



# THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. STOKES, MAYOR

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO, CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL

JEFFREY M. BILODEAU	CECIL E. MUNSON
MICHAEL G. BYRON	MARK S. O'BRIEN
DALE McCORMICK	PATRICK E. PARADIS
DAREK M. GRANT	DAVID M. ROLLINS

TO: Mayor and City Council  
FROM: City Manager Bill Bridgeo  
RE: Administrative Report  
DATE: March 3, 2014

Meetings:

There will be a Mill Park Advisory Committee Meeting on Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> in Conference Room A at 5pm.

The Augusta Housing Authority Housing Symposium will be held in Council Chambers on Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:30pm.

On Thursday, March 6, 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 discuss two separate matters: labor negotiations (which was cancelled last week) and pending litigation. Agendas are included in council packets.

There will be a Senior Staff Meeting on Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at Public Works beginning at 9:15am.

Other Items:

You will note that there is a place holder for a Council resolve that deals with the bill currently under consideration at the legislature that would change how CMP pays its excise tax and very adversely impact the City's finances. Mayor Stokes, City Attorney Langsdorf, Ralph St. Pierre and I met this morning with other members of Steve's firm to plan how best to oppose this legislation. Councilor Paradis, with his extensive legislative experience, is engaged as well (as, of course, will be the members of our legislative delegation). The text of the resolve will be distributed to you by end of the day tomorrow.

DPW Director Lesley Jones has been working hard to identify an alternate source of road salt and having some success in that regard so our concerns from last week have abated somewhat. We'll be discussing what, if anything, we can do for next year to avoid a similar dilemma.

Please see my separate memorandum (enclosed) addressing my recommendations regarding the Lithgow Library project.

C: Department and Bureau Directors  
Augusta Legislative Delegation

**AGENDA FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2014  
7:00 P.M.**

There will be a pre-meeting of the City Council at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room A. No Council actions are taken at pre-meetings. Pre-meetings are open to the public.

**PROCLAMATION** - City of Augusta to Participate in Earth Hour on March 29, 2014 at 8:30 p.m.

**PRESENTATION** - Camden National Bank

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS LISTED ON THE AGENDA**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

All matters listed under this item will be considered routine and will be enacted by one motion. If a Councilor wishes to discuss one (or more) item(s), Councilor may ask to have the item(s) removed from the Consent Agenda and considered individually.

**14-040      Manager (Bureau of City Clerk)**  
ORDERED, That the minutes of the City Council meetings held February 20, 2014 and February 27, 2014, submitted by the City Clerk be approved.

**14-041      Manager (Bureau of Audit Accounts)**  
ORDERED, That the Roll of Accounts for the month of February 2014 in the amount of \$4,516,969.03 be approved.

**14-042      City Manager**  
ORDERED, That the City Council accept from Alford Center for Health a donation for the Farmers' Market at Mill Park in an amount totaling \$5,000.00.

**OLD BUSINESS AND TABLED MATTERS**

**SECOND READING**

**14-037      Councilor Grant**  
WHEREAS, the City Council finds that temporary, on-site contractor signs help residents understand the reason for activity at a site; and

WHEREAS, international service organizations have no easy way to reach visiting members; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has reviewed the issue, held a public hearing, and made a unanimous recommendation.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Augusta that the following underlined text be added to the Augusta Land Use Ordinance:

- 5.1.17.8.7 **Temporary Street Graphics.** Temporary street graphics shall be allowed in the following manner:
- 5.1.17.8.7.1 Contractor. One sign placed at a property where a contractor(s) is performing work may be installed without a permit as follows:
- 5.1.17.8.7.1.1 Sign shall not be larger than 24" x 18", unless multiple contractors are working on the job and will create a common sign for all contractors. A project with multiple contractors displayed on a single sign shall not be larger than 48" x 96".
- 5.1.17.8.7.1.2 Signs shall not be placed more than 7 calendar days prior to the start of a contractor's job and shall be removed within 7 calendar days of the completion of the job. Signs for jobs that require a building permit are considered to start on the date the building permit is issued and end on the date a certificate of occupancy is issued. Signs for jobs that do not require a building permit shall not be place for more than 30 calendar days during any 1 calendar year.
- 5.1.17.8.9 **Service Organization Signs.** The city shall allow official signs within the public right of way for international service organizations that have chapters and organized meetings within the city, but don't own or rent permanent space, as follows:
- 5.1.17.8.9.1 Signs dimensions shall meet Maine DOT Official Business Directory Sign dimensions and specifications; or
- 5.1.17.8.9.2 Round signs shall not exceed 18" in diameter.
- 5.1.17.8.9.3 All signs shall be installed in locations and a manner approved by the city Public Works Director, who may require that signs be installed only by the Public Works Department.

**14-038 Councilors Paradis and O'Brien**

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that Social Services are an important component of the fabric of the city that need to be spread throughout the city to be available to all residents; and

WHEREAS, the topography on Mt. Vernon Ave is challenging and presents unique problems for a maximum setback in certain areas; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has reviewed the issue, held a public hearing, and made a unanimous recommendation.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Augusta that the following amendments to the Augusta Land Use Ordinance be approved:

Amend the RD zoning district such that "Social Services" is added to the district in the Table of Uses, Table 3.6.A.1 as a conditional use.

Amend the Section 3.6.1.1.4.b, the subsection on Dimensional Requirements and Performance Standards, to eliminate the maximum setback of 25 feet from the north side of Mt. Vernon Ave.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### **14-043 Mayor and Council**

ORDERED, That the City Council approve the attached policy be added to the Bicentennial Nature Park Operating Policies. Augusta tax paying businesses who for every \$100.00 of donation to the park shall receive a transferable season pass for their employees to use regardless of residential status.

#### **14-044 Manager**

Ordered, that the City Manager is authorized to accept federal fiscal year 2013 Homeland Security Grant funds in the amount of \$109,256.43 and to appropriate the funds as follows:

- Training and Emergency Planning: \$10,000
- Hazardous Material Exercises: \$3,000
- Traffic Control Supplies: \$4,000
- Tactical Gear, Personal Protective Equipment and Vests: \$12,256
- Emergency Operation Center – Backup Dispatch Center: \$80,000.43

#### **14-045 Mayor and Council**

A resolve opposing LD 1754 regarding public utility excise taxes

### OTHER BUSINESS

Enter into executive session to discuss:

- labor negotiations; 1 M.R.S.A., §405(6)(D)
- property negotiations; 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(C)

### COMMUNICATIONS

Committee Reports  
City Manager's Report

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara E. Wardwell, City Clerk  
March 3, 2014

1318 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

PHONE: 202-225-6116  
FAX: 202-225-5590

WWW.PINGREE.HOUSE.GOV



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND  
RELATED AGENCIES  
INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED  
AGENCIES

CHELLIE PINGREE  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
1<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT, MAINE

February 14, 2014

*AR*

Mr. William Bridgeo  
City Manager  
Augusta City Office  
16 Cony Street  
Augusta, ME 4330--5200

Dear Bill,

Thank you for helping coordinate the meeting my staff held in Augusta on January 31 and for attending. I know you're busy, so I appreciate the time you were able to give and the feedback you offered about federal programs and your community's needs.

Serving on the House Appropriations Committee is an exciting opportunity because it puts me in a position to better advocate for what Maine communities need to thrive. That said, finding agreement in Washington has become more challenging than ever and important projects and community programs that have historically received bipartisan support have been subjected to political wrangling.

This tough environment makes the kind of conversation my staff had with you very important. It's critical that I hear what federal programs are most vital for our communities so I know where to target my efforts, both in advocating for adequate funding for programs and working with agencies as they implement policies.

My staff has given me the details of the meeting, and it sounds like it was a productive conversation. I appreciate the feedback you offered on the municipal funding challenges Augusta faces as well as the need to expand the Lithgow Library. I know my staff is looking into how we can support your efforts on the federal level.

Thank you again for hosting the meeting, and thank you for all you do for the community. It's my intent that these meetings are just the beginning of our conversation. I know my staff will keep in contact, but please don't hesitate to reach out to us as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chellie R" followed by a long horizontal line.

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



# THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO

To: Mayor and Council  
Fr: City Manager Bill Bridgeo *BLR*  
Da: March 3, 2014  
Re: Lithgow Library Project Recommendation

The time has come, I believe strongly, for the City to resolve the long-standing and difficult issue of renovating, modernizing and upgrading the Lithgow Library. For sixteen years, I have struggled with how best to deal with this issue. I have participated in the various studies and commissions charged with addressing it. I have pushed City staff to identify creative, less costly alternatives. I have respected and at times agreed with those who said we could not afford the tax increases that were proposed as necessary so as to proceed with renovation and expansion. I still have concerns about our current and future financial circumstances and what seems like inevitable increased reliance on the property tax to fund basic municipal services.

But, I am convinced that a modern library is an integral part of a healthy community – as much so as a modern hospital, YMCA, high school, or parks and recreation complexes. I've heard the argument that bricks and mortar libraries are becoming archaic with the advances of the Internet and electronic data systems so I've made it a point to study this aspect of the issue (including participation in recent years on my national city management association's task force on the mission of modern libraries). I conclude that although modification to the mission of libraries is required in our electronic age, abandoning them (or neglecting them to the point where the end result is comparable) is unwise. I've made it a point to visit the new libraries in communities I consider to be first-rate places to live, like Brunswick, Maine and Portsmouth, New Hampshire and note that their libraries are mirror images of what Augusta's library champions want for us.

As Lithgow Fundraising Chair Wick Johnson so aptly put it the other night, the one remaining major asset challenge that our community faces is the library (I know that we have needs for fire facilities, road improvements and other recurring capital projects but I'm confident that creative use of TIF funds will enable us to address much of that in good order). I know that you

all have sympathy for the library project as well and any reservations that you have relate to over-extending the City's financial obligations. The question really becomes how to most responsibly fund what needs to be done. To that end, after in-depth discussion with Assistant City Manager Ralph St. Pierre, I am recommending that you give primary consideration to the option of refinancing the outstanding balance of the City's general obligation pension bond and adding to it the amount that would be necessary for the City's share of the total library project cost. (Other creative options like seeking amendment to the State's TIF law so as to allow those funds to be used for libraries in downtown districts and selling the Lithgow Library to its 501(c)(3) Friends organization and leasing it back so TIF funds could be used remain for me as possibilities but not foremost at this time.)

The refinancing option is comparable to a homeowner who, with a limited outstanding balance on her mortgage, faces the need to make substantial improvements to her home that will add considerable value as well as resolve major problems. Though extending the term of mortgage debt is not prudent for reasons like vacations, recreational vehicles or gambling debts, it is certainly advisable for energy efficiencies, a new roof or utilities or room for an expanding family. Our pension obligation bond is amortized in four years and at that time the annual interest and principle will be \$2 million. If I believed that we could wait that long to undertake the library project, that would be my recommendation. However, I think we all agree that the precarious state of Lithgow's infrastructure (like an elevator they don't make parts for anymore) makes waiting that long risky. Ralph has had our bond advisor run the numbers and we could do the refinancing and extend our current annual payments by eleven more years and have sufficient proceeds to proceed this year with the project (provided that the fund-raising could meet its \$3 million commitment). This strategy would allow for the project to go forward this year with no need for a property tax increase. That includes the approximately \$250,000 increase in annual operating costs the expanded library is projected to require as well as an allowance for the cost of temporary space for library operations during the eighteen month construction period.

All this, of course, would be up to the voters but I believe the average resident understands the concept of refinancing for a good reason and would see this as an appropriate course of action. In the next couple of weeks, I will forward additional information to you (including spreadsheets Ralph is developing) in anticipation of your discussion of this at the informational meeting of the 27<sup>th</sup>. I know that you will have a number of important questions to be answered before you can make an informed decision about this. I'm giving this memorandum to you today because most of you have spoken to me of late about this important project and I want you to be aware as a group of where I'm coming from on this.



**CITY COUNCIL**  
**City of Augusta, Maine**

March 6, 2014

**Title: Bicentennial Nature Park Operating Policy**

**ORDERED, That** the City Council approve the following policy be added to the Bicentennial Nature Park Operating Policies. Augusta tax paying businesses who for every \$100.00 of donation to the park shall receive a transferable season pass for their employees to use regardless of residential status.