



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO, CITY MANAGER

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Bill Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: April 2, 2018

Meetings:

There will be a business meeting this Thursday, April 5th beginning at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers. A pre-meeting will be held in Conference Room "A" at 6:30 pm. The agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Other Items:

As we prepare for our budget review sessions, several members of Council have asked for information regarding comparative property tax rates. The State of Maine publishes that data and bases it on what each community's mil rate would be if the community was at full valuation (100% of market value). Enclosed you will find two spread sheets – one for all of the communities in Kennebec County and the second for all of the communities in Maine with a population of 10,000 or more. We can provide more expansive data if you wish.

On the agenda for Thursday evening you will find an order authorizing me to enter into a contract for legal services with three firms who are partnering to represent a number of the larger communities (and a number of county governments) bringing suit against national companies affiliated with the opioid industry. The contract document has been thoroughly reviewed by City staff and by Councilors Alexander and O'Brien. It makes clear that in retaining these law firms and engaging in this litigation the City incurs no obligation to expend any City funds nor will the City be liable for any monetary obligation that does not come out of an eventual settlement or judgement. Councilors Alexander and O'Brien were adamant on that point and their extensive legal experience was invaluable in coming to terms in this agreement (our Corporation Counsel's firm has a conflict in this matter and was not available to guide us in this matter).

Also on the agenda is acceptance of a gift of in-kind services to the Lithgow Library from the Friends of Lithgow valued at \$82,000. This gift will provide for the final restorative work in the historic reading room – the last remaining piece of the multi-million dollar effort to restore and expand our library. Fund-raising committee chair Wick Johnson will be present to make the presentation.

There has been some Facebook commentary over the weekend about my proposed '19 budget, in particular some criticism about our level of spending related to winter maintenance this year. Here is some current statistical information about this year's experience:

Bill,

Lesley asked that I come up with some figures to compare the current winter to the previous winter. They are the following:

	<u>2016/2017</u> <u>Season</u>	<u>2017/2018</u> <u>Season</u>
Total Snowfall (in)	99.5	90
Number of events	35	33
All Plow events	13	15
Ice events	7	12
Evening snow haul	30	36
Sand/Salt material	5709	7774
Weekend events	6	10

A couple of things that I would like to point out are the number of ice and weekend events. As you are aware, ice events typically require a great deal more material compared to snow events to keep the roads safe. The bulk of this material is salt, which is not cheap as you know. Also, we have experienced several weekend events which are all at employee overtime rates which significantly affects our overtime budget.

If you have further questions, please let me know

Jerry Dostie

Street Superintendent
Augusta Public Works
(207) 626-2435