



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. STOKES, MAYOR

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO, CITY MANAGER

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TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: City Manager, William Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: July 7, 2014

Meetings:

A meeting of the Planning Board will take place on Tuesday, July 8, 2014 beginning at 7pm in Council Chambers.

The TIF Committee will meet on Thursday, July 10th at 12:00pm in Conference Room A.

There will be a Special Council Meeting at 6:30 pm this Thursday to consider a request from Maine Natural Gas for night paving at Civic Center Drive. The regular informational meeting will immediately follow. An agenda is enclosed in your packets.

Other Items:

Implementing the overwhelming voter mandate to restore and expand Lithgow Library has begun. Last week, senior staff members joined me for a tour of the vacant former Hannaford store on Willow Street. Though sorely in need of some major cleaning, painting and upgrades (like floor-covering), we all agreed it would be very well-suited as a temporary library location. We're stilling looking at possible alternative sites but our primary focus right now is on Willow Street. Bob LaBreck is pricing out the cost of adapting the building to our purposes and architect Stewart Roberts will be charged with drawing up a plan for the interior layout. Ralph St. Pierre and I will conduct negotiations with Hannaford (and their leasing agent The Boulos Group) regarding the terms of a possible short-term lease (which would ultimately require Council authorization).

Meanwhile, Ralph St. Pierre and his deputy Tracy Roy are working with our fiscal advisor (Richard Ranaghan of Gorham Savings Bank) to arrange for the refinancing of our pension obligation bond and the issuance of debt for the construction project. Bond Counsel Jamie Pitney will be involved in that work as it proceeds.

I have discussed with the Mayor the advisability of a construction phase advisory committee that I would chair and that would include two Council members, representation from the Trustees and Friends of Lithgow, and appropriate staff (including the Librarian, Facilities Director and Directors of Development Services, DPW and the City Engineer). The committee would meet regularly and vet logistical issues as they arise. It would have no administrative authority as this construction project will proceed as does any other capital project already authorized and funded,

but clearly something of this scope and significance to the City can benefit from the counsel of the various interested parties and our seasoned staff professionals. I will have something on Thursday's informational agenda for discussion of this.

Lastly, as relates to the Lithgow project, the initial meeting with architect Stewart Roberts to discuss scope of work, timetables, his fees and related matters is scheduled for this morning. Assuming that goes well, I will have a Council order prepared for your consideration authorizing a contract for architectural/engineering services for final design through construction oversight to occupancy. We've clearly reached a very exciting phase of this project. I will make every effort to keep you fully apprised as we proceed.

As you are aware by now, the Fourth of July festivities were a wash-out. First, the State Fire Marshall's Office ordered the fireworks display cancelled (the likelihood of an electrical storm made the premature detonation of them too risky) and then Mother Nature dictated the remaining activities, including the parade be cancelled (the damage to Mill Park's turf could've been extensive, according to Jim Goulet and Leif Dahlin). The fireworks are now scheduled for August's Augusta Fest. This was all a disappointment for everyone who had worked so hard to put together a fun-filled Fourth but Hurricane Arthur had other ideas.

Please include in your calendars a picnic on the evening of Thursday, July 24th at Bicentennial Nature Park for Council and senior staff. It will begin at 5:00 pm and conclude in time for a 7:00 pm informational meeting at City Hall. As we discussed during the budget meetings, this will give you an opportunity to experience the park at its best and to meet our great summer staff there. I will see that the BNP champions receive invitations as well.

C: Department and Bureau Directors
Augusta Legislative Delegation