



# THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. STOKES, MAYOR

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO, CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL

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TO:            Mayor and City Council  
FROM:        City Manager Bill Bridgeo  
RE:            Administrative Report  
DATE:        March 17, 2014

Meetings:

The Conservation Commission will meet on Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in Conference Room C.

There will be a meeting of the Strategic Communications Committee at 6:30pm on Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> in Conference Room C.

On Thursday, March 20, 2014 in Council Chambers at 7pm there will be a City Council Business Meeting. There will be a pre-meeting in Conference Room A beginning at 6:30pm. At the conclusion of the business meeting, there will be an executive session to real estate negotiations.

A Senior Staff Meeting will be held on Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup> at City Center beginning at 9:15am.

Other Items:

With this packet, you will find materials submitted to me by the Kennebec Land Trust related to a proposal they will present to you at the beginning of this Thursday's Council meeting. KLT will be asking you to authorize a partnership between the City and KLT that would result in the public acquisition and preservation of the very historically significant Howard Hill property that forms the backdrop to the State Capitol Building. The purpose of the initial public presentation this Thursday is to introduce the idea and set the stage for follow-up Council discussion at an upcoming informational meeting and, if you support the proposal, to then act accordingly at a business meeting. That potential action – likely in the form of an order authorizing eventual acceptance of ownership of the 164 acre parcel with permanent conservation easements attached to it – would be a necessary step in the phased sale transaction from landowner Sumner Lipman through KLT to the City of Augusta. KLT Board Chair Brian Kent, board member (and resident) Sue Bell and KLT Executive Director Theresa Kerchner will be present Thursday evening to make the presentation and answer questions.

Regarding the matter of the CMP-initiated excise tax bill (LD 1754), Mayor Stokes and I are appearing this afternoon before the Taxation Committee as it holds its work session on this matter. I appreciated from afar – through e-mails and online KJ articles - the great work done by those who prepared and offered testimony last Wednesday at the bill's public hearing. Our two Council members with legislative experience have both told me how satisfied they were with how things went (and their past service in the Legislature certainly added considerable weight to the City's position before the committee). We will not let up on our efforts until this matter is

finally disposed of in the Legislature. It also goes without saying that we are most grateful to our own delegation for their strong advocacy on this matter.

On the related matter of the petition filed last week with the Public Utilities Commission seeking relief from CMP's inappropriate involvement with Maine Natural Gas and CMP's associated punitive actions against the City, Attorney Tony Buxton has done an impressive job of crafting a powerful statement of the City's case for the PUC. A copy of the formal complaint is enclosed.

C: Department and Bureau Directors  
Augusta Legislative Delegation