



**GARDINER CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**



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|--------------|---|------------|------------|
| Meeting Date | 08/16/2023 | Department | City Clerk |
| Agenda Item | 4d. Agenda item Department Head Reports | | |
| Est. Cost | N/A | | |

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| Background Information | Please see the attached Department Head Reports. | | |
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| Requested Action | |
| City Manager and/or Finance Review | |
| Council Vote/ Action Taken | |
| Departmental Follow-Up | |

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 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: July 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms:

There has been an increase in interest for commercial spaces in the downtown. I have had several conversations with individuals and building owners to make connections and fill spaces. I toured some of the vacant commercial properties available to see the spaces and help find suitable tenants. I also participated in meetings regarding workforce development, expanding housing in Gardiner, and I continue collaborate and meet regularly with Gardiner Main Street.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

Brownfields Assessment Grant: I have received a draft of the Phase I report on the property located a 19 Maine Ave (Gardiner Feed) for review. A list of potential properties as well as discussions with property owners continues to be in development in collaboration with Ransom Consulting.

Libby Hill Business Park: We received a couple of inquiries about the two remaining lots listed by the city, and we continue to work with our Realtor Dennis Wheelock on the properties.

The July 22 McKay Park ribbon cutting and re-dedication event was well attended by friends and family members of Caroll McKay and members of the community.

The new Gardiner Current citizen notification app has been well received. It is an easily accessible way for residents to stay up to date and be informed about what is happening at in the city. It is also easy for staff to quickly send out information.

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

The Economic and Community Development Committee did not meet in July. It will next meet on September 14, as I will be away during the regularly scheduled August meeting date.

Over the past few months, I have been participating in Gardiner Main Street's Entrepreneurial Ecosystems grant project to review and assess the support systems we have in Gardiner for business owners. The grant process is now moving to an implementation phase to support existing businesses and encourage new entrepreneurs in Gardiner. GMS has some great plans in place and I look forward to supporting them over the upcoming months as they work to fill commercial space downtown with businesses ready to succeed. Expect an announcement from Gardiner Main Street soon on how the project will be implemented.

I will be out of the office attending the National Brownfields Conference in Detroit from August 7-11 the expenses to attend are covered by the City's Brownfields Assessment Grant. I look forward to learning more about the benefits of the Brownfields process to economic development at the event.

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Fire & Rescue

Department Head: Chief Rick Sieberg

Month: July

Year: 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Total CFS (calls for service): 302

EMS: 277

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|----------------|---|
| Gardiner: | 84 |
| West Gardiner: | 27 |
| Richmond: | 49 |
| Farmingdale: | 25 |
| Litchfield: | 15 |
| Pittston: | 18 |
| Randolph: | 29 |
| Chelsea: | 21 |
| Other: | 9 (Augusta, Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, Hallowell, Whitefield) |

Fire: 25

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:.

- Iron Man was a success.
- Beginning to purchase/price out new equipment for the new engine.

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

- Open Firefighter/Paramedic position is posted
- FF Seekins is now licensed at the EMT-A level

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 for: Front Office/Finance
Department Head: Denise Brown
Month/Year: July, 2023

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

Activity for the month:

471 MV Transactions - \$110,743
67 Tax Payments - \$64,422
213 Sewer Payments - \$27,662
72 IF&W Transactions - \$5,365
28 Vital Records - \$541
11 Amb payments - \$1,843
1 DBA issued - \$10
2 victualers licenses and 1 liquor license
13 Notarial Services - \$65

Two general assistance applicants were assisted in July with housing.

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

The 6% pay increases were processed for all of the employees at the beginning of July. City staff were grateful for the recognition and the Department Heads wish to thank the Mayor and City Council for this generous offer in light of the fact that the negotiated increases were 2.5%. This act shows that the City is committed to retaining its dedicated employees.

Kathy Cutler celebrated her 16th year this month. I'm pretty sure there aren't many things that go on in the City of Gardiner that she doesn't know about... and probably has had to do something in order for it to happen.

Financial:

The front office staff had an on-site representative from our software company for an all-day one-on-one training. This was an excellent opportunity for staff to get their specific questions answered.

The readings from the Water District were not received in July for the April-June usage. This will push out the quarterly sewer bills into mid-August.

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

The City Manager and I filed for FEMA assistance for the Mayday Disaster. The stabilization portion of the project (\$250K) will most likely be completed within the 6-month requirement and the longer/larger mitigation of \$2.8M will require requests for extensions, as the time-frame for the permanent work is only 18 months.

There has been a bit of delay in the phone system conversion; as we are waiting to fully transition to Office 365 first.

Monthly Report for Gardiner Police Department

Department Head: Chief Todd H. Pilsbury

Month: July 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms:

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| Calls for Service: | 519 |
| Accidents: | 7 |
| Arrests/Criminal Cites: | 17 |
| Traffic & Parking Tix: | 41 |

Current Progress on projects/Plans/Problems:

The Gardiner Police Department has begun the process to become MLEAP certified. (Maine Law Enforcement Accreditation Program) We have contracted with Dirigo Safety, LLC, Public Safety Advocates to assist us in getting our accreditation. The Maine Law Enforcement Program is a voluntary process where police agencies in Maine demonstrate their commitment to excellence and compliance with the highest standards in law enforcement. These standards, developed by Maine Law Enforcement professionals, are designed to help agencies effectively serve their communities and protect individuals' rights. By achieving accreditation, agencies can earn credibility and confidence, reduce risk and liability exposure, and show their commitment to their communities and profession. These benefits are particularly important in today's climate, where law enforcement agencies are under increasing scrutiny and the public demands transparency and accountability. By demonstrating their dedication to meeting the highest standards in the field, accredited agencies can set themselves apart as among the very best in law enforcement. The process to achieve accreditation is a process that takes about three years to complete.

Once again primary patrol unit #2600 is back at Quirk Ford with engine issues. This unit has been there since late July and am waiting on repairs.

Damaged speed trailer as reported on in August has been dropped off at TMDE Electronics in Richmond for repairs as the City has received payment for repairs from the other parties insurance carrier. Trailer is still currently at TMDE.

As noted in previous reports, within the next 3-5 years we will need to go to a new or upgraded records management system as Central Square/IMC (current system) is slated to be discontinued.

It has been brought to my attention that our dispatching (RCC) will not be offering services utilizing our current system (IMC) for many more years. The City just signed a two year contract with RCC for our dispatching needs but we should keep in mind at a later date we may need to look elsewhere for this service and possibly an upgrade or replacement to our current IMC system.

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

Sgt. Normand Gove, an 18 year veteran of the Gardiner Police Department, has taken a patrol position with the Sagadahoc Sheriff's Department. He completed his last shift with the Gardiner Police Department on 8/6/2023. Sgt. Gove's experience will be greatly missed by the City of Gardiner and we wish him continued success.

Officer Zachary Reynolds will be attending the Maine Criminal Justice Academy on 8/14/2023. Officer Reynolds will be gone for 18 weeks to become a certified police officer. We wish Officer Reynolds all the best and know he will represent the City very well.

Officer Amanda Reed has cleared her Field Training Program and began working a normal patrol shift on 8/7/2023.

Sgt. Stacey Blair, I am quite certain, will be out for an extended time due to a medical issue he learned about in late July. We are wishing Sgt. Blair good luck and a speedy return.

With the separation of Sgt. Gove, the absence of Sgt. Blair and the loss of Officer Reynolds for 18 weeks the department is currently and will be down, for the next few months, six (6) officers out of a complement of 12 (twelve) including myself. The department is at a critical staffing level as we are running now at 50%. We have had one application come in for these positions and this person has no experience of any kind in law enforcement. If backgrounded and hired this person would not be ready for patrol work until March of 2024. We still are currently utilizing social media, e-mailing potential applicants and officers are actively attempting to recruit new officers for the department.

Overall, officers used a total of 184.5 hours of vacation/comp time during the month, and 44 hours of sick leave.

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

Nothing other than staffing issues mentioned above.

Monthly Report: Public Works Department

Director: John A Cameron Sr.

Month: July 2023

Summary of Month in General Terms

Highway Department:

This month the crew was able to get all the paving roads ready for main-ly paving to come when their schedule allows. There's been a couple of spots where the beavers have been causing a lot of issues for the crew to keep the dams opened up. They are finishing up the Old Brunswick road teeing up that intersection. We had a sewer main issue by 311 Brunswick Ave. we put in 150 feet of new pipe and tied in the house service

Buildings & Grounds:

This month was real busy with the high speed rate of grass growth but with this crew they were up for the challenge and did a great job. I've got a lot of good positive feedback on the way the parks are looking. They have also spent some time on projects like trimming brush at the overlook and repairing some bricks on the downtown sidewalks.

Current Progress on Projects/Planes/Problems:

The Palmer Fountain project is moving along with building and grounds grinding out the tree stumps the contractor is moving along with the ground work.

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

At the Public Works we are still down one equipment operator. On the Buildings & Grounds side we have added a new full time maintenance assistant his name is Mike McArther jr. and we promoted Greg Stevens to foreman.

TO: Andy Carlton, City Manager
FROM: Douglas E. Clark, Wastewater Director
DATE: August 1, 2023
RE: Wastewater Activity Report July 2023

Collection System

Investigation work continued through the month of July on the sewer line from Old Brunswick Road, crossing Lions Ave. and Family Matters parking lot, the old Armory lot and the end of Fairview St. to try and find out the cause of the backup into 311 Brunswick Ave. As of August 1 the old line has been dug up and replaced including the portion with the telephone pole stuck through it. The 8" clay tile line was totally blocked with roots in front of 311 Brunswick Ave. as well as broken up in several places. It's a miracle any flow at all was passing through it. With the pole gone and brand new line up as far as Fairview St. 311 should never back up again. The service line from the house to the new main was found to be in good shape. The plan moving forward is to jet clean the old line farther up to Lions Ave. to remove some roots remaining then do a final camera inspection. Also pending is the installation of a sewer manhole basin on Partridge Dr. as well as fix a leaking connection on a service line on Partridge, then finally the replacement of the Church Street line sometime in September.

Weather

The current rainy weather pattern continued through July. Since April 1 we have received 19.11" of rain on the gauge at the plant. Through flow balancing and storage using the CSO/RTB tank at Maine Ave. Pump Station we have been able to avoid going into CSO (wet weather primary bypassing secondary in DEP jargon) mode of operation during seasonal disinfection period of May 15 to September 30 of each year, which is exactly what the tank was designed to do.

Maintenance

One of two heat circulator pumps at the plant was rebuilt in July. Routine maintenance and PM were performed on the RBCs, pumps at Maine Ave. P.S. plus the replacement of pump impellers and rebuilding of the mounting and guiderail system on Pump Stations # 3, 4 and 5 in the Libby Hill Business Park. We have also been in communication with management at the Commonwealth Poultry Plant in the LHBP concerning better ways for them to remove some solids and debris leaving their facility and getting jammed in the pumps at P.S. #4.

Personnel

Ben Dice signed up for a three day JETCC/NEIWPC Operator training class at Southern Maine Community College August 15, 16 & 17. Along with a one day Wastewater Math refresher August 3 he will be ready to sit for his Grade III Maine DEP Operator's License exam sometime in September. If he passes he will be at what DEP considers a Chief Operator level for a grade IV plant such as Gardiner's. This is outstanding as he only came to us 6 years ago as a night stocker at Hannaford with no WW experience at all. Since then he has shown phenomenal growth, intelligence, attitude and energy (what I refer to as the "X Factor") learning not only the full operation of the plant but all lab work as well. A grant from the Harold Alfond Foundation is paying for half of the classes reducing the total cost from \$500 to \$250.

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Public Library

Department Head: Dawn Thistle

Month/Year: June, 2023

Programming

Summer Reading is well underway. Story Time attendance is amazing – last week we lost count at 60. The free lunches we are able to provide via a USDA program are an additional draw and we are so happy to be able to host these lunches 3 days a week during the summer.

Our attendance for weekly movies has been positive – although we did suffer a technical/sound glitch in week 2, which was swiftly remedied and is no longer an issue.

We hosted our fourth (relatively) annual Stuffed Animal Sleepover in the last week of June and it was, once again, a huge hit. We had a full house, posted ample photos of the antics online, and provided each child with a pin/button depicting their cherished animal enjoying the night of fun.

On Saturday, June 24, we hosted a Marjorie Standish Potluck, honoring the Maine celebrity cook who wrote her weekly cooking column from Gardiner for over 25 years. We welcomed about 40 attendees and a wide variety of dishes, with no duplication. The Kennebec Journal published a great piece in advance and helped boost our attendance. Many expressed to us how much they loved the event – and many expressed their disappointment that they could not attend this year. We aim to make this an annual event and will repeat it next year with even greater exposure. Standish remains a Maine treasure and we are lucky to be able to claim her!

We are showing movies this summer, too! Tuesday evenings are general admission, all audiences, with an emphasis on documentaries; Wednesday afternoons are geared for teens, but we welcome all ages; and Thursday mornings were selected for children but, again, all ages are welcome. We offer free popcorn in addition to the free lunches served on those days.

We still have many upcoming events – and still more to be announced! Story Time, of course, is the key draw and our Children's Room will be hosting the bulk of summer events. We will be welcoming some amazing large puppets with Miss Lindsay on Friday, July 14th; and Mr. Drew and His Animals, Too (always a big draw) will be coming in August. We also have an upcoming visit from the L.C. Bates Museum on Wednesday July 19; they always provide a wonderfully immersive scientific and/or historical experience.

I can't help but reiterate how thankful we are for the Grant Support we received to ensure and improve our summer programming this year. We thank Bangor Savings Bank, Maine Public Library Grants, and Healthy Maine Communities, in particular for helping to make all our summer programming possible.

Grants

Speaking of grants, since last reported, we received an additional \$xxx from Healthy Maine Communities to support our programming – especially this summer's programming and, ultimately, to create and maintain spaces and events that include and support LGBTQ+ youth and those who are lacking safe spaces to gather.

If I haven't already reported, we recently received word that we were granted over \$32,000 in ARPA funds for Maine Public Libraries to Support Remote Workers. Our project aims to improve our working spaces in our reading room and to provide a private, relatively sound-proof meeting "Pod" that will allow up to 4 people to gather and meet in privacy for any number of meeting needs. We currently welcome tutoring sessions, social work/family meetings, interviews, remote meeting sessions and more – and we hope these solutions will prove useful for our patrons and visitors as soon as they can be implemented.

Regarding grants, we are still waiting to hear on our Viles grant application for garden improvements, as well as a Belvedere request for repairs to our roof/corbels.

I am currently in the process of applying for more grants. On the immediate horizon is continuing needs for our roof and corbel repairs. The Steven and Tabitha King Foundation and the Davis Foundation (among some others) are on our radar and I will be filing applications soon.

Town Meetings

Farmingdale & Litchfield meetings proved successful in June – we received full support with no push-back this year. We have also been tracking new library card sign-ups and can show increased support following the town meetings. We will continue to track this data and hope it might signify some enlightening trends.

The Randolph Town Meeting will be our final of the season – held on Wednesday, July 26th.

The Library Building

Our century-old bee colony returned this year; they have been a bit less active than in past years, but we are happy to have them back.

We also have evidence that bats are back during our evening hours – this is a topic that we will re-address soon and try to determine best moves going forward.

Our "new" (within the last year) curtains in the Children's Room are still proving helpful and many ways; the batteries on one curtain cut out early, but we were able to bring the Fire Department in, along with a ladder, to replace the battery and solve our problem. Now we will know how to proceed with recharging all the batteries going forward. Thanks, FD!!

We have received recent, updated estimates on our brownstone work via the GLA. We hope to have work re-commence this fall. It is a large work-in-progress.