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**Greetings from the All-America City of Lewiston:**

Each month, this report from the City Administrator's office provides a brief summary and update of major activities, events, projects, and programs that impact the community of Lewiston. Feel free to send your comments and suggestions.

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### Lewiston Council Opens Free Dump Days to All Residents

**2012 Clean-up Assistance Week is April 21 through April 28 at Lewiston's Solid Waste Facility located at 424 River Road**

**During this week only**, the City will waive tip fees and use of the Punch Pass. In addition to the facility's regular hours of operation (7:15 AM – 2:45 PM, Monday-Friday), **the Solid Waste Facility will be open on two Saturdays, April 21 and April 28, from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM.** The Solid Waste Facility will not be open on Sundays.

This assistance is for Lewiston residents only, and **proof of residence** (driver's license, tax receipt, and/or utility bill) **is required**. Failure to provide proof of residency may require the customer to pay for disposal of their waste material. Tip fees will not be waived for commercial accounts (this includes owners of multi-unit apartment buildings as defined in the City's Code of Ordinances.)

**All materials brought to the Solid Waste Facility for disposal must be separated, as follows:**

- **Bulky Waste:** Includes old furniture, carpeting, mattresses, etc.
- **Construction and Demolition Debris:** Includes, but is not limited to, building material such as plaster and lath, plumbing fixtures, insulation, asphalt, wall board, pipes, pressure treated wood, and metal conduits, etc. 
- **Wood (does not include pressure treated wood):** Includes demolition wood (free of metal, sheetrock, insulation, and other solid waste), brush and tree waste (does not include stumps), and wood furniture, etc.
- **Scrap Metal:** Appliances, such as stoves, dryers, washing machines, etc. Does not include engines, gear boxes, lawnmowers, or tanks (whether full or empty which contained chemicals or fuels) of any kind. 
- **Television/Computer Monitors (no more than seven per customer)**
- **Refrigerators/Freezers that contain refrigerant**
- **Four Tires** 
- **Two 20# Propane Tanks**

In addition, the Lewiston Public Works Department will collect brush (**butt ends to face the street; does not include stumps**), and **quantities are limited to no more than two standard pick-up truck loads.**

**Please Note: All brush to be collected by City staff must be curbside no later than Sunday, April 22.**

City staff will be collecting the curbside brush throughout the week. Once they have collected brush from a given street, they will not return to collect additional brush.

# CITY ADMINISTRATOR

## Council Priorities Established

At an all-day planning session, the Council established priorities and action items for the next two years. These include:

- **Budget:** Adopting budgets that keep property taxes stable, manage the City's debt, and maintain service levels, all on a long term basis.
- **Improve Housing City-Wide:** Support mixed-income residential development; provide incentives to increase owner-occupied properties; review and revise City loan programs; address parking requirements and winter parking rules; and assess the effectiveness of the additional position in Code Enforcement.
- **Downtown Redevelopment:** Review parking policies and improve the parking system; promote downtown living to downtown businesses and employees; improve City loan programs; establish design standards for new construction; coordinate with Riverfront Island Master Plan;
- **Riverfront Island Development:** Adopt a master plan; determine priority projects for remaining earmark funding; acquire the canal system; decide the future of Mill 5.
- **Strategic and Master Planning:** Integrate the City's strategic and comprehensive plans; review city-wide zoning on high traffic corridors, transitional and rural areas, and open space; include bike and pedestrian plans.
- **New School:** When appropriate, take a position on the location of a new school.
- **Marketing the City to Change Perceptions:** Develop a new brand and logo and a city marketing plan that dovetails with regional efforts; aggressively publicize positive stories.
- **Pursue Public/Private Redevelopment Efforts:** Identify existing properties that could benefit from early city involvement in pursuing redevelopment opportunities.

Other areas of interest included working with Auburn and other entities on regional economic development; improving collaboration with Auburn, local hospitals and education institutions, the Young Professionals of Lewiston and Auburn, the Visible Community, the immigrant community, and other major stakeholders; and promoting waste reduction and expanded recycling.

## Proposed FY13 Operating Budget Presented to Council

Excluding General Assistance, where great uncertainty remains (see last month's report), City revenues are down slightly from last year (0.4%) - a significant improvement over the last two years where revenues fell 15% and 5%. Proposed expenditures are up 1.8%, largely due to a \$1 million increase in capital expenditures for recurring items like street paving and vehicle replacement deferred in previous years. City debt service will drop by \$300,000 next year and by \$650,000 over the last two years. Assessed value is projected to increase by 27.7 million due expiring Tax Increment Financing Districts and the initial phases of CMP's Maine Power Reliability Project. While the School Department budget will not impact the tax rate, the proposal calls for a 19 cent or 0.75% increase. For a home assessed at \$150,000, property taxes would increase by just over \$19 per year. The proposed budget moves the City toward a more sustainable fiscal footing through managing debt, moving recurring and minor capital items into the budget, and relying on current revenues to cover current expenses. The Council will be meeting twice a week throughout April to review the proposed budget. The budget that will be adopted by Council in May will likely reflect numerous changes and adjustments.

## DEPUTY CITY ADMINISTRATOR | H.R. DIRECTOR

### **Union Contract Negotiations Update**

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the City Council approved the contract for the Lewiston Police Supervisory Unit. The contract covered a three-year period beginning July 1, 2010. No cost of living adjustment (COLA) was awarded for FY2010-11; 2% COLA was approved for FY2011-12 effective on 1/1/12 (full fiscal year equivalent of 1%); and 2% COLA was approved for FY2012-13, with a portion of the COLA cost offset by reduction in annual retirement benefit payments. Negotiations continue with the police patrol and firefighter units.

### **City-School Department Human Resources Merger**

The City Council approved an agreement which will lead to the merger of the City and School Department Human Resources (HR) departments. July 9, 2012 is the target date for the City's Human Resources staff to be relocated to the Dingley School Department building on Oak Street. The planned physical relocation of the city HR office will take approximately two days to complete. Newly appointed School Department Human Resources Director Jackie Little will oversee a staff of five people who will be providing services to some 1500 full and part-time city and school staff. Ms. Little's expertise will help to shape a new direction in a department that must deliver personnel services in an increasingly complex environment driven by a seemingly never-ending parade of new state/federal regulations and case law. I will continue to provide HR support in overseeing labor-management activities, workers compensation, and serving as the City's chief labor negotiator.

### **Proposed Changes in City-Wide Overnight Winter Parking Ban**

The Downtown Neighborhood Action Committee (DNAC) has been working on developing an alternative plan to amend the city-wide winter parking ban which prohibits overnight parking on essentially all city streets from December 1 through March 31 of each year. I have been working with City staff, the DNAC and wrecker representatives to develop a model that would allow for year-round overnight parking on streets. Under this new model, overnight parking would only be allowed on streets that do not have existing parking restrictions (e.g. restricted parking on one side of the street in the winter which would continue under this proposal). Additionally, new winter emergency parking ban language would provide for advance notice of a city-wide winter parking ban which would also result in towing violating vehicles to a new city impoundment lot. City staff estimates that this proposal will be ready for a City Council workshop sometime in early summer.

### **City Council Approves Bus/Truck Wash Grant Application**

The City Council approved a Council Order to authorize the Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee (LATC) to submit a Federal Transportation Administration grant application for a \$900,000 bus/truck wash facility. The grant will provide 80% of necessary funding. If the grant is approved, the City will be permitted to seek additional partners to participate in the program.

## ASSESSING

Due to favorable weather conditions, the Assessing Department was able to get an early start on the spring canvas for the 2012-13 tax year. This activity centered on review of new construction as well as field visits for personal property accounts.



### Large Construction Project

The Maine Power Reliability site off Larrabee Road was visited to determine the extent of work completed for the April 1, 2012 taxing date. The construction activity and sheer size of the substation is extremely impressive. This development represents the largest construction project in Lewiston since the Wal-Mart distribution facility in 2005.

### Exemptions

All applications for Homestead and Veteran Exemptions were due by April 1<sup>st</sup>. It is estimated, at this point, that over 6,400 homeowners will be eligible for the 2012-13 Homestead Tax Exemption.

*The above activity is part of the recurring work required on an annual basis to complete the tax roll.*

## FIRE

### L.F.D. Promotes Three in the Month of March

Chief Paul LeClair is proud to announce the promotions of John Daniels to the rank of Captain along with William "JR" Wallace and Kevin Roux to the rank of Lieutenant.



**John Daniels** began his career as a firefighter in May of 1985 and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in September of 1993. John holds an Associate's Degree from S.M.C.C., is a Certified Firefighter I & II Instructor and a member of the International Association of Arson Investigators. John also brings many years of experience to his newly promoted position as Captain. His new duties will include taking command of the fire scene and overseeing the ordering and maintenance of firefighting gear, clothing, and household supplies for the department.

**"JR" Wallace** joined the department in April of 2002. His firefighting credentials include: EMT-B, Certified Fire Officer II, Certified Fire Instructor II, Maine Fire Service Institute Instructor, Hazardous Materials Tech, Confined Space Rescue Tech and Wild Land Firefighter. Along with his many certifications, JR also brings a great enthusiasm to the workplace. His first assignment as Lieutenant is Central Station's Engine #7.



**Kevin Roux** began his City career with the Public Works Department in 1997. In September of 2000 Kevin joined the LFD and has served on numerous assignments. He has continued education in the field of Fire Science and has been a certified Peer Fitness Trainer for the department since 2008. Kevin's

dedication to the department along with his willingness to share his knowledge or lend a hand makes him a fine choice for his new position as Lieutenant. His first assignment will be at the Main Street sub-station, Engine #5.

## LIBRARY

### eBook Downloading & Borrowing

LPL cardholders with Kindles and other eReaders have been able to download and borrow eBooks through the Maine InfoNet Download Project for the last two years, however during the last month, LPL has been expanding eBook offerings by purchasing additional book titles which are only available to Lewiston patrons. During the last month 123 cardholders downloaded 250 eBooks through this service which **currently offers more than 3,000 eBook titles**. In the upcoming months the Library will be promoting this new service which should greatly expand the usage.



### Community Programs at LPL

During March several community programs were held in the Library. These included: a Job Skills Workshop conducted in partnership with the Maine State Library's Information Commons program; ArtVan Celebration and Family Party; Great Falls Forum featuring Kathie Leonard and Gene Geiger from the L/A Future Forum; St. Patrick's Day Irish Dance Event for families; and a World Community TB Awareness Day event which was co-sponsored with the Maine Center for Disease Control and the New Mainers Community Collaborative.



## PLANNING & CODE ENFORCEMENT

### Planning Board

On March 26<sup>th</sup> the Planning Board took the following action:

- Granted approval to Gendron Drive LLC to create a three lot residential subdivision at 91 Ferry Road with access to the new lots via an extension of Grande Avenue.
- The Board granted site plan review approval to the City of Lewiston to create twenty-two additional parking spaces at the Lewiston Memorial Armory at 65 Central Avenue. This parking is a component of the relocation of the Seniors Program from the Multi-Purpose Center to the Armory.
- The Board made a favorable recommendation to the Lewiston City Council to amend the political sign provisions contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code to authorize staff to remove political signs erected in violation of the Code.

## Dangerous Buildings

On March 20<sup>th</sup> the City Council made determinations that the vacant and dilapidated multi-family structures located at 10 College Street and 305 Bates Street are dangerous buildings within the meaning of Title 17 M.R.S. § 2851 and ordered that they be demolished. In the event that the owners and or parties of interest in these buildings do not appeal the Council Order of Condemnation and if they do not demolish these buildings, the City will take the necessary steps to cause their demolition.

## Permit Activity March 2012

- 29 Building Permits with a dollar value of \$11,898,928
- 6 Plumbing permits
- 23 Electrical permits

Note: the largest permit for March 2012 was for the Lewiston Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority with a reported building value of \$11,140,548.

## Permit Activity March 2011

- 26 Building Permits were issued with a dollar value of \$7,459,500 (two permits were issued for new single-family homes)
- 7 Plumbing Permits
- 24 Electrical Permits

Note: the largest building permit for March 2011 was the Veterans Outpatient Clinic at 15 Challenge Drive with a reported dollar value of \$7,459,500.

# POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Stats

March	2012
<b>Calls For Service</b>	3,623
<b>Vehicle Stops</b>	869
<b>Citations</b>	211
<b>Written Warnings</b>	520
<b>Verbal Warnings</b>	138
<b>Adult Arrests</b>	175
<b>Juvenile Arrests</b>	27
<b>Criminal Summons</b>	88
<b>Narcotics Arrests</b>	7
<b>OUI Arrests</b>	11
<b>Parking Tickets</b>	931

In the month of March, the Lewiston Police Department responded to 3,623 calls for service. The agency initiated 869 vehicle stops in the month of March resulting in 211 citations, 520 written warnings with the remaining stops resulting in verbal warnings. There were 175 arrests of adults and 27 juvenile arrests during this period as well as 88 criminal summonses issued. There were 7 arrests on narcotics violations and 11 arrests for operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The parking enforcement and patrol divisions issued 931 parking tickets in the month of March.

***Please join the Lewiston Police in congratulating the following for their recent promotions:***

**Lieutenant Kelly Hamel:** Lieutenant Hamel has been a member since 1985, and was recently promoted from the rank of Detective Sergeant. He is assigned at the Watch Commander on the Day Watch.

**Sergeant James Theiss:** Sergeant Theiss has been a member since 1990, and was recently promoted from the rank of Detective. He is assigned as the road supervisor on the Morning Watch.

**Detective Carly Conley:** Detective Conley has been a member since 2001, and was recently promoted from the rank of Patrol Officer where she was assigned as Domestic Violence Coordinator in our Youth and Family Services Unit. She is assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division Burglary Team.

**Officer Mike Dumond:** Officer Dumond has been a member since 2001, and was recently assigned from the Patrol Division to the Youth and Family Services Unit as the new Domestic Violence Coordinator.

## Community News

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, several members of the Police Department took part in a hockey game against Maine Fire: "Battle of the Badges". The game was to benefit a memorial to be placed at the site where Officer David Payne was shot and killed in the line of duty. Dave's parents traveled from New York to attend the game.

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Sergeant St. Pierre spent considerable time developing an emergency/safety response plan with Cianbro/Irby safety representatives in coordination with LFD Assistant Chief McKay and UAS Joe Lahood. Cianbro/Irby is the corporation doing the large-scale transmission line work throughout Lewiston and surrounding areas. All access points to their job sites were visited, many of which would present challenges if a response to a major emergency were to occur. Contact information, maps, and contingency plans were developed and distributed in the event of an emergency.

Several members of the department attended the Special Olympics swim meet recently held at the YWCA. The officers handed out medals to participants subsequent to the various events the Olympians participated in.



**Special Olympics**



Officer Craig Johnson attended the prescription drug take back planning meeting. **This event will take place on April 28th at Farwell School.** Officer Rousseau took the lead on a texting while driving awareness campaign at Lewiston High School. Students were also given the opportunity to use a driving simulator. Over 100 students participated.

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



**Wow! What a March! Can you believe 86 degrees in mid-March!!**

- Despite the warmth, we actually had three more plowable storms and five more salt/sanding events. All occurred in the first five days of the month, so it isn't surprising if you don't remember! This brought our winter total to about 65 inches. Seemed like a really nice winter, but we still got all that snow! Total of 11 plowable storms and 23 events when salt/sand trucks were deployed. **We expect to have more than \$90,000 in savings on overtime.**

- The Water & Sewer crew worked closely with Ted Berry Company to clean a 5,150 foot cross country 16 inch sewer force main from the Randall Road pump station to Webster Street. Foam 16" "bullets" (see photo) were pushed/pulled through the pipe to clean/remove material. This was a major project as the pipe had not been cleaned since it was installed in 1981. Remarkably, very little material was removed, but what was will improve the efficiency of the pumps and system.



*Here is a quick summary for other work done in March:*

### **Street/Road & Sidewalk Improvement Projects**

- Work on large construction projects is dormant for the winter, but design work continues. Gendron demolished two buildings to clear the way for the Main Street project expected to be advertised and awarded in the next month or two.
- In addition to responding to snow storms, the crews did:
  - ✓ Storm drain catch-basin clearing of snow & ice in prep for rain;
  - ✓ Storm drain catch-basin repairs at eight locations including man-hole & catch-basin repairs, cave-ins, and failure of a 42" storm pipe off Lincoln Street;
  - ✓ Sidewalk and street sweeping began on March 12<sup>th</sup>. This is early compared to previous years.
  - ✓ General patching at numerous locations. Our asphalt hotbox went out 18 of 20 workdays;
  - ✓ Big push to address tree removal and pruning with 20+ streets throughout the city addressed;
  - ✓ Replaced signs with 19 additional locations addressed.

### **Water, Sewer, and Stormwater**

- Phase 2 work on the Joint (Lewiston & Auburn Water District) UV Facility at Lake Auburn continues and will be completed this spring;
- Work on the Joint Chloramine Facility near the Central Maine Community College in Auburn is expected to be complete soon, and a follow-on contract is planned for this summer to relocate Lewiston's chloramine injection point from Main Street to this new facility;
- Hired two new employees to replace those who transferred to the Highway Division;
- Other work performed by the crews included:
  - ✓ Incredibly, there were no water main breaks or service leaks this month!
  - ✓ Responded to 21 citizen service requests;
  - ✓ Responded to 168 dig safe requests;
  - ✓ Responded to six sewer back-ups--four were private;
  - ✓ Crews conducted video inspections of sewer mains where construction is planned for this summer;
  - ✓ Crews continue to change out water meters within the system to meet the PUC requirements of the ten-year change over;
  - ✓ Ongoing hydrant sandblasting, and painting;
  - ✓ Ongoing water meter reading and water gate maintenance, cleaning, operating;
  - ✓ Ongoing maintenance of all reservoirs, pump stations, lift stations, cross country lines, and buildings;



- ✓ Ongoing water and sewer locates and ties for GPS mapping;
- ✓ Ongoing maintenance of tools and equipment, vehicles etc.;
- ✓ Ongoing curb box repairs for meter changes;
- ✓ Crews have been cleaning, raking, and trying to get everything ready within the water shed for the summer months including the installation of the boat dock.

### Other Information

- Engineering worked with the Purchasing Division to award the Oak Street Sewer/Stormwater Separation project to Gendron & Gendron for \$1,049,999.99 and the Jepson Brook CSO Separation Phase II project to St. Laurent & Sons Excavation for \$1,087,740.50;
- Work on the Lincoln Street Rehab project (Gully Brook to South Avenue) has resumed and is taking advantage of the great spring weather;
- The Public Buildings Division has work well underway at the Armory preparing for the relocation of the Seniors Program from the MPC. Demolition of the interior spaces is complete and electrical work is underway. The Planning Board approved the plans for the parking lot and rain garden. An elevator company was selected and approved for the building addition design-build contract which will be bid later this spring;
- Residential recycling rates remain strong for the previous five months as compared to the same times last year (up 67%). Revenue from the sale of single stream material is \$34,311 (year-to-date). The projected savings for providing recycling services to residents and businesses in Lewiston is \$77,000, when compared to FY2011;
- The Selco Baler, which was located at the Solid Waste Facility, was sold as surplus equipment to Recycling Mechanical, a broker of used equipment. The baler and conveyor were sold for \$48,000. During it's time in operation, the baler processed/baled approx. 2,875 tons/year of plastic containers and newspaper, corrugated cardboard, and other waste paper. Use of the baler was discontinued with the switch to Single Stream Recycling in July 2011;
- Roy's Logging returned to the Solid Waste facility property to continue the timber harvest begun last fall on areas adjacent to the secure and closed landfills. We expect revenues from sale of the timber to be \$50,000.



## RECREATION

### MPC Program Relocation

The department continues to implement plans for the relocation of the Multi-Purpose Center (MPC) programs, and meetings to the Armory. One significant program change took place in March--the relocation of the gymnastics equipment and program. The Lewiston Rec Department (LRD) staff is very grateful for the volunteer help the department received from the Gymnastics Team Parents Club! Several parents assisted with the loading, unloading and set up of the equipment.

## Armory Renovations

The Lewiston Senior Citizen (LSC) suite renovations are well underway which include: removing walls and framing the area--now in its final stages; one new bathroom has been framed, the other gutted; electricians are in the process of hardwiring the kitchen and kitchen appliances have been purchased. The LSC Board chose the carpet color as well as the color of the interior walls, which have been prepped for painting. The LSC Board and the LRD staff are very pleased with the renovation progress and are looking forward to the transition of their programs to the Armory.

## Gymnastics State Meet

The Lewiston Recreation Gymnastics Team and Parents Group hosted the 2012 YMCA Maine State Gymnastics Meet on Saturday, March 31 and Sunday, April 1, 2012 at the Armory. The Lewiston Team is coached by Diane Jordan and the team is affiliated with the Auburn YMCA for the purpose of team competition. Over 200 gymnasts completed from nine teams around the state including: Bangor, Bath, Central Lincoln County, Down East, Greater Rumford Community Center-Rumford, Old Town (Orono), Oxford Hills, Waterville and Lewiston.



**The Lewiston Recreation Gymnastics Team received the 2012 Pine Tree Cluster YMCA Gymnastics Sportsmanship Award.** This award is given each year in memory of Woody Appleton to recognize the gymnastics team that demonstrates good sportsmanship.

This event was also successful because of the generous donations and support by local vendors and businesses that purchased an ad in the State Meet program book, gave food donations, raffle prizes of gifts or services and purchased banner advertisement. Their help and support of youth programs in the community is to be commended.

## Batting Cages



The softball and baseball cages were installed for the early spring indoor batting practices. Reservations began at the end of February for the season through mid-May.

## Charitable Funding Applications

Fourteen charitable funding applications were received as of March 12th. The non-profit organizations are seeking in-kind support for their events from the City relative to city properties, resources, assets and/or departments.

## March Transition

March is a transition month for the department--most winter program manuals and materials are now stored for another season, as we prepare for the upcoming spring and summer programs. Spring athletic field scheduling is near completion and the scheduling of parks by many non-profit organizations is starting to peak.

## Upcoming Spring and Summer Events

The department received several exciting inquiries from non-profit organizations regarding their upcoming spring and summer park events throughout the City.

### Armory Events/Activities Scheduled:

Travel basketball 5/6 <sup>th</sup> practices	L.A.Y.C. Cheering practices
Adult basketball	L.E.A.P. Activities – Armory
Batting cages	Color guard marching practices
Gymnastics classes	Auburn Exchange Club – Gun Show
Softball meetings	AFSCME Union meeting
State meet–gymnastics	Lewiston Senior Citizens Board meeting

### MPC Events/Activities Scheduled:

Co-ed Volleyball games	Marine Corps meeting
South Lewiston Little League tryouts	Veterans Post 22 meeting
Gymnastics classes	L/A Cash Coalition tax preparation
Longley School activities	Lewiston Democrats monthly meeting
L.A.Y.C. cheering practices	Prime-Time After-School program
Just Us rehearsal	Youth T-Ball classes
L/A Veterans meeting	Lewiston Republicans meeting
Big Brothers/Big Sisters activities	Association Canado Americanne A.C.A
Franco-American War Veterans meeting	L/A Forestry Board meeting
Basketball practice	VFW 9150
Androscoggin Head Start event	

## SOCIAL SERVICES

### ALL GENERAL ASSISTANCE CLIENTS ARE SEEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

*Beginning with the new fiscal year, July 1, 2011, our reimbursement from the state will start at the 50% rate. Once we reach our threshold, we will begin receiving reimbursement at the 90% rate. **We will reach the 90% reimbursement mid April 2012.***



<b>Statistical Activity</b>	<b>March 2012</b>	<b>FYTD 7/1/2011-6/30/2012</b>
<i>Office Traffic (Duplicated)</i>	683	5,988
<i>New Clients</i>	51	595
<i>Households Served (OT) (Unduplicated)</i>	225	553
<i>Housing Expenditures</i>	\$77,884.00	\$ 599,966.88
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$88,664.42</b>	<b>\$697,336.85</b>
<i>State Reimbursement</i>	<b>\$44,212.96 (50%)</b>	<b>\$348,193.59 (50%)</b>
<i>SSI Reimbursement</i>	\$ 118.50	<b>\$ 48,729.68</b>
<i>Other Reimbursements</i>	\$ 0	<b>\$ 711.23</b>
<b>Actual Municipal GA Cost (net)</b>	<b>\$44,332.96</b>	<b>\$299,702.35</b>
<b>Workfare</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>FYTD 7/1/2011-6/30/2012</b>
<i>Cases (unduplicated)</i>	<b>81</b>	<b>203</b>
<i>Clients (unduplicated)</i>	<b>102</b>	<b>263</b>
<i>Hours Performed</i>	<b>3,440</b>	<b>27,335.40</b>
<i>Dollar Value (\$7.50 per hour)</i>	<b>\$25,800.00</b>	<b>\$205,015.50</b>
<i>Percentage of Cases Assigned Workfare</i>	36%	37%

- *Able-bodied recipients are required to participate in the workfare program. The number of hours assigned are calculated by dividing the amount of assistance the recipient receives by minimum wage.*

### **PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Governor's 2<sup>nd</sup> Supplemental budget contained a variety of proposals that would impact the GA program. The final proposals were approved by the House and Senate on 4/12/2012, and the proposals are expected to be enacted by both the House and Senate on 4/13/2012. The Governor has publicly

stated that he will not sign the bill, particularly because it ignores welfare reform. Below are the GA proposals that are expected to become law:

- Beginning July 1, 2012 until June 30, 2013, the GA maximum levels of assistance will be reduced by 10%.
- Beginning July 1, 2012 until June 30, 2013, households will be limited to receiving housing assistance for a period of nine months; except if a person has a severe and persistent mental or physical condition or has an application pending with the Social Security Administration, housing will not be limited.
- The state reimbursement rate for municipalities that exceed their threshold (based on property valuations) will be reduced from 90 to 85%. Lewiston will be impacted by this reduction.
- A work group will be established to review and make recommendations related to the GA program. The work group must have its first meeting no later than June 1, 2012 and the DHHS Commissioner must report back to the legislature no later than December 1, 2012. The report will include recommendations regarding law or rule making related to the GA program, including changes that will achieve \$500,000 in General Fund savings from January 1, 2013 – June 30, 2013.
- A pilot program will be established whereby funding will be allocated for seven Family Independent Specialist positions to assist applicants in applying for SSI benefits, and to assist veterans in accessing cash or medical benefits from the Veterans Administration. The positions are established through June 15, 2014 and the program is expected to generate revenue for the GA program. The revenue will more than pay for the cost of the positions.

<b><i>Length of Time Clients Receive GA</i></b>	<b>1-3 MONTHS</b>	<b>4 -6 MONTHS</b>	<b>7-12 MONTHS</b>	<b>MORE THAN 12 MONTHS</b>
<b>FY 2011</b> 7/1/2010-6/30/2011	<b>65%</b> (36% received GA for only 1 month)	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>10 Year Prior History</b> 7/1/00-6/30/10	<b>72%</b> (45% received GA for only 1 month)	<b>13%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>6%.</b>

- Approximately 35% of GA clients have SSI pending. These clients are mentally and/or physically disabled and require GA for longer periods of time. These clients tend to cycle in and out of GA throughout the years.

### **FRAUD CASES AND REIMBURSEMENT MONIES**

The City of Lewiston's Social Services Department is aggressively referring fraud cases and pursuing reimbursement monies.

- General Assistance clients who commit fraud - those who attempt to receive GA and those who actually receive GA - are disqualified from receiving GA benefits throughout the state for

120 days. All cases are reported to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The cases that are receiving the DHHS Food Supplement are disqualified from receiving the Food Supplement for the 120 day GA disqualification period.

- The cases involving clients who have actually received General Assistance by fraudulent means are reported to the DHHS and to the Lewiston Police Department (LPD) for potential prosecution.

For the calendar year 1/1/2011-12/31/2011, the GA office referred 33 cases involving clients who received general assistance fraudulently. This constituted only 5% of the total GA cases that were assisted, but the amount of money that was fraudulently received was in excess of \$50,000.00. An Androscoggin County jury recently handed up an indictment for one of the referred cases.

- From September 2011 - December 2011, the City of Lewiston's GA office was reimbursed approximately \$18,550.00 from three Supplemental Social Security (SSI) recipients who were referred to the LPD in calendar year 2011 for committing fraud (the entire amount of \$18,550.00 was not fraudulently received). All clients who receive GA and have SSI pending, sign an agreement to have the Social Security Administration (SSA) reimburse the municipality when the clients receive their retro-active lump sum SSI payment.

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