GAHS student's piece – all accompanied by one of our patrons playing holiday music on the harp. Up and down Water Street, it was a lovely and well-attended kick-off to a festive downtown season, and we were proud and delighted to be a vibrant part of it! We hosted weekly holiday movies, as well as a sing-along featuring The Sound of Music. The Wednesday homeschool reading group and Lego club, and Thursday Teen afternoons continued to be well attended. In addition to regular Wednesday afternoon sessions of children reading to Sparrow, the therapy greyhound; we coordinated with the Alzheimer's Care Center for a few clients to come to the library to visit with two other therapy greyhounds. It was a delightful afternoon. The storm on the 18th brought a swift change to our month. The power outage shut us down for a few days and the risk of flooding necessitated action in the Archives (which some of us will remember flooded in 1987). Plan A has been to swiftly empty the room by rolling all the cart out and upstairs on the elevator. Without power, Plan B became moving everything to upper shelves or higher surfaces by hand – in the dark. I can't thank Public Works Director John Cameron and all his crew (PW and B&G) enough. They immediately sprang into action to help, got it done, and were the only reason I got any sleep that night. Thankfully, no water entered the library at all. It will be a task to get things back in order, but it was far better to be safe than sorry.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

The season of budgeting processes for our supporting towns has begun. The Board of Trustees was unable to meet as scheduled due to the storm but did come together the first week of January to determine a new proposed fee schedule for the supporting towns. The "meeting pod" (paid for by the Maine State Library ARPA grant) is on its way and will be installed in mid-January. On behalf of the GLA, I secured two additional grants that will assist in restoring and stabilizing parts of the exterior of the building, as well as improving the functionality and welcoming character of the Children's Room circulation desk. Thanks are due to the J.W. Robinson Welfare Trust and the Lewis J Sheaffer Community Trust.

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

We hope to welcome a new part-time staff member in early February. Otherwise, nothing to note.

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Fire & Rescue

Department Head: Chief Rick Sieberg

Month: December

Year: 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Total CFS (calls for service): 425

EMS: 361

Gardiner:	130
West Gardiner:	32
Richmond:	49
Farmingdale:	48
Litchfield:	35
Pittston:	28
Randolph:	21
Chelsea:	16
Other:	1 (Augusta, Bowdoinham)

Fire: 64

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

- Beginning to purchase/price out new equipment for the new engine.
- Planning on how to best use the new space created in the old building and grounds area.

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

- FF Rohobot Carlson passed his National Registry and is now our newest Paramedic!

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

- Space at Central Station remains a challenge.
- Working toward staffing all three rescues.

Monthly Report: Public Works Department

Director: John A Cameron Sr.

Month: December 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms

Highway Department:

The highway department worked on getting their trucks ready and calibrated for the winter season mostly rain events got us in the month of December this year. Chasing water and fallen trees for the first event on the 11th they got everything taking care of decent but with the second big one on the 18th kept the crew busy doing clean up from multiple days trying to get streets reopened cleared from trees. The arcade and parking lot and the waterfront parking took a while to get reopened but got it cleaned up to get us through the winter. There is still a lot of cleanups to do on the lawns once spring comes.

Buildings & Grounds:

The buildings and grounds crew worked on building some new storage rooms at City Hall along with the assistance from the highway department then once we got the big rainstorm on the 18th of December been hard at it trying to get the parks cemeteries and waterfront open back up for the public to enjoy.

Current Progress on Projects/Planes/Problems:

The buildings and grounds and highway department of both working together to get some new storage rooms built inside the old buildings and grounds bays at City Hall hoping to have this project wrapped up over the winter.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be aware of: none at this time.

Monthly Report for Gardiner Police Department

Department Head: Chief Todd H. Pilsbury



Month: December 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Calls for Service:	325
Accidents:	0
Arrests/Criminal Cites:	7
Traffic & Parking Tix:	39

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

The Gardiner Police department continues the process to become MLEAP certified. (Maine Law Enforcement Accreditation Program) As stated in prior reports, the process takes approximately three years to complete but I hope to have the process completed in approximately two years if all goes well. As of the end of December the process is going very well and I still hope to complete the process early.

The departments new Ford F-150 is currently at Coastal Electronics in Wiscasset waiting to be outfitted for patrol work. All the equipment has arrived and we hope to have it ready for patrol work by mid January.

The damaged speed trailer is still currently at TMDE Electronics being repaired. I was advised that the repairs have started but due to vacations, etc. it is still not completed. They are hoping within the next two to three weeks to have the repairs completed.

As noted in previous reports and will be noted in future reports, within the next few years we will need to go to a new or upgraded records management system as Central Square/IMC (current dispatching system) is slated to be discontinued. We currently are also in a two year contract with our dispatching service (RCC) and they may not be offering service utilizing our current system (IMC) beyond the two year contract. We need to and are exploring other options for this service and possibly an upgrade or replacement to our current IMC system.

Currently one of the departments primary marked patrol units, plate 2400, is back up to Quirk Ford for an engine issue. As noted in previous reports this unit was down for most of the summer until a new engine was installed. The unit was towed to Quirk Ford on December 24th.

2023 and as of January 3, 2024 has not been looked at by Quirk Ford. I was told that they are backlogged as well as issues with staffing.

Personnel Updates (Promotions, Absences, Needs, Etc.):

Officer Zachary Reynolds graduated from the 44th Basic Law Enforcement Training Program on December 15th, 2023 (BLETP). He represented the City of Gardiner and the Gardiner Police Department very well as I knew he would. Officer Reynolds has chosen to work the night shift (6p to 6a) and began his road duties on December 18th, 2023 as a certified full time police officer.

Officer Michael Moody, who was scheduled to attend the 45th Basic Law Enforcement Training Program (BLETP) from January 16th, 2024 through May 17th, 2024, will not be attending this training session. He requested, due to personal issues, that he may attend the 46th BLETP which begins in August of 2024. A letter requesting this change was sent to the Criminal Justice Academy and I am awaiting a response from the Academy's Board of Trustees. If all goes well and staffing allows, I would like to send Officer Moody as well as Officer Michael Caputo to the 46th BLETP in August of 2024.

Staffing is still a concern as even with the hiring of Officer Michael Caputo, who is currently in his field training with the department, we are still down two (2) officers. We have received a few new applications but they have not panned out. I still believe that we will be able to fill these positions within the next few months.

Overall, officers used a total of 194 hours of vacation/comp time during the month, and 82.5 hours of sick leave.

Any other Noted Updates, Concerns, Items for the City Council to be aware of:

Nothing up to this point warrants noting.

TO: Andy Carlton, City Manager
FROM: Douglas E. Clark, Wastewater Director
DATE: January 8, 2024
RE: Wastewater Activity Report December 2023

Christmas Storm

All things considered we made it through the Christmas Storm of December 18-22, 2023 relatively unscathed. All the standby generators worked well and we were able to secure a fuel source for delivery to the remote sites. Flood waters did not come close to the Plant or South Gardiner Pump Station but filled up the wet well side of the Maine Ave. Pump Station to a depth of 20 feet. Water did not enter the dry side at all. It appears the excess head pressure of the water (0.433 psi per foot of elevation) ruptured the diaphragms inside the tank level control pressure transducers in the wet wells, however, and we lost all control of the pumps from Christmas Eve. through Christmas Day. Though out of state I was in constant contact with operators over the phone. At that point I instructed them to shut the station down completely rather than risk damaging the pumps which kept running dry. 100% of the flow at that point passed through the CSO/RTB Tank and even though full provided at least primary treatment before discharge to the river through CSO Discharge point #ME-0101702-003 at the Waterfront Park. I looked at language in our Waste Discharge License and found that in emergency situations we are actually allowed to provide only a minimum of primary treatment. Though specifically referring only to the plant and in instances where standby power is not available I argued to DEP that a pint's a pound the world around and that primary treatment is primary treatment no matter where it occurs and they agreed so we only had to file a Discharge Incident Report (DIR) with them and they would not pursue the matter further as a permit violation requiring enforcement.

To finish the story, Tim Stevens of Stevens Pump & Electric and one of our operators worked most of Christmas Day installing a temporary float operated level control device and they were able to restart the station. It ran in this mode until Tuesday morning 12/26 when our instrumentation technician then came and installed two new transducers I had as spares returning the station to normal operation. I was in constant contact with James Knight, our DEP inspector, throughout this keeping him informed of the progress.