INFORMATIONAL MEETING AGENDA

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2018
CITY HALL (COUNCIL CHAMBERS)
6:30 P.M.

A. Items for discussion submitted by the City Council and/or the City Manager:

1. Augusta Trails Bond Brook Recreation Area proposed Plan and Budget for Friends of Maine Mountains Funds – City Manager
2. Final Review of 2018 Council Goals and Actions – City Manager

B. Persons wishing to address the City Council who have submitted a formal request in accordance with Section 2-61 of the Code of Ordinances:

C. Open comment period for any persons wishing to address the City Council:
To: City Manager and Augusta City Council  
Re: Friends of Maines Mountains Grant Recommendation for Bond Brook and Augusta Trails  
From: Leif Dahlin, Director of Community Services  
Date: February 22, 2018  

Recommendation  

Project Work and Budget  

For Utilizing the FMM Funds  

The task of formulating a plan and developing a budget for said funds had been delegated to Augusta Trails Board of Directors when the City accepted the $50,000.00. To that end, on Tuesday, October 10, 2017 and November 13, 2017 the Augusta Trails Board met for the purpose of planning how to best utilize the $50,000.00 provided to the City of Augusta for the benefit of the Bond Brook Recreation Area and Augusta Trails and their continued efforts in developing the Bond Brook Recreation Area. 

The following list of items are site as well as functional improvements for the benefit of park users and the park land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>Trail marking and park general information</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiosks</td>
<td>Necessary for disseminating information</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Shelter</td>
<td>Finish structure – Paint doors/windows trim paint interior and stain exterior.</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail</td>
<td>Development &amp; maintenance</td>
<td>$16,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>Install Solar/PV electrical for visitor shelter</td>
<td>$12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website/Facebook</td>
<td>Update social media and web based portals</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
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**TOTAL $50,000.00**

**Request:** To authorize the use of said funds as so recommended by Augusta Trails Board of Directors consistent with the City’s procurement ordinances and purchasing policies.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council, City of Augusta, Maine
FROM: Stephen E.F. Langsdorf, Corporation Counsel
DATE: February 20, 2018
RE: Charter Amendments

Attached to this memorandum are proposed Charter amendments for the Council’s consideration. I have worked with the Clerk and we recommend that these changes be addressed at this time. The drop dead date to have all language finalized is the April 19, 2018 Council meeting. There is time in the interim for a committee to review these and other possible minor changes to the Charter. Once the Council has finalized the language of whatever it wishes to put out on the ballot in June, it will be necessary to hold a formal public hearing at least 30 days prior to the election. Each of these questions would be voted on individually at the polls per statute as amendments to the Charter, although related ones may be grouped. The Clerk and I will be available at the informational meeting on February 22, 2018 to answer any questions.

SEFL:ryp
Article II, Section 9:

The council may by an affirmative vote of six (6) voting members pass emergency ordinances, orders or resolves to take effect at the time indicated therein. Such emergency ordinances, orders or resolves shall contain a section in which the emergency is set forth and defined. No emergency ordinance may be enacted unless it involves life, health, safety or property. Every emergency ordinance shall automatically stand repealed as of the sixty-first day following the date on which it was adopted, but this shall not prevent enactment of the ordinance on a non-emergency basis.

Article II,

Sec. 6. Regular meetings.

The Council shall meet on the first Monday–Thursday in January, at such time and place on that date, or at such other date as the previous Council shall determine, at which time the Mayor-elect, the Councilors-elect, and members-elect of the School Board, and the School Board Chairperson-elect shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duties by the City Clerk, a notary public, declimus justice, or an attorney at law. Thereafter, the Council shall meet at such time and place as may be prescribed by ordinance or resolution, except that it shall meet regularly each month.

Sec. 10. Charter review.

Unless otherwise required by municipal referendum or state law, a charter commission shall be created and elected in accordance with state law at least every ten (10) years in order the Council will review the Charter every ten (10) years to determine whether a Charter Commission should be established to provide for citizen review of the structure of city government.

ARTICLE IV:
Board of Education

Sec. 1. Composition, election and tenure of office

The Board of Education shall be composed of nine members, one member from each of the four wards of the City, and four–five at-large members, and the Chairperson. The ward members shall be elected by and from the qualified voters of the ward, and the candidate for each ward receiving the largest number of votes cast in each ward shall be elected to represent that ward. The at-large members shall be elected by and from the qualified voters of the City and the candidate(s) receiving the largest number of votes cast City wide shall be elected Board member(s).

The terms of all members shall be for three years or until their successors are elected and qualified. Including the office of Chairperson, no person may serve be elected as a member
of the Board for more than three consecutive three-year terms, unless he or she was elected to
an initial term of 18 months or less, in which case he or she may still be elected to three
consecutive three-year terms. Members shall be nominated and elected under the provisions
of Article V. Their qualifications as to residency in a ward and the effect of removal
therefrom shall be the same as in the case of Councilors hereinbefore set forth.

In case of vacancy caused by forfeiture of office, death, resignation, removal from the ward in
which elected, removal from the City, or removal from office, the Council shall call a special
election to fill the vacancy within the same provisions as set forth for the Council in Article
II, Section 5.

The members of the Board, except the Chairperson, shall receive as a stipend the sum of $200
per month and shall be reimbursed for actual authorized out-of-pocket expenses incurred in
the performance of official duties.

No member of the Board elected at large or by the several wards shall be a member of the
Council nor shall he or she be eligible, while a member of the Board, to hold any office of
emolument or profit under the City Charter or ordinances, nor to hold the office of City
Manager during the term for which the member was elected.

Sec. 5. Chairperson of board.

A chairperson of the board shall be selected by and from the qualified voters of the city. The
chairperson shall be elected for a term of three (3) years or until a successor is elected and
qualified, except that when elected to fill a vacancy the chairperson shall hold office only for
the unexpired term or until a successor is elected and qualified annually by the board of
education at its first meeting of the year.

No person may serve as chairperson of the board for more than three (3) consecutive three (3)
year terms, unless he or she was elected to an initial term of eighteen (18) months or less, in
which case he or she may be elected to three (3) consecutive three (3) year terms.

In case of the vacancy caused by forfeiture of office, death, resignation, removal from the city;
or removal from office of the chairperson, the council shall call a special election to fill the
vacancy within the same provisions as those set forth for the mayor in Article III, section 2.

The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the board and shall perform such other duties
not inconsistent with the office as the board may impose. The chairperson shall have the right
to vote only when there is a tie vote of the Board.

The chairperson’s stipend shall be fixed at two hundred twenty five dollars ($225.00) per
month and the chairperson shall be reimbursed for actual authorized out-of-pocket expenses
incurred in the performance of official duties.
ARTICLE V
Nominations and Elections

Sec. 1. Date of elections and procedure to determine results.

The regular municipal elections under the provisions of this Charter will be held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November of each year. At these annual elections the qualified voters of the City shall vote for members of the Council, the Mayor, and School Board members, and School Board Chairperson and such other elective officers as are otherwise provided for in this Charter. The candidates for these offices shall be duly qualified under the nomination provisions contained herein.

As provided in Section 2 of Article II, the qualified voters of the various wards shall vote for eight members of the Council and the Mayor, and such other elective officers as here within prescribed, all of whom shall have been nominated under the provisions of this Charter, subject to the provisions of Article II, Section 1, above.

The City Council may order that a special election be held to fill vacancies in elective office, vote on an initiative or referendum question subject to Article V-A, Section 6(f), of the Charter, or on any other matter allowed by this Charter or required by state law.

Sec. 3. Nominations for elective office to be made by petition.

The nomination of all candidates for elective offices provided for by this Charter shall be by petitions. Candidates seeking election to the Council or the Board shall run either from a ward or at large. The petition of candidates for Mayor and Chairperson of the School Board shall be signed by not less than 200 qualified voters of the City. The petition of candidates for members of Council and the School Board elected at large shall be signed by not less than 100 qualified voters of the City. The petition for a ward candidate for the Council, School Board, or other elective offices shall be signed by not less than 50 of the qualified voters of the respective ward.

Sec. 5. Filing nomination papers; acceptances of nominations must be filed. The nomination petitions for any one candidate shall be assembled and united into one petition and filed with the City Clerk not earlier than the first Tuesday in August and no later than 4:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday in August. Nomination papers for elections will be available on the 105th day prior to the election, and shall be available for 30 days. No nomination shall be valid unless the candidates shall nomination petitions are filed with the City Clerk in writing not later than the third Tuesday in August prior to the November seventy five (75) days prior to the election his or her consent, accepting the nomination, agreeing not to withdraw and, if elected, to qualify.
The nomination petitions for any one candidate shall be assembled and united into one petition and filed with the City Clerk not earlier than 7:45 am on the 90th day nor later than on the 75th day prior to the election.

The Council shall have the authority to shorten the nomination period as needed.

No nomination petition shall be valid unless the candidates shall file with the City Clerk in writing his or her consent, accepting the nomination, agreeing not to withdraw and, if elected, to qualify; prior to the close of business on the last day of filing.

Sec. 6. List of candidates to be published.

The City Clerk shall certify the list of candidates and shall cause to be published in one or more of the daily newspapers circulating conspicuous places within the City the names, the residences and offices to which nominated, of the candidates who have duly filed the above-described petitions and acceptances.

Sec. 9. Count of ballots.

All votes cast for the several offices shall be sorted, counted, declared and registered in open and posted in each polling place ward meetings as provided by statute. The Ward Clerk shall forthwith deliver to the City Clerk a certified copy of the records of such election.

The Council shall examine copies of the records of the several wards, certified as aforesaid, and shall cause the persons who shall have been elected Mayor, and members of the Council and other elected office as provided in this Charter to be notified in writing of their election. If it shall appear that at the first election, or at any subsequent election, one or more of the offices to be filled has not been filled or if the person elected shall refuse to accept the office for which he or she has been elected, the Council shall order a special election to fill such vacancy or vacancies.

Article VII, Section 7:

No order or orders providing for the issue of bonds which in the aggregate total in excess of seven hundred fifty thousand one million dollars ($750,000,001,000,000), pledging the full faith and credit of the city and approved by the council in any one fiscal year shall become effective until ratified by a majority of the voters voting thereon at a general or special election. The provisions of this section shall not apply to loans made in anticipation of receipts from taxes nor in anticipation of money to be received from the state or federal governments.
2018 AUGUSTA CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND ACTIONS  
(February 16 2018)

INTRODUCTION
On Saturday, January 20, 2018, members of the Augusta City Council, staff, and partner organizations met in the Augusta Civic Center for a 6-hour goal-setting session. Following a write-up of the session by staff, the Council met in several workshops before approving the goals and actions for the coming year.

BACKGROUND
2017 was a very successful year in the City of Augusta. New residential development at subdivisions like Fieldstone Place, and new businesses openings such as Cushnoc Brewing Co. in the downtown, have picked up to the point that the Development Department is being forced to reorganize itself to deal with all of the permitting. City government has earned plaudits from area observers in recent weeks for the quality of city services related to street plowing, flood preparation, and drug crime prevention. The unemployment rate for the City of Augusta was 2.4% in December 2017, below both the state and national level.

But good times also bring new problems. City department heads report that it is difficult to attract and retain qualified staff for both part-time and full-time work. As in all of Maine’s economy, the public administration sector of Kennebec County’s workforce is aging (see chart below). The largest cohort is the 55-64 age group, people who are heading toward retirement in the next ten years. The need to be able to recruit and retain talented replacements is critical for the quality of future City services.

Both municipal government and the school department have experienced staff leaving for nearby communities where the pay is better. The City is renegotiating several public employee contracts this year, and creating a more competitive work environment will be a major goal of those negotiations.

But pay raises will create fiscal challenges. There are positives for City revenues in 2018: more school funding from state government, more new development on the tax rolls. There are also negatives: excise tax revenues from car sales are expected to drop off, and quirks in the school funding formula may diminish how much Augusta actually gains from the increase in state spending. There are also expenditure-side challenges in meeting future capital needs for items such as a new or renovated police station and Civic Center upgrades; for maintaining the current high level of snow plowing quality; and for providing adequate fire staffing.

With this as background, here are the City’s goals for 2018.
GOAL A: PROMOTING HIGH-QUALITY DEVELOPMENT

The City of Augusta’s population has been stagnant for many years, even as Kennebec County was growing. In the near future, Kennebec County is not projected to grow – so the challenge for Augusta to attract new families will be even harder.

However, the appeal of urban living is much greater now than it has been for many decades. The two major forces in the coming housing market – downsizing baby boomers and young millennials – both have similar interests. They want low-maintenance housing, open floor plans, energy efficiency, walkability, high-speed internet access, and access to nightlife and cultural activities. One difference is that millennials are interested in smaller spaces, including “tiny homes,” and are open to walk-up living – where downsizing boomers want more space, and mostly first-floor living.

The City of Augusta has land available for development that meets these needs. But much of its existing old housing stock is not that attractive to these two groups. Therefore, new housing construction is an important part of the City’s strategy.

NEW INITIATIVES


Kennebec Locke has the potential to serve both millennials and downsizing baby boomers. It is near to downtown, near to trails, near to jobs and services, and on the water. It is an absolutely unique site in central Maine. The new project proposed by the Augusta Housing Authority (see photo) is a first step.

What it lacks is necessary infrastructure: a good access road, utilities, and possibly the transformation of the piers or trestle into a biking/walking link to downtown. A master developer could provide this, but to date the City has not been able to attract such an entity. City government may need to provide this itself if it wishes to open the site up to smaller developers.

Action A2. Focus on redevelopment of northern end of Augusta downtown.

With the leadership of the Downtown Alliance and critical City support like the Tipping Point program, Water Street is becoming transformed. Now the goal is to move the new investment north towards the train trestle and Mill Park. Fundraising for the proposed Colonial Theater renovation, possible transformation of the trestle into a walking bridge, a possible UMA tech center, are all possible anchor investments for a rejuvenated neighborhood.


Kennebec Locke is one opportunity, but there are other sites in the city where new residential development can take place. While the City’s role in promoting market-rate residential development is
limited, reviewing current ordinances and making sure that the City can market itself as “open to innovative residential development” is a first step.

**Action A4. Enhance code enforcement capability.**
In recent years, City government has passed ordinances to protect historic character and ensure housing maintenance. Now additional effort is needed to enforce these codes, particularly in the city’s older neighborhoods. In addition, a new housing code should be considered – a boarding house code, that would charge a fee that would pay for City code staff to inspect these properties and ensure that they are up to standard.

**Action A5. Evaluate downtown and Winthrop Street parking options**
The Augusta Parking District has performed an important function in managing and providing parking for downtown. Yet challenges still remain. Long-term (2+ hour) parking options for customers are not easily provided. The topography of downtown, from the river to the parking garage at the top of the hill, can be difficult for pedestrians to navigate. Meanwhile, on Winthrop Street, the line differentiating publicly-owned space and privately-owned space is unclear, and parking practices vary by block. This is an appropriate time for the City and Parking District to review parking practices and availability as downtown continues to grow.

**ONGOING ACTIVITY**
In addition to the new initiatives above, the City will continue its current policies of:
- Supporting and working with the Downtown Alliance.
- Trying to redevelop the Arsenal property in a way consistent with the original plan for the site
- Extending utilities to Riggs Brook
- Monitoring and remaining open to the possibility of passenger rail service to Augusta

**GOAL B: MARKET THE AUGUSTA BRAND**
Part of attracting new people to live and work in Augusta is improving the image and brand of the city.

**NEW INITIATIVES**
**Action B1. Step up online Augusta presence – social media, web site, an app.**
If the goal is to attract millennials, then the communication needs to be electronic. This needs to be an ongoing effort, not a one-time fix. Social media, a usable phone app, an actively updated web site, are all part of the answer.

**Action B2. Try to attract a sports team to Augusta.**
Sports teams build city identity and pride. Augusta supported semi-pro baseball in the (distant) past. The potential for a minor-league level team in any sport – from soccer to baseball to basketball – should be explored anew.
Action B3. Improve landscaping and physical appearance of Augusta at gateway streets.
The first impression of visitors to Augusta is made by the roadways into the city from I-95. Better landscaping would be helpful – but it will cost money, and fiscal limitations are what has prevented it from happening in the past. This item should be considered again in the 2018 budget.

GOAL C: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF AUGUSTA RESIDENTS
By virtue of its location, history, and major institutions – state government, Maine General Hospital, and the University of Maine at Augusta – the city of Augusta has unique opportunities to develop attractive amenities that can serve its existing – and prospective – residents.

NEW INITIATIVES
Action C1. Explore ways to provide city-owned or sponsored high speed broadband service.
Chattanooga, Tennessee has a municipally-owned utility that provides resident households with 100 Mbps service for $58/month; 1,000 Mbps for $70/month; and 10 GIG service at $300/month. This has transformed the city economy. One visiting journalist observed:

When I first started visiting the city, in 2010, months after EPB had deployed its fiber-optic technology to home networks, the downtown area was still filled with empty factory buildings. In 2016, an incredibly vibrant tech community has filled many of those vacant buildings with open-office spaces for start-ups. The music and film communities are vital, too, and there is a real downtown nightlife with bars and restaurants open late and filled with hipsters.¹

This is a complex issue, but Augusta should explore its options.

Action C2. Create a Public Art Commission designed to promote public art in the downtown, in the gateways, and in other locations in the city.
This past summer the Kennebec Leadership Institute, the University of Maine at Augusta, and the Downtown Alliance coordinated a successful effort to create murals on downtown buildings. The City should look to institutionalize this kind of effort with an ongoing public art strategy to be created by a new Public Art Commission.

Action C3. Create a walking tour that goes from the Maine State Museum to Fort Western.
This summer a new fire museum will open at the renovated Hartford Fire Station in downtown. In addition, a First Amendment Museum will open soon at the historic Gannett House next to the Blaine House. This creates the potential for a walking tour of museums in Augusta – from the State Museum to the First Amendment Museum to the Hartford Fire Station Museum to Old Fort Western. The potential should be actively marketed online and through brochures, etc.

¹ See https://www.thedailybeast.com/chattanooga-has-its-own-broadbandwhy-doesnt-every-city
ONGOING ACTIVITY

In addition to the new initiatives above, the City will continue its current effort to publish a trails map and to create events related to the trails.

GOAL D: SOCIAL SERVICES

Augusta is a service center, with a general hospital and a mental health hospital, and many social service agencies. As such, it has many people in the general population in need of housing and support services. In addition, in recent years Catholic Charities and other relief agencies have located refugees and immigrants here because the area has low crime, low-cost housing, and a good service network. Finally, the opiate crisis continues to grip the state. Augusta has dealt fairly effectively with the criminal justice aspects of the problem, but people continue to die from drug overdoses in Augusta. Better services for drug users are needed.

NEW INITIATIVES

Action D1. Support the establishment of substance abuse treatment programs and facilities in the city.

On average, one person dies every day in Maine from a drug overdose. About 1 in 5 of Maine people in need of substance abuse treatment receives care. This situation has led the Veterans Services at Togus to send Maine veterans to Connecticut and other out-of-state locations for residential treatment. Currently, Maine General provides some treatment beds, and there is a proposal from a private entity to develop residential treatment beds in Augusta. This kind of project will require careful consideration with regard to scale, design, neighborhood impact, safety, and fiscal impact.

Action D2. Expand immigrant-focused programs.

In recent years, the Capital Area New Mainers Project has helped to welcome refugees and immigrants to Augusta from places such as Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq. New Mainers are part of the long-term answer to the workforce shortage in central Maine. But in the short term, they need help with English as a second language, transportation, school integration, job training and placement, and social support. The idea of a welcome center to Augusta has been floated and discussed; it deserves further study.

Action D3. Explore the establishment of a city-owned or city-sponsored homeless shelter.

The Bread of Life Ministries had 509 calls for people looking for a bed at night in 2016. The Bread of Life has a 26-bed family shelter and a 12-bed veterans shelter, and the beds are mostly full. The issue of what do homeless people need, and where is the best place to provide such services, has been a subject of ongoing discussion in Augusta. In other Maine cities, the municipality plays a stronger role in
providing shelter and services to the homeless. The City should look into whether this is a desirable and viable idea for the future.

**ALTERNATIVE WORDING FOR ACTION D3**

_**Action D3. Explore alternatives to increase municipal control over the siting and operations of services for the homeless.**_ The Bread of Life Ministries had 509 calls for people looking for a bed at night in 2016. The Bread of Life has a 26-bed family shelter and a 12-bed veterans shelter, and the beds are mostly full. The issue of what do homeless people need, and where is the best place to provide such services, has been a subject of ongoing discussion in Augusta. City government should explore its options to play a more direct role in the siting and operations of services to the homeless. Such options include City ownership or sponsorship of homeless shelters and services; additional City ordinances addressing siting and operations issues; City partnerships with nonprofit organizations to provide services.

**ONGOING ACTIVITY**

In addition to the new initiatives above, the City will continue its current efforts to support the Age-Friendly initiative in Augusta, with a current emphasis on expanding transportation services.

**GOAL E. GOVERNANCE**

As is mentioned in the background piece, Augusta faces long-term fiscal challenges. This leads to the first recommendation below.

**NEW INITIATIVE**

_**Action E1. Create a 5-year budget and capital improvements program that shows a path for tax rate stability in the future.**_

Every year there seems to be a new fiscal issue, brought on by a recession or state government cuts or major capital needs. Nothing can prevent new crises from arising in the future. But what would help councilors this year would be to see a draft fiscal plan for the coming five years that would show how – based on current fiscal practices and trends – the city could maintain a stable tax rate and still meet its capital needs over that period.

**ONGOING ACTIVITY**

In addition to the above, the City will continue to:

- work closely with the school system on a variety of issues, including new immigrants, food security, and the location of a possible new elementary school (if approved by the state)
- pursue its Comprehensive Plan. That plan is leaving the data collection stage, which took place last year, and will be entering its phase of public input and policy development.
- carry out a planned charter review.