



GARDINER CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET



Meeting Date		Department	
Agenda Item			
Est. Cost			

Background Information

Requested Action	
City Manager and/or Finance Review	
Council Vote/ Action Taken	
Departmental Follow-Up	

<i>City Clerk Use Only</i>	1 st Reading _____	Advertised _____	EFFECTIVE DATE _____
	2 nd Reading _____	Advertised _____ w/in 15 Days	
	Final to Dept _____	Updated Book _____	Online _____

Monthly Report for: Economic Development

Department Head: Melissa Lindley

Month/Year: November 2024

Summary of Month in General Terms:

This month I was busy learning about the new website platform and began the process of moving content on to the new city website. I am excited about the transition. The City's information will be much easier to find and will be a helpful resource for our constituents. It will also be much more user-friendly for staff to maintain. It is still a work in progress and the new website will launch in early 2025. I was invited to speak as a panelist at the Nov 7 Main Downtown Center annual conference for a topic discussing the relationship between municipalities and downtown organizations.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

Brownfields Assessment Grant: Current properties in review or undergoing Brownfields investigation are: Arcade parking lot, former OC Woodman School site, and the alley behind Renys. The excavation and removal of contaminated soils at 1 Summer St (former TW Dick) was discussed at the Nov. 20th city council meeting, and we are continuing to investigate options with a focus on relocating the soils at the Hatch Hill landfill. I plan to report back to the council with updates in January.

Libby Hill Business Park: Lot 12, the last city-owned parcel, is under contract. GRA Real Estate's development of a warehouse and office building on lot 21 is fully underway. JRN Holdings (Chemstation), the owner of lots 18 & 20 has past due mortgage and PILOT payments; they have indicated plans to catch up on these balances, I will continue to work with them on this. A meeting will be held at City Hall for Libby Hill property owners on December 18 at 9am regarding responsibility and access for the maintenance needs of the detention ponds in the park.

Community Action Grant: A contract was signed with Haley Ward to perform the climate vulnerability assessment project. An ad-hoc committee will work with them during the project, which is expected to take approximately 13 months.

Arcade Parking Lot: Harriman Associates is reviewing the existing conditions of the site to prepare for the engineering and design to improve the lot. As the design phase begins, we will have opportunities for public engagement and feedback.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be aware of:

Economic and Community Development Committee: The committee continues to identify priorities and funding opportunities to support economic development.

Downtown Sidewalk Committee: Regular meetings have paused for this committee while MDOT finalizes the design phase using recommendations from the committee and the city council. We

will work with MDOT to pursue funding options to implement the construction phase of the project.

City Parks Committee: The committee reviewed the redesign plans for Dearborn Park.

Grant Writing Contractor: Jessie Cyr from KVCOG met with department heads to begin the strategic planning process of identifying the needs of the city and aligning them with funding opportunities. She is working with us to submit a \$75,000 Community Action Grant application to fund heat pumps for municipal buildings, no local match is required.

Recently new/moved businesses:

- Ribbon cuttings were held last month to recognize:
 - Vintage Cannibus at 325 Water Street
- The Harrom salon has relocated a few buildings down the street to 223 Water St

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Fire & Rescue

Department Head: Chief Rick Sieberg

Month: November

Year: 2024

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Total CFS (calls for service): 262

EMS: 245

Gardiner:	86
West Gardiner:	23
Richmond:	29
Farmingdale:	31
Litchfield:	24
Pittston:	17
Randolph:	19
Chelsea:	14
Other:	2 (Hallowell, Dresden)

Fire: 17

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

- Boat is winterized and at the treatment plant.

Personnel Updates (promotions, absences, needs, etc.):

- Conducted Bureau of Labor Standards Annual training.
- Added Kaleb Barnes to the Call Company.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

- Space at Central Station remains a challenge.
- Working toward staffing all three rescues.

Monthly Report for: Front Office
Department Head: Kathy Cutler
Month/Year: November 2024

Current Month Activity:

November					
274	MV Transactions	80,227	Permits		
174	Tax Payments	98,379	2	Building-Bus/Commercial	165
141	Sewer Payments	19,548	16	Building-Residential	992
22	IF&W Transactions	577		Mobile Home	
27	Vital Records	896		Fence	
14	Ambulance Payments	2,260		Excavation	
38	Dog Transactions	232		Demolition	
1	Victualer/Liquor License	10	5	Street Opening	1,400
4	Notarial	20	4	Driveway Entrance	100
	Marriage		4	Plumbing	390
	General Assistance		4	Septic	1,060

Current Progress on Projects/Plans

The election took up all of our time this month. We had an unprecedented turnout for both absentee and day of voting. We registered 311 new voters on election day! The lines were long but staff handled it with grace and we had few disgruntled voters. We were also kept busy with post-election paperwork and the recount.

Personnel Updates (promotions, absences, needs, etc.):

The Assistant City Clerk resigned, so we are down one staff member. The Deputy Tax Collector has decided to move into that role, which leaves the Deputy Tax Collector role open.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be Aware of:

November was slow with one GA benefit issued to avoid an electric disconnect. There were 4 Salvation Army vouchers for assistance with heating, all for elderly residents. One voucher went to a West Gardiner resident, and the remaining three were from Gardiner.

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Public Library

Department Head: Dawn Thistle

Month/Year: November, 2024

Summary of Month in General Terms:

We collected nearly 400 pounds of meal kits and food for Chrysalis Place during the month of November (and have already begun collecting desserts for December). Many dozens of patrons and the public engaged in the drive throughout the month, and it took four trips to deliver all the food! In addition to our busy day-to-day work, the staff prepared for participation in the early December Art Walk, Festival of Trees, and the Parade of Lights – all of which were great successes. Our Children’s Librarian, Heather, has added a bi-weekly STEM Club and weekly Baby Bounce to her programming line-up. One of our book groups hosted a book talk via Zoom with best-selling NY author, Christina Baker Kline. More programming ideas are already in the works for 2025.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

The brownstone restoration and repair on the Library Street side of the building has been completed and I am told that the scaffolding should be down by December 17th. Next spring and summer work will resume on the garden side of the building. The GLA launched their Annual Appeal in mid-November. They are working on a number of initiatives in support and improvement of the library building and grounds. They have hired a grant writer who has already submitted several applications and, to date, has secured \$60,000.

Any other noted updates, concerns, items for City Council to be aware of:

None at this time.

Monthly Report for Gardiner Police Department

Department Head: Chief Todd H. Pilsbury



Month: November 2024

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Calls for Service:	331
Accidents:	1
Arrests/Criminal Cites:	15
Traffic & Parking Tix:	17

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

The Gardiner Police Department continues the process to become MLEAP certified. (Maine Law Enforcement Accreditation Program) As stated in prior reports, the process takes approximately three years to complete but I hope to have the process completed in approximately two years if all goes well. The process continues to go well, and I still hope to complete the process early.

As noted in previous reports and will be noted in future reports, within the next few years we may need to go to a new or upgraded records management system as Central Square/IMC (current dispatching system) is slated to be discontinued relating to the support aspect of the program to an upgraded version. At this point I do not have a solid figure for the cost of the upgrade/new system but from speaking to other agencies I believe it will be a very expensive endeavor. I was able to have an initial conversation with Kennebec County Sheriff Ken Mason reference this upgrade and from our brief preliminary conversation believe that we will stay with this version of IMC until it ceases to work and there is no IT support. The Gardiner Police Department is partnered with the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office under their licensing for our dispatch software.

Our current contract with RCC ends on June 30, 2025, with our current year cost of \$206,275.00. (Police and Fire dispatching costs.) Our current contract states that it may be extended for an additional 12 months with a request 60 days prior to expiration of the agreement. We have heard from RCC with some dispatch cost numbers for FY2026 and FY2027. The reported costs for dispatching services for FY2026 will be \$212,463 and for FY2027 they will be \$226,903. Other than the cost of the reported dispatch services this is some better news that RCC is willing to extend their dispatching contract.

Personnel Updates (Promotions, Absences, Needs, Etc.):

As of December 1, 2024, Sgt. Stacey Blair is officially retired from the Gardiner Police Department. We hope to get together with him for a proper send off at some point after the holidays.

We currently are still down two officers for the department. Some inquiries have been made but none that have panned out yet. I am still optimistic that we will attract some suitable candidates.

Officers used a total of 60 hours of sick leave and 288 hours of Vacation/Comp./Personal time during the month.

Any other Noted Updates, Concerns, Items for the City Council to be aware of:

Nothing up to this point warrants noting.

Monthly Report: Public Works Department

Director: John Cameron
Month: November 2024

The crew worked on finishing up some last-minute items before winter, such as the intersection of the old Brunswick Road. We were able to get that widened out and repaved. We went around and filled in some known problem spots for potholes with some hot mix to hopefully get us through the winter before our next paving season. We installed the last couple driveway culverts for the season and put up some new street signs, road name signs, and stop signs that have been in bad condition. We picked up leaves in the cemeteries and parks and in some ditch areas that cause water problems. The leaf bin at the Public Works garage is still getting used quite a bit and we get it emptied out a couple of times a week. The crew spent some time getting trucks ready for snow events and put on some extra lights to help the drivers see at night. A substantial amount of time was spent this month putting up the Christmas lights to get everything working and ready for the annual tree lighting and other events. The new banners were installed. It is looking very festive downtown. We are still looking to fill one more Equipment Operator position and haven't had much luck as of lately getting applications for that position. We took delivery of the one-ton dump truck and got that lettered up and ready to go. We also took delivery of the new John Deere backhoe. It has been lettered up as well. Those two new pieces of equipment along with one of our other dump trucks can be seen in this year's Parade of Lights.