



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			

City Clerk Use Only	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: February 2025

Summary of Month in General Terms:

It has been a very busy time for economic development. Our planning and development staff continue to work with developers for projects in various phases in discussion, planning, or implementation. I was also preparing the new city website for launch as well as the department's budget for FY26. Several grant funding opportunities have application deadlines this time of year. There is a lot of uncertainty regarding the status of recent and future federal funding programs. Some grant providers have paused their application process while others have continued to receive requests as originally planned. I was preparing three grant applications this month. I also was able to fit in some vacation time.

New Website:

The new website went live on February 27th at www.gardinermaine.gov. For a short period of time the old website will also be available at www.gardinermaine.com. This allows our staff to some time to transition to using the new web hosting platform while also maintaining the traditional methods of posting and sharing information that our citizens are accustomed to. Soon the .com web address will forward the .gov domain which is authorized by the federal government and has additional security measures. We will make a public announcement about the website upgrade in the coming weeks. If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the new website content, please let me know.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

Brownfields Assessment Grant: A site visit was performed for a Phase I Brownfields Assessment at D&H Motors. Current properties in review or undergoing Brownfields investigation are the D&H Motors, Arcade parking lot, and the alley behind Renys. A Phase II has been recommended for the Pool Hall, and we hope to start that work soon. The 1 Summer Street TW Dick soil excavation has involved a lot of discussions and negotiations. The City has applied for Brownfields grant funding from the Department of Economic and Community Development for \$75,000, offsetting the disposal costs expected from Hatch Hill landfill. This would be a different Brownfields program for the City and requires additional material for grant approval, including selecting a qualified environmental professional to manage this next phase of the property. I hope to have the process complete ASAP so the project can break ground.

Libby Hill Business Park: Lot 12, the last city-owned parcel, is under contract. Lot 19 was recently sold by private sale; Transport Leasing Corp received planning board approval in January to construct a 6,000 sq ft building associated with box storage areas and laydown area. Lot 18 is listed for private sale; I am told there is an interested buyer.

Community Action Grant: A public engagement event is planned for April 17th from 5:30-7:30 at Johnson Hall. More details to come.

Dearborn Park: The City Parks committee has advised on tree replacements for the park's redesign. The construction bid packet is planned to be publicized in March. Construction is anticipated to start by early May.

EV Charging Stations: No progress to date. Efficiency Maine has advised the City not to incur any expenses related to this grant until further clarification is received from the federal government regarding the funding of this Federal Highway Administration funded program.

Arcade Parking Lot: I will apply for the CDBG Downtown Revitalization grant by March 7th. The request will be for \$300,000 in funding to support this large construction project. Design and engineering plans are in progress.

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

Economic and Community Development Committee: Did not meet in February. Next meeting date is 3/13.

City Parks Committee: The committee discussed the Dearborn Park project and tree selection, as well as funding programs for other park projects.

Business Owner Meetings: I will work with Gardiner Main Street to plan meetings for Gardiner members for the Gardiner business community to discuss issues and initiatives important to them. I hope to have a meeting scheduled for March.

Monthly Report for: Gardiner Fire & Rescue

Department Head: Chief Rick Sieberg

Month: February

Year: 2025

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Total CFS (calls for service): 297

EMS: 287

Gardiner:	108
West Gardiner:	23
Richmond:	34
Farmingdale:	34
Litchfield:	24
Pittston:	30
Randolph:	22
Chelsea:	12
Other:	0

Fire: 10

Current Progress on Projects/Plans/Problems:

- Finalizing the design plans for the new Engine (supposed delivery December 2025)

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

- Adam Updyke is now a licensed Maine Paramedic

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: February 2025

Current Month Activity:

February					
408	MV Transactions	168,167	Permits		
274	Tax Payments	352,259	3	Building-Business/Commercial	5,636
141	Sewer Payments	18,403	11	Building-Residential	710
42	IF&W Transactions	2,648		Mobile Home	
19	Vital Records	557		Fence	
16	Ambulance Payments	4,245		Excavation	
31	Dog Transactions	577		Demolition	
6	Victualer/Liquor License	485		Street Opening	
5	Notarial	25	1	Driveway Entrance	25
1	Marriage	25	3	Plumbing	540
	General Assistance			Septic	

Current Progress on Projects/Plans

Cleaning and making room for storage of the new license plates.

Personnel Updates (promotions, absences, needs, etc.

Kelly Hare started and is being trained on the tax side of things. We are now fully staffed.

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

Six applications were approved for General Assistance in February. Two residents received GA benefit for end-of-life services cremation/burial. Three families totaling 13 people received rental assistance to avoid eviction and keep them in their homes during the winter season. One family of 7 received a small benefit for household goods/services.

Three applications for various assistance were declined due to the applicants being over income or showing excessive misspent funds.

Monthly Report for Gardiner Police Department

Department Head: Chief Todd H. Pilsbury

Month: February 2025

Summary of Month in General Terms:

Calls for Service:	277
Accidents:	13
Arrests/Criminal Cites:	27
Traffic & Parking Tix:	26

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.):

On February 18, 2025, we hired Ammar M. Dheyab as a full-time police officer for the City of Gardiner. Officer Dheyab has two years' experience with the Westbrook Police Department, and he is a graduate of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. Officer Dheyab is expected to complete his FTO period and be ready for a patrol shift in mid to late April 2025.

The Gardiner Police Department also has another prospective hire that has shown interest to come work for the City of Gardiner. This candidate has close to ten years' experience and is also a graduate of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. Pending no setbacks, we may be able to bring him on in late April or early May.

With the hiring of Officer Dheyab and the possible hiring of another officer within the next month we may, for the first time in many years, be at full staff which will be nice for the department and the City of Gardiner.

There were no significant trainings in February.

Officers used a total of 27 hours of sick leave and 109 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 for: Gardiner Public Library

Department Head: Dawn Thistle

Month/Year: February, 2025

Summary of Month in General Terms:

The library was bustling in February. In addition to our established programming schedule, we added a weekly Monday morning light stretch/exercise class that has been nicely attended. The last week of the month we started a weekly coffee chat gathering on Friday mornings. We had been looking into starting something like this for some time and were ultimately approached by a social worker from Gardiner Family Medicine who was looking for an opportunity for one of her clients (who happened to be one of our patrons) to get out and spend some time talking and visiting with others, as she was feeling very lonely. We provided some light snacks and Bintliff's donated a carafe of coffee and the first meet-up was a great success. Fewer folks came the second week, but we are working on sustaining it and feel that it has great potential. Children's and teen programming continued as usual, with a huge attendance for the vacation week Story Time (39 children!) Tuesday AARP tax preparation services began in early February. All slots have already been filled through April 15th. On March 1st, we co-hosted the first of what we hope will become an annual event – Feed Your Neighbor – a fund-raising and food-raising program at Johnson Hall in support of the Chrysalis Place. Among others, it included performances by Gardiner's MIKA Dance Studio and (via video) Ampersand Academy, as well as Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations. We partnered with the Gardiner Library Association, Gardiner Main Street, and Johnson Hall the event brought in over \$2000 and 188 meals for the food pantry.

Current Progress on Projects/Plans:

March is bringing some staff vacation time and kicks off Town Meeting season. Pittston's town meeting is Saturday, March 15, at 9:45 AM. There has been some rumbling about not supporting the library in full this year, but we are hopeful that a strong turnout of patrons and library advocates will carry the motion. In particular, our Pittston members of the Gardiner Library Association are working diligently to encourage attendance and support. Heather, our Children's Librarian, has started a new bi-weekly Tuesday evening pajama story time. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has gone live in Kennebec County. Children 0-5 can sign up to receive a book a month through the mail. Literacy Volunteers of the Kennebec is working with the Maine State Library to kickstart the program and they have looped Lithgow, Waterville, Bailey, and Gardiner libraries into the fold to help promote and encourage support for it. It is still in early days and there will be more information going forward.

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

None at this time.

Monthly Report: Public Works Department

Director: John A Cameron Sr.

Month: February 2025

The month of February was busy with the entire crew putting in lots of overtime taking care of all the snow events that we had. Many hours were spent plowing the roads and parking lots, and taking care of our sidewalks in the downtown areas. As soon as the snow stopped falling and we got things cleaned up, we shifted gears towards snow removal to get the snow out of the downtown and intersections; as well as to get the roads widened back out. After all the snow is plowed and removed there is always a list of things that need to be repaired and maintained on the equipment. The crew does a great job at keeping things in good shape. Working together doing custom fabrication in the shop is a big help towards not having to buy new parts if we can fix what we have.

We are in search of a new custodian. A couple of guys are cleaning City Hall and the Library to help keep things presentable until we find a replacement.

Work was spent on budget and putting together the RFP for the 2025 paving bid.

City of Gardiner

Statement of Revenues & Expenses

as of February 28, 2025

FY25 Revenues	FY25 Budget	Received Thru Feb 28	% of Budget
Revenues			
Property Tax Revenue	9,165,885	5,488,353	60%
Homestead Exemption	366,107	256,809	70%
BETE Reimbursement	132,109	132,109	100%
State Revenue Sharing	1,186,868	913,424	77%
Excise Tax and Vehicle Registration	1,250,000	819,404	66%
State Local Road Assistance Program	84,000	85,324	102%
Veterans/Tree/Snowmobile	11,100	10,922	98%
Solar	145,000	143,992	99%
General Assistance Reimbursement	42,000	15,233	36%
Penalties and Interest	55,000	35,890	65%
Licenses and Permits	65,000	55,291	85%
Fees and Fines	51,500	27,642	54%
Library Fees	140,900	140,901	100%
TWC Franchise Fee	63,000	57,957	92%
Ambulance Rental Reimbursement	10,000	10,000	100%
Audit/Events/Tech Reimbursement	50,200	49,200	98%
First Park	25,000	0	0%
Investment Earnings	200,000	140,968	70%
Other Revenue	12,000	88,421	737%
Due from WasteWater Fund	149,145	149,145	100%
Use of Fund Balance	500,000	0	0%
Carryforwards	6,000	0	0%
Total Revenue	13,710,814	8,620,986	63%

Total revenues are right where they were at this time last year.

Revenue Variance Notes:

Property Tax appears low but 2nd installments are due mid-March.
 BETE and Local Road Assistance have been received in full.
 We have received all of the Solar proceeds.
 Library fees have been paid in full by the member towns.
 We will receive First Park proceeds in June.
 Other Revenue is high due to receiving insurance proceeds for the totaled loader that is offset with the purchase of a new loader in the B&G budget.

FY25 Expenses	FY25 Budget	Expended Thru Feb 28	% of Budget
Expenses			
General Government	826,803	458,394	55%
Legal	25,000	27,405	110%
Workers' Compensation	173,172	110,304	64%
Property & Casualty Insurance	92,000	97,696	106%
Contingency	25,000	18,594	74%
Technology	162,520	108,994	67%
Police	1,589,131	1,131,666	71%
Fire	1,154,467	814,084	71%
Fire Hydrants	357,939	177,637	50%
Ambulance Services	277,129	277,129	100%
Buildings & Grounds	531,198	370,679	70%
Public Works	1,822,896	1,113,061	61%
Public Library	574,904	340,886	59%
Economic Development	250,804	145,662	58%
General Assistance	61,301	31,570	52%
Community Programs	161,144	158,700	98%
Total Municipal Appropriation	8,085,408	5,382,460	67%
Overlay	40,853	0	0%
County Appropriation	616,809	616,809	100%
Education Appropriation	4,967,744	3,309,170	67%
Total Expenditures	13,710,814	9,308,439	68%

Total expenses are slightly higher than they were at this time last year.

Expense Variance Notes:

Legal was underbudgeted; FY26 will propose \$40K.
 The Property Insurance overage is due to a higher than anticipated renewal increase.
 Two quarters of the fire hydrants have been paid to date.
 Gardiner's share of the Ambulance Service has been paid in full.
 General Assistance is slightly low which is a good sign.
 Community Programs is high due to timing of annual payments.
 County Taxes have been paid in full.

For comparisons, February brings the City 66.6% through the fiscal year.