



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

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WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO, CITY MANAGER

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TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: City Manager Bill Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: August 5, 2013

Meetings:

On Tuesday, August 6, there will be a meeting of the Mill Park Advisory Committee at 5:00 pm in Conference Room "A" at City Hall.

On Thursday, August 8, the City Council will hold an Informational Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. The agenda is enclosed.

Other Notes:

We were notified this morning by Cyndy Taylor that her application for grant funding from the Federal Home Loan bank of San Francisco has been approved. This is terrific news and a huge boost for the Flatiron restoration project. The award is for \$580,000 and will also significantly enhance Ms. Taylor's chances at securing competitive mortgage financing from the Maine State Housing Authority. She deserved great credit for winning this grant. Cyndy was emphatic that the City's team (led by Matt Nazar and Keith Luke) are a pleasure to work with key to her string of successes so far in this project.

As councilors and candidates engage residents throughout the City this summer, they are hearing a lot about the condition of City streets. Many of the most passionate complaints are associated with roads and streets that are the responsibility of the State of Maine, not the City. Most folks, understandably, do not appreciate that distinction. For everyone's benefit, I asked Street Superintendent Jerry Dostie to summarize all known upcoming street improvement projects in the City by agency of responsibility. A copy of that report is enclosed and extra copies are available from my office upon request.

Also enclosed is a memorandum from DPW Director Lesley Jones with a status update of the work of the Traffic Calming Committee. If you wish further information on any of these matters, please let me know.

For some time now, City staff has been working with local entrepreneur Buddy Doyle on the concept of a new recreational amenity – a Paddle Park for the storage of kayaks and canoes on the bank of the Kennebec at the East Side Boat Landing. Mr. Doyle has unbounded energy and passion for this idea. As the owner of the company that manufactures unique kayak storage units (six of which we purchase for the riverfront a year ago), he has an obvious interest in promoting such a concept but beyond that he has put together an impressive proposal that would not cost

the taxpayers any money (and could potentially yield some revenues), would enhance recreational access to the river, and provide another downtown amenity. I've had Leif Dahlin and Jim Goulet working with Mr. Doyle and we think it is timely for him to make a presentation to Council on his ideas. An introductory letter explaining what will be discussed Thursday evening is enclosed with this package.

Finally, even though we have been notified by the State (DECD) that we have been awarded a CDBG grant of \$200,000 for the Haymarket Square restoration project, the feds (HUD) have yet to give the final go-ahead for the funding and thus the State has not yet given us the OK to proceed to contract obligations. As Leif Dahlin explains in an e-mail this morning, it now appears that the prudent course of action is for us to wait until winter to bid this project and have construction begin in the spring. Given that the pipeline companies have tied up most if not all of the area contractors, we are likely to secure much better pricing by waiting, as well. Leif's message follows:

If City staff had it our way we would be well under construction of the Market/Haymarket Square and Bus Depot Relocation project. But, that is not the case as we still have to work thru the grant process and the necessary protocols to ensure the \$200,000 in grant funds are available to roll out the project. As you know, we have been awarded the grant funds. The process now includes working thru the Federal system to get the requisite "Go Ahead" to the State DECD office so that they in turn can tell us in writing that we are now OK to move ahead with bidding the work. I am learning patience is a true virtue. Our desire to get this project underway this year we are realizing was a bit ambitious and may have set some expectations that I now must say I am sorry for. With the construction season getting ever shorter we fear this project is not going to happen this construction season. Even if we put the bid document out to bid today it would be late September or October before work could commence and that is if all things went perfectly. It is the opinion of staff that is too late in the construction season to begin this work. Further compounding this challenge and yet is great news, many of the companies who would be prospective bidders are fully engaged in the natural gas pipe-line work. We suspect the gas line work would preclude us from receiving as many bids from qualified bidders. By putting the project out to bid in February, companies can plan their construction season work and the successful bidder can gear up accordingly in a better time frame. As each day goes by without formal notification to go to bid, we are one day closer to having to delay this until this next Spring. The good news is we are very ready to put this project out to bid. This project is shovel ready!! The bid specs are done, all of the required paperwork on our end has been submitted to the appropriate agencies and the funds to do the job have been appropriated by City Council. As I hear and learn things about the project I will certainly keep you apprised as best I can. Your patience is greatly appreciated.

WRB/pec

Enclosure

cc: Department and Bureau Directors
Legislative Delegation