TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: William R. Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: December 3, 2018

Meetings:

There will be a business meeting of the City Council on Thursday, December 6, 2018 in Council Chambers. Agendas are included in your Council Packets. A pre-meeting will take place in Conference Room A beginning at 6:30. **At this time, there is an executive session scheduled for 6:00 pm for discussion of pending litigation.**

Other Items:

In the fall of 2017, Council authorized me to sign an option with the Augusta Housing Authority for lease of the property at the end of Maple Street for construction of their family housing project. Now, the lawyers are preparing the final paperwork for closing on this long-term lease agreement and are requiring a follow-up Council order to authorize the actual execution of the lease. I have asked Counsellor Langsdorf to draft that order and it is on this week’s agenda.

First meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Committee will be Monday, December 10th at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. At it Chair Darek Grant will review the charge of the committee, provide an opportunity for the newly appointed members to become acquainted with one another and with City staff (in particular Matt Nazar who will direct staff support efforts), and establish the schedule for the committee’s work in the coming year.

I am delighted to announce that after an internal search process, Community Services Director Leif Dahlin has promoted (with my enthusiastic endorsement) Assistant Library Director Sarah Schultz-Nielsen to Library Director, effective last week. Sarah’s appointment comes with the strong support of the Library’s Board of Trustees and former director, Betsy Pohl who hired Sarah thirteen years ago. For the past several months, Sarah has done a terrific job as Acting Director (as she has for years as Assistant Director). As you can readily see from Sarah’s enclosed resume, she comes highly qualified for the position and would have been an outstanding candidate for the same position in any of Maine’s major public libraries. She enjoys the unqualified support of the library staff, patrons, and friends of Lithgow.

Last week, we said goodbye to a loyal and capable twenty-year veteran City employee, Street Superintendent Jerry Dostie has accepted an offer of employment from the Maine Department of Transportation to serve as a project manager for them. Jerry, an Augusta native, came to work for us in 1998 as a DPW foreman. After several years he moved over to serve as our Engineering Technician (until a budget crisis resulted in the elimination of that position) until accepting the Street Superintendent position in 2010. Jerry’s dedication to the City and his co-workers and
subordinates has always been remarkable and we will miss him and certainly thank him for his service. A search process for his successor has begun.

Also, I note the announced retirement of Fire Department Lieutenant Tom Freeman who concludes twenty-five years of able service to our community as a firefighter and paramedic. Tom is another veteran City employee who has consistently personified the high standards he is known and respected for. His good humor and capable leadership will be missed by us all.

A number of folks have inquired about the status of our holiday lights at the two traffic circles. Although the weather over the past two months has complicated our ability to finish getting all of the downtown holiday lighting completed, the Parks and Cemeteries Bureau expects to complete the work this week. Trust me when I say no one is more frustrated over this than Leif Dahlin. He’s given me a lengthy explanation about it that I’ve included in this package.

The second of two planning sessions where the GAUD board implements its priorities for 2019 is next week and Council is invited to attend. Please RSVP with Loretta as soon as possible.

Date: Tuesday, December 11
Time: 5:00 PM
Location: 33 Jackson Avenue (the wastewater treatment plant)

C: Department and Bureau Directors
   Legislative Delegation
Work Experience

Lithgow Public Library / Youth Services Librarian & Assistant Director
April 2002 - PRESENT, Augusta, ME

Supervise the Youth Service Department of 4 library aides, 1 teen coordinator and 2 library pages; plan, implement and promote quality library programming with Youth Services team; order print and audio-visual materials for youth and families; create monthly reports to share department happenings for Library Trustees; represent the library on the Augusta Literacy for ME committee, and provide outreach to local organizations including The Children's Center and area Head Start sites. Responsible for scheduling a staff of 16, acting as Director in Director's absence, and staffing the Circulation and Adult Reference desks when needed.

Brent Council Library / Head Librarian

Supervised a small library branch with a staff of 5, providing materials and programming for a diverse neighborhood with users of all ages.

Hammersmith Library / Pool Librarian

Staffed the Enquiry Desk, answering library user's questions and directing them to the appropriate areas of the library. Helped weed and develop adult fiction collection.

Museum of Science, Lyman Library / Library Assistant
November 1998 - August 2000, Boston, MA

Worked solo, staffing the educational resource library at the Museum. Worked with educators and parents, providing print resources to enhance their science curricula.
References

Nelson Eubanks

Rae Ann French
raeannfrench@gmail.com

Maeghan Maloney
maeghanformaine@gmail.com
November 30, 2018

Mr. Gerald P. Dostie
Street Superintendent
City of Augusta

Dear Jerry,

On behalf of the Mayor, the Members of the City Council, and the residents of our community, I would like to thank you for your twenty years (almost to the day!) of dedicated service to your hometown. From your summer internship with us way back during your college years, through three years as a DPW foreman and then nine years working as our Engineering Technician, and then eight years in your current position as Street Superintendent you have provided valuable public service and leadership often under challenging circumstances (whether they be budgetary, recruitment or miserable weather to name but a few).

My personal lasting impression of you is of an amiable, capable professional committed to the well-being of his co-workers and his community. I hope that over time as you look back on your two decades with the City you will take pride in the many projects that you played a significant role in completing and the professionalism with which our Department of Public Works is justifiably viewed.

The Maine Department of Transportation is getting a seasoned and capable project manager in you and I know that you will serve them well. My best wishes to you and your family as we approach the holiday season.

Sincerely,

William R. Bridgeo
City Manager

C: Lesley Jones, Director of Public Works
   Mayor and Council
To: Bill Bridgeo, City Manager  
Re: Holiday Lights  
From: Leif Dahlin, Director of Community Services  
Date: December 3, 2018

Holiday Lighting program work completed to date.
- Downtown lighting is done and consistent with what the ADA (Augusta Downtown Alliance) requested be done.
- Market Square Holiday Tree is in place
- Lithgow Library Spruce is done

The week of December 3rd.
- Rotaries will be completed provided the weather cooperates.
- Westside rotary is about 2/3 done

The City staff of the Parks & Recreation Bureau have been striving to get the Holiday lights up and operational. With that said, this year has been a frustrating one with respect to timing and ability to get the lights placed. This October and November have been exceptionally rainy and snowy as compared to other years. October 2018 is the 10th rainiest October on record. November was no better with the rain and there was also three snow storms that pulled staff from duties such as getting up lights to work on snow operations. Public Safety in such situations takes priority. Plus the lack of decent weather made it problematic to work on lights. The snow and associated winds makes it very difficult to get to the locations to perform work. Also worthy to note is this year's Thanksgiving (November 22nd) is the earliest it can be which is a week earlier that most years. In 2019 Thanksgiving is November 28th which is more typical. This fact compounds the lighting operation "coming up short" perception. The week of December 3rd we will attempt to finish up the holiday lighting program provided Mother Nature cooperates. The rotaries most years we are able to drive on them with the bucket truck to do the lighting. Due to the significant rains and snow and mud, this year it is advisable to have frost set up the rotaries or risk damage to the area. Regardless, a full court press to finish up the rotaries will be made. In my decades of doing this work I have never seen such lousy weather in October and November. Interesting to note, there have been numerous news articles about the fact many landscapers and communities have not been able to finish up fall project work such as leaves and leaf pick-up and putting flower beds and such to bed for the winter. Be advised, Holiday Lighting is at the top of our priority list. We need some cooperation from Mother Nature. Lastly, we make NO excuses why all of the Holiday lights are not done. We simply provide the reasons that have made this year a real challenge to deploy in a timely manner.