



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. STOKES, MAYOR

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO, CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL

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MICHAEL G. BYRON MARK S. O'BRIEN
DANIEL M. EMERY PATRICK E. PARADIS
DAREK M. GRANT DAVID M. ROLLINS

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: City Manager Bill Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: May 6, 2013

Meetings:

On Thursday, May 9, the City Council will hold an Informational Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. The agenda is enclosed. (I am leaving Thursday afternoon for my annual three day "back to Aroostook roots" fishing expedition – Ralph St. Pierre will staff the Council meeting.)

Other Items:

The Council's ad-hoc natural gas bid award committee met last Friday and endorsed the retention of a consultant expert in the area of large-user procurement of natural gas to assist the City in reviewing our two natural gas bids. The Committee supports a staff recommendation that Council authorize the appropriation of an amount not to exceed \$40,000 from fund balance for that purpose. Accordingly, there will be a special Council meeting this Thursday at 6:30 pm to consider and act upon that recommendation. Staff reached out to four national firms (recommended to us by the State's Office of the Public Advocate and Maine energy consultant Gordon Weil, who had a conflict and could not respond himself). Three responded to our RFP and Energy Market Decisions of Hopkinton, Ma. is considered to be the best choice for our needs. At first glance, this may seem to be a large sum for the advice we need but it should be kept in mind that this is a momentous decision – once in a lifetime, really – that will have ramifications on all of the residents and businesses in this city and surrounding communities for a long time.

As Councilor Paradis has requested, Greater Augusta Utilities District General Manager Brian Tarbuck will be at Thursday's informational meeting to provide an update on the Mill Park segment of GAUD's construction project. Enclosed with this report is a copy of Leif Dahlin's status report to me on the same matter.

At Council's request, the City hosted a meeting of Summerhaven area residents and pit owners to discuss the issue of truck traffic and associated concerns. Below is the content of a memo from DPW Director Lesley Jones summarizing the meeting:

The following is a summary of the meeting that was held last night in the Fort Western Learning Gallery at City Center. This meeting was held to provide an opportunity for residents and pit owners to get together to talk about concerns some of the neighbors have with the truck traffic that is generated going into and out of the gravel pits in the area. This meeting was attended by four residents, four pit owners/operators, City Councilor Dan Emery and City Staff, Lesley Jones, Jerry Dostie and Matt Nazar. Dave Rollins and Jeff Bilodeau were able to attend the later portion of the meeting. The sign in sheet and agenda is attached.

The residents expressed concerns about:

- *The use of 'Jake brakes and truck speed and the effect on quality of life*
- *Different trucks have different types of brakes and make different noises*
- *Independent trucks seem to be harder to control than company trucks*
- *There is the potential for a lot of truck traffic with all the construction projects going on and being planned*
- *Wanting "no excessive engine noise" or similar signs*
- *Police presence is effective when they are there but the minute they leave it goes back to "business as usual".*
- *Two residents submitted written comments about truck traffic not being an issue. One other written comment was that truck traffic was an issue, echoing the comments listed above.*

The Pit Owners explained their efforts to control the truckers. These include:

- *Weekly/daily reminders to the drivers about driving the speed limit in addition to talking about these issues at project meetings*
- *Talks with individual drivers when they are identified as driving too fast or making too much noise*
- *Support for no longer employing/hiring "problem truckers"*
- *General support for "no excessive engine noise" or similar signs although they expressed concern that although the signs would be a good reminder over time they felt they would probably be less effective.*
- *Those present provided contact information if a resident has a problem with a truck that they would like to report.*

Overall, I believe the meeting went well. Everyone appeared to understand and be respectful of the concerns of both sides. I think it was good that the pit owners that were present were able to provide information to the residents about what they are doing to keep the truck traffic issues to a minimum. The city agreed to provide a list of contact information for residents to have so they could contact a pit representative about trucker issues and to try and include information for some of the pit owners that were not in attendance. The City also agreed to ask the Police Dept. if the portable message signs could be used to remind the trucks to obey the speed limit and keep engine noise to a minimum.

WRB/pec

Enclosure

cc: Department and Bureau Directors
Legislative Delegation