



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO
CITY MANAGER

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: City Manager Bill Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: December 8, 2014

Meetings:

The Planning Board will meet on Tuesday, December 9th at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. An agenda is included in council packets.

On Thursday, December 11th there will be a Special City Council Meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room "A" for the sole purpose of an executive session to discuss pending litigation. The regularly scheduled informational meeting will begin at the conclusion of the executive session (anticipated to be 6:30 pm). Agendas are included in the council packets.

Other Items:

I begin this report with commendation for our Police and Fire service personnel. The terrible fire early Friday morning taxed their resources and they performed admirably. But for the timely aggressive actions of our officers and firefighters lives would likely have been lost. A wide array of agencies and individuals has stepped up to help the victims (as detailed in an e-mail provided by Housing Authority Director Amanda Bartlett), including our own General Assistance case manager Sara Russell. Later this week, I plan to host a debriefing session to evaluate the community response and strengthen our planning and protocols for any future events. Once again, the generosity of our community has been in evidence in so many ways during this challenge.

DPW crews were out throughout the weekend contending with this spate of nasty weather. The dramatic fluctuation in temperature and the precipitation has resulted in difficult ice conditions throughout the City.

Enclosed with this report is a summary, prepared by Richard Parkhurst, of all that has transpired during this past year at the Colonial Theater. Hopefully, 2015 is the year that the stars align for this project to come to fruition.

C: Department and Bureau Directors
Augusta Legislative Delegation

William Bridgeo

From: Amanda Bartlett
Sent: Monday, December 08, 2014 10:38 AM
To: William Bridgeo
Subject: Response to Fire

Good morning,

I just wanted to provide you with a quick update relating to efforts to help victims of Friday's fire.

First, I want to say that we should be incredibly proud as a City of what has been a well-coordinated and comprehensive response to assist those affected. Over the weekend multiple agencies and community members have been working literally around the clock to meet the needs fire victims. Joy Grahn from the Red Cross office in Portland has served as the primary point of contact, coordinating multiple community resources and pulling together a comprehensive response to address both immediate and longer-term needs of victims.

At this point, the Red Cross has paid for three nights in the hotel for victims. For many, that meant that their time would be running out as of 11am this morning. Heather Pouliot from United Way and I were in constant communication to address this issue throughout the weekend. United Way has since secured enough private donations to cover two additional nights in the hotel. The Red Barn has also encouraged private citizens to call and pay for rooms. This has resulted in 8 rooms being paid for, for one additional night as well.

I spent time at the motel Friday and Saturday talking to fire victims about housing and immediate needs. As one gentleman said, "I can't even think about a donated couch or pans or anything else. I just need a place to live."

Today, we will be holding a housing fair at Gilbert Elementary School from 4-6pm. This will be a multi-agency effort to help rapidly re-house fire victims. More than a dozen landlords and property management professionals with immediate vacancies will be onsite as well as community agencies that may be able to help with security deposits or other resources. Darling's will be providing shuttle service to and from the event. The community's primary focus has to be on rapidly securing new permanent housing over any other need at this point. To illustrate how much money is needed to make this happen, securing a one bedroom apartment for each family at an average market rent of \$650, we would need to secure \$23,400 in funding. Many families need larger units. Since it will realistically take several days or more get into new housing, we will also need additional funding for temporary housing. It is our hope that help from community agencies at tonight's event as well as landlords who are willing to offer concessions will be instrumental in defraying these costs.

Donations are being accepted online at <http://www.gofundme.com/augustafire> or may be dropped off or mailed to the United Way of Kennebec Valley, 121 Commercial Street, Augusta. Checks MUST have a note "for Augusta Fire Victims". As of this morning, nearly \$3,000 has been raised.

Red Barn and the Unitarian Church are working together to coordinate donations of clothing/goods. At the recommendation of social service providers involved with recent Lewiston fires, a press release was distributed over the weekend from United Way urging financial donations. After the Lewiston fires, donations of goods were in such excess that they had to be hauled out by the truckload and cost the city significant money to dispose of items. This is a typical occurrence in the aftermath of any disaster. Everyone wants to do what they can to help. Focusing on financial contributions can help our community better control and distribute donations.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions about the housing event at amanda.bartlett@augustahousing.org or 207-626-2357 x2. For questions about the Augusta Fire Victims Relief Fund, please contact Heather Pouliot at hpouliot@uwky.org.

I will continue to provide updates as they are available.

Onward and upward!

Amanda Bartlett
Executive Director
Augusta Housing
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(207)626-2357 x2

AUGUSTA COLONIAL THEATER'S YEAR IN REVIEW

My congratulations to the many volunteers who dedicated their time and efforts during the past year to initiate the restoration of the Colonial Theater. A special thanks to Chris Selwood who has spent nearly 300 hours cleaning and making the Theater accessible to the public.

My thanks also to the local business who have donated much needed time and materials this year? Special thanks go to Augusta Fuel, G & E Roofing, Oakes and Parkhurst Glass and NRF Distributors.

Thanks to the public whose weekly donations enabled us to keep moving forward in preparation of major construction next year and to Becca Hodgdon and the Rocky for Equality fundraiser which donated More than \$2,300 from this year's live production of the Rock Horror Picture Show.

Mid January – Election of officers for the Augusta Colonial Theater, Inc. which is a non-profit

February 13 – “Visioning Session” for the Colonial Theater open to the public hosted by the Augusta Downtown alliance and UMA School of Architecture.

During May the electrical service was upgraded and the Lights went on.

June 7 thru November 1 – Open house and tours every Saturday 10 – 2. More than a fifteen hundred people toured the theater and donated more than \$2,700.

During June domestic water was reconnected to the Theater.

June 19: Public informational meeting at Charlemagne's.

During July the roof drains were replaced.

July 25 Maine Historic Preservation Commission nominated the Colonial Theater to the National Register of Historic Places.

During September a bathroom was installed for use by the volunteers.

During October temporary windows were installed behind the stage to allow light in but keep the weather out.

During November Natural Gas was brought to the building.

During December a natural gas construction furnace will be installed in order to keep the building heated for the winter. The roof will also be sealed to prevent leaks until the roof is replaced.

October 8 – Colonial Theater entered into the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, Department of Interior, Washington, D. C.

Moving forward thru the winter:

You won't see much going on but we will be busy -

We will be heating the building to keep roof drains from freezing and continue to prepare the building for construction to begin in the spring.

We will finalize a Mission Statement

We will finalize conceptual Architectural Plans

We will develop a Construction budget

We will finalize a business plan

We will begin to secure financing for construction thru grants and investors.

Donations to help with winter heating costs can be made by visiting our web site: info@augustacolonialtheater.org