



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO, CITY MANAGER

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: William R. Bridgeo
RE: Administrative Report
DATE: February 19, 2019

Meetings:

There will be a City Council Business Meeting on Thursday, February 21, 2019 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Agendas are included in your Council Packets. A pre-meeting will be held in Conference Room A beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Other Items:

We have continued to monitor the regional dispatching issue that more directly involves the Sheriff's Department, the City of Gardiner and twenty-one other towns in Kennebec County. As we've discussed in the past, we advised those parties that the City of Augusta would be willing to provide an alternative dispatching service if we were made whole financially and it had no adverse impact on our own ability to serve our residents. Based on a recent meeting hosted by the County Commissioners, it appears that the County, City of Gardiner and the State may be resolving the issue amongst themselves. One thing that we were potentially concerned about was a proposal to fold the cost of dispatching for these 21 communities into the broad based county tax. That would have significantly adversely impacted Augusta (and the other communities in the county, like Waterville, that have their own dispatch facilities) but it is no longer under consideration. Below is Chief Mills' summary to me of what transpired at the meeting he attended last week:

The meeting went well today and only lasted about an hour. There was no mention about Kennebec starting their own dispatch that would affect our county tax. The Belgrade manager requested that their bill for dispatch be part of their county taxes so there could be one bill that the towns pay to Kennebec and Kennebec would in turn be billed by RCC and pay for the 21 towns dispatching cost. Most of the comments during the meeting were in support of Kennebec and Gardiner staying with the RCC and paying the increase for the RCC to hire four more dispatchers and have one desk at all times for Gardiner and Kennebec with IMC. I was thanked at the end by Windsor for the City of Augusta being an option to help the 21 towns if they did not have a dispatch center. I stood up and explained once again to the group that Augusta was only an option for the 21 towns if they had to leave RCC and did not have a dispatch center. If we were in a position to expand our center we would have gladly taken on Gardiner as well but because of those reasons we could only do either the 21 towns in Kennebec or Gardiner, not both. I advised the group that the City of Augusta is in support of Gardiner and Kennebec staying together for dispatching at the RCC now that it is clear that the RCC will keep them together and offer them both the same service that we were only able to offer Kennebec SO. I think they are going to stay.

Meetings with department and bureau directors for 2019-2020 budget preparation concluded last week. Ralph St. Pierre and I will now move forward with the process of integrating all of that information into one comprehensive document. Hopefully by the time you begin your deliberations we will have a better sense of where State government will be with school aid and revenue sharing and Homestead Exemption finances.

C: Department and Bureau Directors
Legislative Delegation