



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO
CITY MANAGER

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Bill Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: September 8, 2015

Meetings:

The Historic Preservation Commission will meet Tuesday, September 8, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room C to discuss the demolition permit received for 208 Western Avenue – the former Capital Buffet.

There will be a meeting of the Planning Board on Tuesday, September 8, 2015 in Council Chambers beginning at 7:00.

There will be a TIF Committee Meeting at 4:00 p.m. in Conference Room A on Thursday, September 10, 2015. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss amending existing TIF agreements. None of the amendments proposed by staff involve any benefit for any private party. Rather, they are intended to extend the benefits available under law to the City and its taxpayers. It is anticipated that at a future meeting of the TIF Committee, a staff recommendation to shelter the new assessed value of the Homewood Suites hotel under construction off Western Avenue (again solely for the City's public benefit and with no property tax advantage to the developer/owner) will be addressed.

There will be a City Council Special Business Meeting on Thursday, September 10th beginning at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. An Informational Meeting will immediately follow.

Agendas are included in your council packets.

Other Items:

Thursday evening will be a busy one for Council beginning with the special Council meeting. We can look forward to presentations from the Daughters of the American Revolution and from Fire Chief Audette (there to speak about the upcoming anniversary of the Great Fire of 1865). Business items will include the two bond issue orders (the \$750,000 Council bond and \$1,675,000 referendum bond, both intended to fund 2016 CIP projects) and an order that appropriates cash from a variety of sources (listed in the order) for the remainder of the 2016 CIP, as discussed in prior informational meetings. A final order, if adopted, will address one of Council's 2015 goals, namely the establishment of an Ad Hoc committee to be appointed by Mayor Rollins to study and make recommendations that deal with the related issues of child hunger and homelessness in our community.

The Informational Meeting scheduled to immediately follow the special business meeting has a couple of routine annually recurring items (discussion of acceptance of snowmobile club trail maintenance state grant money and discussion of the City's annual allotment of Homeland Security public safety grant funding). Up first, though, is an update from the Kennebec Land Trust on the status of the Howard Hill preservation project. Included with you package is a set of documents prepared by the Land Trust that will ultimately need to be authorized by you before the Land Trust can close on purchase of the property with owner Sumner Lipman. These documents have been vetted by City staff and Corporation Counsel and are consistent with what we have been discussing with the Land Trust since this project was initially proposed to the City last year. What's different, of course, is that because of the Governor's refusal to sign off on the voter approved conservation bonds, the Land Trust has been forced to borrow the money to close on the purchase before the October option expiration date and retain ownership of the land until the loan (being provided by Kennebec Savings Bank) is paid back. Only at that point can the land be transferred to the City – as originally contemplated – with the restrictive covenants necessary to ensure its perpetual status as open space. The Board of the Kennebec Land Trust deserves praise for the extraordinary measures it has undertaken to preserve this project notwithstanding the loss of the Land For Maine's Future grant.

The final item on the informational agenda is continued review of the proposed Historic District ordinance.

C: Department and Bureau Directors
Augusta Legislative Delegation