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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

Sustaining Community Award

The City of Lewiston received a "Sustaining Community Award" from Coastal Enterprises Inc. (CEI) on February 15, 2011. The City was praised for its long-standing and productive relationship with CEI, not only in housing and economic development projects, but in support of the programs/outreach CEI promotes such as the IDA Program, Youthbuild, the Earned Income Tax Credit, business development with local immigrants, support for StartSmart, work with New American entrepreneurs, and a forward, progressive approach to planning, community inclusion, and social equity.



Free Tax Preparation

The Lewiston-Auburn CASH Coalition, which Lewiston has led since 2004, is well underway with **FREE tax preparation sites** at the Multi-Purpose Center in Lewiston and Auburn City Hall. The Coalition encourages eligible low-to-moderate income residents to file for the **Earned Income Tax Credit**, a Federal tax credit for those who work--the Federal government's largest anti-poverty initiative. An eligible individual filing a 2010 Federal return could receive a tax credit ranging from \$457 - \$5,666. The Coalition also introduces LMI individuals to financial education opportunities, such as budgeting, home ownership, understanding credit scores, and savings. Those who would like a free tax preparation appt. with IRS-certified volunteers e-filing both Federal & State returns may call **513-3160** to schedule an appointment (*open through March 31st*). The chart below shows the impact the Coalition's outreach has had from 2004-2010. The Coalition has facilitated the return of over \$10 million in refunds to Lewiston-Auburn area residents. To visit the Coalition's web site, go to www.lewistonmaine.gov and click on the EITC link under "**Special Notices.**"



EITC - 2004 - 2010

Tax Season	Federal Refunds	Federal EITC Amount	State Refunds	# Served at Tax Sites
2010	\$1,911,000	\$370,888	\$584,000	1314
2009	\$1,889,237	\$638,746	\$335,637	1194
2008	\$1,537,994	\$624,379	\$285,985	1104
2007	\$1,362,269	\$537,502	\$249,463	990
2006	\$958,722	\$410,306	\$175,221	748
2005	\$536,562	\$251,082	\$96,896	397
2004	\$506,688	\$262,416	0*	336
TOTALS	\$8,702,472	\$3,095,319	\$1,727,202	6083

Note: Didn't Track State First Year.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Fiscal Year 2012 Budget

The City's various departments have submitted their requested budgets for the coming year. Finance and Administration have met with each department to review their requests and begin the process of formulating the annual budget to be presented to the City Council in March.

While many uncertainties exist, certain factors will significantly affect the budget. On the revenue side, these include:

- A relatively flat overall assessed value given the continuing slow down in construction due to the economy
- Flat auto excise taxes
- Further reductions in personal property taxes due to the state's decision to exempt much of this property from taxation and to scale back reimbursements to municipalities for lost taxes
- The Governor's budget proposal to continue to cap the municipal revenue sharing program at a level where the City will receive \$2 million less than called for under the traditional distribution formula
- Small reductions in other City revenues, again reflecting economic conditions.

On the expenditure side:

- We saw a 15% increase in employee health insurance costs in January of this year and anticipate a further increase next January
- The State Retirement System has also increased the required percentage contribution from the City for covered employees. (Note that the City's state retirement system is separate from the State's and is funded at over the 90% level.) This increase is intended to maintain adequate funding and avoid the unfunded liability problem the state now faces
- An increase in debt service related to some technical issues on how our debt is structured as well as additional recent bond issues.

While these factors are known, other uncertainties remain such as the impact of the Governor's proposals to modify the General Assistance, or local welfare, program. Some of these proposals might reduce local costs; others, including his proposal to reduce state reimbursements to those communities with significant welfare expenditures, could increase costs.

When all is said and done, however, it's clear that next year will again be a challenge for everyone. The budget process will begin in earnest in late March and continue until mid-May. The Council will carefully review the proposed budget on a department by department basis. As always, the Council both seeks and will welcome public comments as this process moves forward.

DEPUTY CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Interviews for New Assistant Fire Chief

The city launched its interview process to select a new Assistant Fire Chief this month. The plan is to conduct at least two interview sessions with candidates with the goal of possibly selecting an Assistant Fire Chief no later than March. If a candidate is selected, the Fire Chief will provide more information about the selection in his March 2011 report.



Preparing for Upcoming Budget and Union Negotiations

Now that Governor LePage has released his budget, the City Administrator's Office will begin to prepare preliminary budget estimates to share with the elected officials, union representatives and city employees in advance of union negotiations. These meetings are intended to share some early information on the budget process. Three extended contracts will expire on June 30th, and the city remains engaged with three other unions whose contracts expired on June 30, 2010.

MPRP Transmission Line Right-of-Way Clearing Begins



Calvin L Beaumier, Communications Specialist for the Maine Power Reliability Project, has notified the city that clearing of the transmission line from the Greene town line to the Larabee Road substation will begin in February. Mr. Beaumier is scheduled to contact all abutting property owners and will leave a door hanger with contact info.

MPRP "Lewiston Loop" Project Application Denied by PUC

The media widely reported that the Maine Public Utilities Commission denied the Lewiston portion of CMP's Maine Power Reliability Program (MPRP). That was inaccurate. After months of review, the Public Utilities Commission voted on March 1st to deny the application for the portion of the MPRP in Lewiston referred to as the "Lewiston Loop." This portion of the project would have relocated and upgraded CMP's substation on Main Street (in the parking lot of Pedro O'Hara's) to Middle Street and would have introduced a new 115kv line that would have extended from the new sub-station on Middle Street, down Canal Street terminating at the CMP sub-station located on the backside of Grimmels Gasoline Station on Lisbon Street. The PUC denial was unanimous but "without prejudice" which means that CMP can continue to pursue the project without having to restart the entire process. What CMP must do, however, is provide the evidence needed to convince the PUC that this project improves power reliability for Maine ratepayers and demonstrate that the proposed system enhancements involve the least possible cost to Maine residents and businesses. More to come.

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ASSESSING

Homestead Exemption

February activity in the assessing office was highlighted by a concerted effort to contact eligible Lewiston property taxpayers to file for the Homestead Tax Exemption program. The office identified potential recipients and mailed out 795 homestead applications. To date, 250 homestead applications have been filed with the Assessing office. The estimated savings for these taxpayers approximates \$50,000. These new homestead applicants are in addition to the current 6,550 holders of the homestead exemption. In 2010, the total tax savings under this program amounted to \$1,330,960.



Veteran's Exemption



In conjunction with Auburn, Lewiston also published the annual assessing notice advising eligible Veterans and homestead applicants to apply for these exemptions by April 1, 2011. In 2010, 1,028 Veteran exemptions were granted in Lewiston for Veterans or their widows. The total tax savings was \$128,016. In order to be eligible for the Veteran's exemption, the applicant must meet the requirements established by the State of Maine including having served in a federally recognized war period. Information on eligibility requirements is available through the Maine Revenue Service website or by contacting the Lewiston assessing office.

The Assessing Department is continuing the four-year review of real estate and yearly personal property inspections.

CLERKS

Preparation for Municipal Election

Instructions for nomination papers were completed and posted on the website and a press release was issued regarding registration deadlines for the Mayor's race.

Dog Licensing



By state law, a \$25 late fine goes into effect for any dogs licensed after January 31. Busy with owners licensing their pets late.

During the month of February, a review session was held with the City Administrator and Finance Director regarding the FY12 budget. In preparation for the Energov training session during the first week of March, the office staff uploaded the entire business licensing database. Meetings were held with the Mayor to complete all of the pending appointments to the various city boards and committees and notification was sent to citizens and related departments of their appointments.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Update on Downtown Projects!

As “construction season” gets into full swing again, it is time to provide an update on what folks should expect to see as they travel around downtown Lewiston:

81 Ash Street Senior Housing

Located on the corner of Ash and Bates Street, the former Healy Asylum (most recently known as the Intown Manor) has begun to be renovated into a 32-unit affordable housing complex for seniors. The \$8.7 million project will utilize Federal and State Historic Tax Credits as well as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits in order to bring this downtown monument back to life. It is expected to open for occupancy in late 2011 or early 2012.



Tedford Housing

Construction is nearing completion on the Tedford Housing 10-unit apartment complex at the corner of Pine and Blake Streets. This facility will provide permanent supportive housing for up to ten homeless families. While it is uncommon to see people living “on the street” in Lewiston, unlike some larger cities, there is a substantial population of individuals and families that lack a permanent residence. The Tedford project will help provide supportive housing to assist some families in this difficult situation. This project is also partnered with a similar project in Auburn in which the Twin Cities have shared involvement. The Blake Street project is expected to open in summer 2011.

NSP Projects

Three projects funded through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) are underway, and a fourth is about to start in earnest. On both Ash and Pine, the City is investing NSP funds in the redevelopment of previously abandoned buildings for low to middle income homeownership and/or rental. The City has partnered with Community Concepts on these projects, and they are now renovated and on the market for sale. Sale proceeds from these properties will be returned to the City to allow us to consider other NSP projects going forward.

84 Lisbon Street

A complete renovation is under way using NSP funds at 84 Lisbon Street. This important building sat vacant for many years after numerous unsuccessful attempts to finance a rehab. The one-time influx of NSP funds allowed the City to partner with local business owner Jules Patry to re-develop this property. When completed this summer, it will feature five high-end apartments for middle income individuals or families along with commercial space on the 1st floor. It will once again be a signature building on Lisbon Street.



Androscoggin Mill Block – Corner of Park & Maple Streets

Finally, work is ready to get underway on the Androscoggin Mill Block building on the corner of Park and Maple Streets. This building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, has been vacant for over 20 years due to the exceptionally high costs of renovating it to historic standards. When the City received its NSP allotment, it solicited an RFP for rehab of the property. Coastal Enterprises, Inc., the successful proposer, recently received final approval from the State Historic Preservation Office to begin renovations, and they are eager to get underway! Passers-by will soon notice a flurry of exciting activity on this corner as the building is turned into two large condominium units for sale, likely some time in 2012.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Concepts Coming to Town

For those driving after dark on Bates Street by Kennedy Park, the lights have been on as construction workers press to finish their work on Community Concepts' new 16,000 s.f. office building. First conceived in 2004, the building was initially planned for the corner of Maple and Park Streets. Neighborhood residents expressed concern about the location and suggested the former St. Dominic's High School site as an alternative. The City participated in the acquisition and demolition of the former school. Financing for the office building was challenging, but in the interim Community Concepts built 30 units of affordable senior housing, opened in 2007, on a portion of the site.



Like Old Buildings? Take Action.



In 2008, the Maine legislature passed progressive Historic Preservation Tax Credit legislation creating a 25% tax credit for eligible rehabilitation expenses of revenue generating commercial properties that are listed on the National Register. The regulations associated with the Maine credit mirror those of the federal historic tax credit. Combined, these credits allow up to 45% of renovation costs to be offset. If the income producing property includes affordable housing, the Maine tax credit increases to 30%. With this new legislation, the cap on the Maine tax credit increased from \$100,000 per project to \$5 million.

Since 2008, this program has helped finance \$125 million in renovation projects including two coming to Lewiston: the Healey Asylum and the Lofts at Bates Mill. These projects would not be financially feasible without these tax credits.

When first drafted, the legislation was considered an experiment and a sunset provision was written into law where the tax credit would expire in 2013.

The experiment has proven successful. It has generated significant development activity and supported construction jobs during the worst recession since the 1930's. The Maine Legislature is considering two bills to extend the tax credit, LD 260 and LD 742. LD 260 would extend it for six years. LD 742 would eliminate the sunset entirely. If you care about this legislation, be in touch with your legislators.

FIRE

Fire Department Retirements

The month of February brought many changes to the LFD with the retirement of three long standing members of the department.

Assistant Chief George Merrill: George joined the department in 1985 and served as a Private until his promotion to Lieutenant of Engine #3 in 1995. On September 2nd, 2003 George was promoted to the newly created position of Battalion Chief. As Battalion Chief, George was in charge of the department's Fire Prevention and Training Divisions. On March 1st, 2006 George was promoted to the rank of Assistant Chief which he held until his retirement on February 28, 2011 after nearly 26 years of service. George was an active member of the LFD Color Guard, the Maine Fire Chief's Association, and he currently serves as the President of the Androscoggin County Firefighters Association.



Captain Laurier Morin: In his 40th year of service with the Lewiston Fire Department, Fire Captain Laurier Morin made the very difficult decision to retire from a job he loved. In 1971, Larry entered the department as a Private and was the sole remaining member of the department to have been stationed at "The Old Central Station" located on the corner of Ash and Bates Street. (The current Central Station was completed in 1973.) Larry held the position of Lieutenant from 1986 until he was promoted to Captain on December 1st, 1993. With the retirement of Captain Morin, a piece of this community's history, as well as the many stories he can tell, leave with him.



Private Gerard Rioux: On February 28th, Gerry retired from the LFD with 25 years of service as a firefighter. He joined the department on May 8th, 1986 and served in his position on numerous apparatus with his final assignment on Engine #3, the Lisbon Street Sub-station.



We want to sincerely wish George, Larry and Gerry a long, happy, and healthy retirement. They take with them over 90 years of dedicated service to this department and to the citizens of the Lewiston Community. Thank you, gentlemen, for a job well done.



678 Old Green Road Structure Fire

On the evening of February 2, 2011, a structure fire destroyed a home located @ 678 Old Green Road. Over a foot of snow and sub zero temperatures presented firefighters with many challenges. The home was located outside of the city's hydrant district, and the Incident Commander enlisted the assistance of Mutual Aid Water Tenders from the towns of Greene, Sabattus, Wales, and Lisbon. Firefighting and water shuttling operations continued into the next morning as firefighters worked to extinguish the fire that had spread through too many concealed

spaces in the home. The lone occupant at the time of the fire escaped without injury; however, a family pet perished in the blaze.

LIBRARY

Jacques d'Amboise

One of America's leading cultural and arts figures, Jacques d'Amboise, will be speaking at LPL's Callahan Hall on Wednesday, March 30 at 7 pm. Jacques was a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet in the 1950's, 60's, and 70's, and he went on to found the National Dance Institute, a highly-acclaimed dance education program based in NYC. d'Amboise has roots in Lewiston—his mother lived in Lewiston in the early 1900's -- and he still has several family members living in the area. His autobiography, *I Was a Dancer*, was recently published. He will be reading from the book and showing videos from his career.



Lewiston-Auburn Film Festival

The Library's Callahan Hall was selected as one of the film venues for the Lewiston-Auburn Film Festival which is debuting on Saturday, April 2. The exact schedule has not yet been set, but a listing of films to be shown is on their website at www.lafilmfestival.org

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program Grant

LPL will receive a technology upgrade and facelift thanks to the Maine State Library's recent receipt of a federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant. Lewiston has been selected as one of 11 regional hubs and will be receiving video conferencing equipment for use by the Library and other community organizations. Library staff will be trained to assist the public in using this technology to find resources on employment, legal issues, and other information needed in their daily lives. In addition, the funding will provide new computers for the Library's Computer Lab.

eResources at the Library



Digital music downloads are the latest electronic offering for LPL cardholders. Through the Freegal service, members can download music in a wide variety of genres, from country to classical! Other e-services available at the Library website (LPOnline.org) include: downloadable eBooks, downloadable audiobooks, and a wide range of premium databases that provide full-text magazines, journals, books, and more. For more details, visit the Library website or call the Reference Desk at 513-3135.

PLANNING & CODE ENFORCEMENT

Preventing and Eradicating Bed Bugs



On February 4th, LA Public Health sponsored a forum for professionals including landlords of multi-unit buildings, exterminators, public building managers, hospital and healthcare providers, and social service providers regarding bed bug infestations in Maine. This well-attended forum was conducted at Bates College and, after the keynote address, there were several breakout sessions. Code Enforcement Officer Tom Maynard was one of three panelists on the legal breakout session along with Matt Dyer, Esq. of Pine Tree Legal and Robert Guillory, Esq. of Shankman & Associates Legal Center. Tom is something of a bedbug expert, and his insights on this less pleasant topic from the perspective of a code enforcement official were very well received.

Atwood Street Rezone

On January 18th, the City Council directed planning staff to work with the Planning Board to develop a proposal to rezone the area bounded by Sabattus Street, Old Greene Road, Atwood Street, and Garcelon Street. The Planning Board engaged in substantial discussions of this request on February 14th and 28th with the desire of establishing zoning that would offer protection to the owners of properties on both sides of Atwood Street while allowing the Sabattus Street commercial zone to expand. The Board was very concerned with the impact of a rezoning on Atwood Street, and they discussed some creative ideas that would allow some commercial activity while ensuring that the residential character of Atwood Street is preserved to some degree. The Board is searching for a solution to this rezoning request that could be a model for similar areas across the City. The Board also made it very clear to staff that it does not wish to rush this matter since getting this wrong is unacceptable given the potential consequences.

VA Outpatient Clinic

On February 28th, the Planning Board granted approval to SGC Engineering on behalf of Summit Smith Healthcare Facilities to develop the property at 15 Challenger Drive where a 32,200 square foot single-story community based outpatient clinic is planned to be leased and operated by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs. This will be a taxable property and is projected to be completed by the end of 2011.

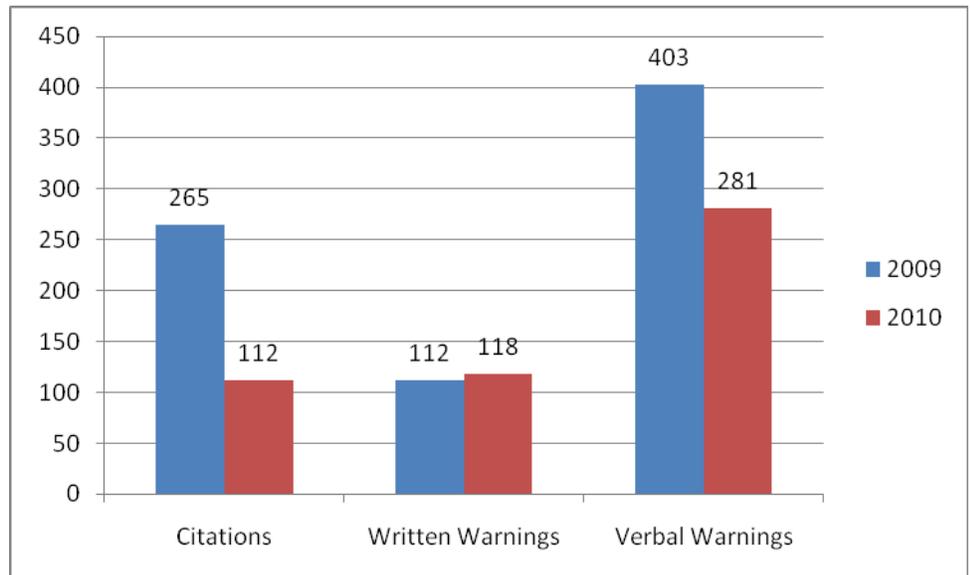


POLICE DEPARTMENT

Stats

In February, the Police Department responded to 3,253 Calls for Service and initiated 530 vehicle stops resulting in 184 citations and 143 written warnings with the remaining stops resulting in verbal warnings. There were 153 adult arrests and 7 juvenile arrests during this period as well as 82 criminal summonses issued. There were 17 arrests on narcotics violations and 8 arrests for operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The parking enforcement and patrol divisions issued 813 parking tickets in the month of February.

February	2011
Calls For Service	3253
Vehicle Stops	530
Citations	184
Written Warnings	143
Verbal Warnings	203
Adult Arrests	153
Juvenile Arrests	7
Criminal Summonses	82
Narcotics Arrests	17
OUI Arrests	8
Parking Tickets	813



Events & Activities

The Androscogin COBRA Haz-Mat Team has relocated from the old Lincoln St. Fire Station to the Public Works Operations Center on River Rd. This will result in significant savings in utilities since the Lincoln St. station will no longer be heated.

Sergeant Marc Robitaille was promoted to Lieutenant and will be assigned to the Morning Watch. Detective Trevor Campbell was promoted to Sergeant and will also be assigned to Morning Watch. Sgt. Rob Ullrich has been transferred to the Community Resource Team to fill the vacancy left by Lt. Robitaille's promotion. Lt. Mike McGonagle has rotated to fill the vacancy as Lieutenant of the Criminal Investigations Division.

The Criminal Investigative Division hosted training conducted by the Maine State Police Crime Lab on Collection and Packaging DNA from crime scenes. Members of area departments attended and it was simulcast from our training room to the Mechanic Falls Police Department.

PUBLIC WORKS

Winter Operations

- February was a very busy month for snow with 40 additional inches of the white stuff bringing our winter total to 90.5 inches! During the 28 days, we had 11 sanding/salting events and 7 storms requiring deployment of our plow crews. We also had about half our Highway crew working nights to remove snow from the gutters and sidewalks in the City. Our in-house crews have removed and hauled to the River Rd Operations Center about 80,000 cubic yards of snow. To visualize this, if you put that snow on a football field, the pile would be 45 feet high!
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- As of the end of February ~65% of our budget for snow removal has been spent. We still have March and April to go before we can count on winter being over, but as of now, the budget appears to be okay. If we continue to get the # and size of storms we saw in February-that will be an issue.

Water, Sewer and Stormwater

- Work is ongoing on the ~\$8 million UV water treatment facility at Lake Auburn and the City Council approved award of the contract for Phase 2. Work on Phase 2 will begin later this spring.
- We experienced 2 water service leaks and 2 water main leaks including two major breaks (Sabattus St & Lisbon St) requiring significant traffic control.
- We tested 224 water meters, and changed out 94.
- We spent a huge amount of time removing snow from 750 hydrants, all sewer lift stations, water pump stations, and reservoirs after each of the 7 storms. Replaced 10 hydrants hit by plows or vehicles.
- Responded to 15 sewer back-ups (7 were private), 40 utility Dig-Safe locates and 29 Customer concerns.

Public Buildings

- Work continues on the building relocated from the Pettingill School to the Solid Waste Facility and we hope to occupy it by the end of March.
- The Police Department relocation of their folks from the former Lincoln St sub-station out to share space at the PW Operations Center was completed with only minor items remaining. The Fire Dept is temporarily storing one of their engines at Lincoln St until it can be sold. Lincoln Street will be winterized and closed saving the City ~\$10,000 / year in operational costs.
- We are working on the contract for the emergency generator for City Hall, which will help us continue operations during power outages. Funding for this is from a Homeland Security grant.

Other Work

- Budget – Between snowstorms and other requirements, we continued preparing and reviewing the budget with Administration and the Finance Department. Work on the budget will continue with Administration and the City Council through this spring.
- Another item making news for the month was the Beech St Bridge. This bridge is not owned or maintained by the City; however, a recent inspection identified significant deterioration of the structural steel supporting the bridge since its last inspected in 2007. To address Public Safety concerns, the City posted a new bridge with a 2 ton weight limit based on an analysis performed by an independent engineer.
- Avon Mill Demolition – The Mill is down! What a huge difference this makes in the visibility at the intersection of Locust and Lincoln Sts! The road improvements at the intersection are planned to be completed this summer.
- We received bids on handling and recycling single stream material beginning July 1. The contract will be awarded soon so that everything's in place when we go live in July. We are planning an education campaign to let residents know what they will be able to recycle and how. Residents will find this process much easier than the current system of separating materials. Plus, it's less expensive for the City!

RECREATION

Notable News

Maine Junior Ski League – Middle School Awards Banquet



Auburn Middle School and the Auburn Ski Association received the bid to host the Maine Junior Ski League-Middle School Awards Banquet held at the Lewiston Memorial Armory. We were very excited and honored to be part of this event. Over 500 youth and adults attended from throughout the state middle school system.

103rd International Snowshoe Championship

The 103rd International Snowshoe Championship was held at the Armory and the L.A.P. The event was hosted by the La Paresseaux Snowshoe Club of Rumford. Over 200 people from Canada and the Northeast participated in this day-long event.



SOCIAL SERVICES

ALL GENERAL ASSISTANCE CLIENTS ARE NOW SEEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.

Scheduling appointments has reduced walk-in traffic.

The full-time receptionist has been reduced to a part-time position effective 2/1/11.

Statistical Activity	February 2011	FYTD 7/1/2010-6/30/2011
Office Traffic (Duplicated)	593	5,640
New Clients	53	535
Households Served (OT) (Unduplicated)	213	1,717
Housing Expenditures	\$60,830.00	\$523,887.00
Total Expenditures	\$69,713.10	\$603,393.51
State Reimbursement	\$34,824.05 (50%)	\$300,548.13
SSI Reimbursement	\$ 1,549.70	\$ 14,856.96
Other Reimbursements	\$ 65.00	\$ 2,297.36
Actual Municipal GA Cost (net)	\$33,274.35	\$285,691.06
Workfare	February 2011	FYTD 7/1/2010-6/30/2011
# of cases	100	296
# of people	122	393
Hours Performed	3,931.50	28,830.80
Dollar Value (\$7.50 per hr)	\$29,486.25	\$216,231.00

Workfare Program

All able-bodied recipients are required to participate in the work-fare program. The number of hours assigned are calculated by dividing the amount of assistance the recipient receives by minimum wage.

Improving Accountability

On behalf of the City of Lewiston, the Social Services Department, in conjunction with the Maine Welfare Directors Association, has submitted bills to the legislature that are aimed at improving and building accountability into the GA program.

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