



CITY OF SACO, MAINE

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council
CC: School Board, Planning Board, and Economic Development Commission
FROM: Kevin L. Sutherland, City Administrator
DATE: December 5, 2017
RE: Council/Board Member Requirements Review

Congratulations again to all of you on your election to the City Council. Last night's inauguration was a well attended event with a great opportunity to meet your family members and some newer faces to local government. I was glad to be a part of it.

Now it's time to hit the ground running! With a relatively new Council, there is a lot to bring you up to speed on.

Next week, we'll have a Member Requirement Review in which I will re-hash some of the information included as part of this packet as well as provide the required trainings to meet state statute. I had initially invited the School Board, the Planning Board, and the Economic Development Commission (CC'd here) to this meeting, but after a conversation with the Mayor have decided to focus this time on the two newly elected boards – Council and School Board (see attached agenda – this is public meeting for education and discussion – no roll call or voting will occur). Planning Board and EDC are still welcome to attend for any part of the meeting, but it is no longer a requirement. The Mayor, staff, and I will make rounds after the New Year to each of your boards for a presentation and discussion about establishing goals and understanding of process. Stay tuned.

Saco Documents and Reports:

There are several documents that I believe are important to review before our meeting that will help shed some light on how local government runs in Saco.

- **City Charter** – This is codified on ecode360.org (a third party that protects the integrity of the language).

- **City Code** – This is also codified on ecode360.org – they are the local laws that govern the organization and the community - everything from zoning to permits and from licenses to departments of the city.
- **Rules and Order of Business** – A requirement of the Charter ([Section 2.08b](#)), Council needs to agree to this at their first regular meeting. Click [HERE](#) for the version last amended by the prior Council on 10-13-16. I will have some recommended changes for you to consider at the meeting next week, please review and bring your suggested changes as well. During the final hour of our meeting we can discuss this document, have a conversation about the meeting schedule, agenda format, and any changes you may want to make.
- **Comprehensive Plan** – A requirement of [Maine State Statute](#), this is our guiding document for public policy around transportation, utilities, land use, recreation, natural resources, public facilities, and housing. We are in the process of updating much of this document and have been for just over a year now. Check out our [webpage](#) for all the information on the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- **Comprehensive Annual Financial Report** – This is our set of financial statements that complies with the accounting requirements promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). It allows auditors or numbers folks to benchmark the health of communities in a standard format. The FY2017 document will be presented to Council in January. In the interim, [HERE](#) is the 2016 report.
- **Annual Report** – A requirement of the Charter ([Section 3.04f](#)), this is an end of the fiscal year report that showcases the programs and performance measures of our departments. Because of the timing of the information and the requirement to produce immediately after the fiscal year, it utilizes the adopted budget and calendar year data for the departments. Click [HERE](#) to review this document.

Goal Setting:

I'd like to begin a discussion on the establishing of goals and look to formalize this after the start of the New Year. The last Council had a rather robust list which we worked hard to achieve. Below are their goals and outcomes as of 7/1/17 – they can also be reviewed on pages 4 and 5 of the [Annual Report](#).

- 1. Actively participate in re-energizing the Saco Main Street organization by having at least one councilor at each Saco Main Street community event.**
Saco's City Council has successfully achieved this goal.
- 2. Charge an ad-hoc committee of elected officials and staff from the school district and the City to explore back office service consolidation, which includes a recommendation by November (before the 2018 budget cycle begins).**
Although a recommendation for office consolidation was not received before the 2018 budget process began, this topic has been explored by elected officials and staff.
- 3. Actively seek an AARP grant that would assist in the development of a plan to make Saco an Age-Friendly Community.**
Saco successfully became an AARP certified Age-Friendly Community in April of 2016. Council also established a Steering Committee that is leading efforts to maintain Saco's Age-Friendly programs and initiatives.
- 4. In cooperation with Biddeford and Maine DOT, review completed traffic studies and develop a traffic improvement work plan.**
Cooperation with Biddeford and Maine DOT on traffic concerns in the City is ongoing. To relieve traffic issues, the possibility for an additional turnpike exit has been discussed.
- 5. Review the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance for discrepancies, assimilate the Bridge 2025 document, and make recommendations for changes to the document for the next calendar year.**
The comprehensive plan review process commenced in November 2016. This process will also include an examination of the zoning ordinance to ensure that it is compatible with the development and density goals identified in the comprehensive plan.
- 6. Charge the Energy Committee to develop a baseline of energy usage for City facilities in order to determine additional areas of improvement; explore/assess new green technology investment ideas for Council to approve in a bond issue.**
This goal was not achieved by Council in 2016 but is in process looking ahead to 2017.

7. Explore and approve two new sources of revenue for the City.

In 2016, Council did explore two new sources of revenue for the City. The first was to offer beachware rentals, such as umbrellas and surfboards, at the beach to offset the cost of lifeguard staffing, and the second was to charge residents for transfer station usage. However, Council ultimately did not provide a positive recommendation for either of these new revenue sources.

8. Advocate a successful bond approval for the replacement of Young School by November.

This goal has not yet been achieved by Council.

9. Adopt a zero dollar increase on the mill rate for the school and City portion of the tax bill.

While the mill rate did see a slight increase of 1% from .1922 to .1942, it was raised only enough to offset the savings that would have been realized through the Homestead Exemption. The tax increase helped cover a rather large loss in state aid for schools and kept expenditures relatively flat for the City, ensuring a continuation of quality services being provided to residents of Saco.

Working with the Mayor, I too, have had established goals in the last two years (as part of my contract):

Goals for Fiscal Year 2017 – established in August of 2016 - (The responses were provided to the former Council in late June of 2017)

1. Successful search and hiring of Saco's next Police Chief

We created a survey to gather feedback from the community on what they expected from the next police Chief. We had nearly 130 responses. From the survey, we gathered that 65% of the community was satisfied or very satisfied regarding the relationship between the Saco Police and the Saco Community. Factoring in somewhat satisfied, this rose to 90%. Other important feedback was provided and shared with the two committees. The Screening Committee was chaired by Deputy Director of Human Resources MaryLou Kadlik and includes Fire Chief John Duross, Director of Public Works Patrick Fox, Police Dispatcher Steve Kierstead, Councilor David Precourt, and Vangel Cotsis, a Saco community resident. This committee reviewed the 50 or so applications, interviewed a handful of applicants and moved two names forward to the Interview Team. The interview team was made up of the Mayor, myself, Human Resources Director Cheryl Fournier, Councilor Bill Doyle, York Police Chief Doug Bracy, and Mayor Emeritus Bill Johnson as a community representative.

While many of the candidates were qualified, it was clear that Ray Demers was the best candidate to move into this position. So far, that has proven to be the case. He's worked with me to make some changes in the department, we've hired a new Deputy Chief position – moved here from Las Vegas providing some outside perspective and have focused heavily on

recruitment - we're on track to be down only two officer positions by the fall (several are currently in training).

2. Begin performance review program for Department Head staff

In the fall of 2016, I met with each of my department heads to establish goals for the coming nine months – in an effort to create an annual review process in June. By the end of June, I will have met with each of them, completed their performance review, and established new goals for FY2018 and a plan to meet and review progress of those goals quarterly with final review in June of 2018.

Department Heads and I are also participating in a team building exercise on June 30th to work on communication and trust amongst the group. While we meet weekly in different capacities, we rarely have a chance to do something like this. Assuming all goes well, I intend to host a retreat with department heads on an annual basis.

3. Create a Comprehensive Plan Review team and start them on the path of revising Saco's document

This was created in the fall of last year and has been moving forward. However, we are slightly behind schedule on the goals, strategies, and policies for each of the subject areas being reviewed. We are working this summer (in part with the assistance of our summer associates) to update language in all of the chapters. Will look to bring this to Council this fall – my intent is to also invite anyone running for office to be at the meetings where the comp plan committee, planning board, and Council are discussing the revisions as the next Council will be responsible for any changes to zoning that staff will be proposing as a result of changes to the Comprehensive Plan.

4. Strengthen the role of a Capital Planning Committee as a jumping off point for the budget process

The process has become substantially better. We've revamped the premise of how we define the funding needs and have tied it to our asset value and have identified replacement schedules. This group is now meeting monthly to be briefed on projects currently in the works, plan and prioritize future needs, recommend funding sources, and advocate for bond approvals. This group will also bring forward a recommendation of spending to City Administration as part of the fixed cost in the annual budget.

5. Begin reviewing and revising current policies

In December I approved a Standard Operating Procedure for review of department and city-wide policies. Since then we've tackled two or three policies a month for review, revamp (for standardization), comments, and final approval. The intent is to continue this practice until all policies have been review and approved at the proper level and then start a standard review process to check for updates.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2018 – established in June of 2017 (notes included are for where these items stand as of 12/1):

1. Successful search and hiring of Saco's next Finance Director

A committee made up of Councilor Doyle, Mayor Michaud, Human Resources Director MaryLou Kadlik, and myself went through two rounds of candidates to find the right replacement for Saco's Finance Director. Glenys Salas was approved by Council on September 5th of this year and joined the Saco team on September 25th. What she brings to the table is a new approach to local government financing and how we get that information out to the public. While her predecessor was instrumental in keeping us afloat in the absence of a director (and we are eternally grateful for this), there were many items that needed to be addressed on day one. Without any tutorials to start, Glenys has learned the ins and outs of MUNIS (our Financial and HR database) and developed an entire library of tutorials for everything from Payroll processing (a 40 page standard operating procedure) to how to update employee information. She has completely re-engineered the payroll process and has taken over the process to work out any remaining bugs before it is returned to HR as a 10 hour bi-weekly responsibility. She has nearly automated the bank reconciliation process and exposed some additional processes that need to be further developed and documented. She has taken this organization forward faster than anyone could have in just over two months. I am highly confident Saco will be in an ever better financial position in the years to come.

2. Develop a feasibility study for co-location in City Hall and the City Hall Annex

The Council and the School Board approved moving forward with this discussion at the June 19th Council meeting (and subsequently the June 21st School Board meeting). Since that time, a group of staff from both School administration and staff from City Hall met with a facilitator to create a report and plan to incorporate both the School Administration and City Hall function in the two spaces. That report has been shared with the City Administrator and the Superintendent. We held off on moving this forward with our recommendations until after the transition of the new Council and School Board. We'll look to bring this to a joint meeting in January. Stay tuned.

3. **Acquire Council approval on a revised Comprehensive Plan and begin the process of revising the zoning ordinances.**

The draft changes have been made to the Comprehensive Plan and one public information session about all of the updates occurred on November 28th. There is another meeting scheduled for this evening December 5th, and there is a planning board public hearing on December 19th. The Planning Board will make its recommendation on the evening of the 18th and it move to Council starting in January. Timeline for zoning updates will begin with community focus groups in late winter /early spring and hopefully in front of Council before the end of the current fiscal year.

4. **Ensure all staff are offered a chance at some form of training and are given performance feedback in FY18**

I have met with all department heads to create performance goals for FY18 (except for new department heads – Finance, HR, and Parks and Recreation). These will be achieved before the end of the calendar year.

5. **Continue updating/revising City Policies and City Ordinances**

With the department head changes in Finance and Human Resources, it was quickly realized we needed to spend staff time creating procedure manuals for tasks in both functions. The idea that all information can be retained in staff memory sets us up for failure. This focus will shift back to policies and ordinances after the New Year.

6. **Negotiate 7 union contracts**

All seven union contracts expire on July 1st. We need to begin negotiations. Staff and I have begun the review process of the contracts and will bring some suggested changes to the Council's attention in executive session after the first of the year.

7. **Develop a stronger communication strategy (examples - at monthly council workshop – have two departments provide Council with a quick update on each departments activities; monthly update on activities happening in our community in the coming month; CC the agendas for all city committees to all of Council, etc.)**

Part of this effort has been achieved simply by promoting the Executive Assistant into the Marketing and Communications Specialist role. We've seen a major increase in our social media presence and she has stewarded through and awarded a marketing RFP to help promote our great City. In addition, departments have been presenting to the Council at meetings this past fall and we'll look to continue the educational tour into January with open houses at our different City Departments/Facilities.

Major Projects:

We have a lot on our plate and I am looking for Council's assistance in deciding what to prioritize or how to incorporate some of these into Council's goals. In no particular order, below is a list of items that are in the front of my mind – there are many more that were discussed as part of the Department presentations (which can be reviewed on the City Administrator's [webpage](#)) – I will pull those for the 12/11 meeting on Monday and have them as part of this list as well as some more detail for each of the items.

2017 - Quarter 4 efforts:

- Audit Report
- Bond Timeline + Project Coordination through 2019 + Grants
- Parks and Recreation Director Search
- Unit 91 Sale
- Comprehensive Plan
- Payroll Transition
- Succession Planning
- School Facilities Use Agreement
- Street Name Re-Addressing
- Strategic Marketing and Communications Plan
- Implementation of the CDBG with Shalom House
- Biddeford/Saco Advisory Group to Maine Water

2018 - Quarter 1 efforts:

- Goal Setting With Council
- Co-Location with School [Agreement + Implementation]
- Audit Report + Financial Policy
- Bond Timeline + Project Coordination through 2019 + Grants
- Succession Planning
- Complete Streets Policy for Main Street Redesign
- Union Contract Negotiations
- Development District Implementation
- Recreational Marijuana Ordinance
- Revisions to the Plastic Bag Ban
- Budget Process
- Fire Department Feasibility Study
- Emergency Management Plan Update
- Beach Management Plan

Camp Ellis Jetty Spur
Joint Council with Biddeford: Harbormaster & Dispatch
Update to the Comprehensive Plan
Payroll Transition
Saco Watershed Collaborative with Maine Water
Strategic Marketing and Communications Plan
Implementation of the CDBG with Shalom House
Zoning Updates Public Outreach and Engagement

2018 - Quarter 2 efforts:

Budget Process
Salary Matrix and Job Description Review
Union Contract Negotiations
Camp Ellis Jetty Spur
Streamlining Financial Processes
Implementation of the Strategic Marketing and Communications Plan
Short Term Rental Registrations (AirBnB)
Bond Timeline + Project Coordination through 2019 + Grants
Beach Management Plan [Implementation]
Zoning Updates

Conclusion:

There's a lot to do and it will take some heavy lifting by both the Council and City Staff to see much of this through. I hope by the end of the evening on the 11th, we have a game plan going into 2018.

Please take some time between now and Monday to consider changes you may have to Rules and Order of Business, as well as goals and priorities you would like to discuss as a group.

I look forward to a lively discussion and the development of not only our order of business but a united front on how to move ahead on all these positive initiatives!