

City of Sanford



**From the Desk of
Steven R. Buck
City Manager**



Memorandum

To: City Council
Subject: Manager's Report for January 19th, 2016
Date: January 19th, 2016

Legislative Updates:

LD 1537 The Bi-Partisan Drug Bill

The Appropriations Committee reported out this bill on Tuesday, but the vote was split 9-4. All Democrats and the Senate Republicans supported the bill, the House Republicans opposed. The House Republicans offered a minority report that includes many of the items in the bill, but allows the Department of Public Safety to manage those items the Majority would send to the Attorney General and uses a different funding source. That split leaves the long-term prospects of the bill up in the air. It is expected to be voted as soon as Thursday, 1/14.

Both versions of the bill will include the 10 bed detox center in northern or eastern Maine (originally specified as Bangor).

I expect a significant drug bill will pass before they're done this year, but it's likely this bill gets hung up and a different bill is finally passed.

LD 1475 An Act to Facilitate the Use of State Education Subsidies

This is Sen. Millett's bill to allow increases in state funding approved after municipalities finalize their school budgets to be spent without an additional referendum. It allows schools to spend such funds as long as they pass a warrant describing how such funds might be spend. I testified in support along with MSMA, MEA, and the MPA.

I did offer a suggested amendment that came out of the Coalition discussion last Friday. Those present ask that the bill specify for municipal school units that the local council have to approve the use of any new funds. I offered the idea to Committee and they gave it a respectful hearing, but I don't expect it to be adopted. I spoke to a couple members and they said the Council will have an opportunity to shape how any such funds will be used when they craft the Warrant article required by the bill.

Surprisingly, MMA testified against the bill in its entirety. The Dept of Education didn't testify, although they apparently submitted written comments (I haven't seen them yet).

LD 1465 MaineCare Reimbursement for Ambulance Services

This bill has a public hearing today before the Health and Human Services Committee. It proposes to increase MaineCare reimbursement for ambulance services up to the Medicare level. Current reimbursement is well below costs. Ambulance service providers from around the state testified in support, including Fire Chiefs from Augusta (Chief Audette) and Sanford (Chief Bonetti). I testified mainly to say that all Coalition communities are facing the fiscal pressures outlined well be Audette and Bonetti. Property taxpayers end up covering for MaineCare's failure to cover costs.

There is a decent chance of a rate increase being achieved this year. We'll see.

Impeachment Discussion in the House, Thursday 1/14

The House will take up a motion to form a special committee to investigate the Governor's recent actions in several areas and make a recommendation on impeachment. I don't expect this to pass, but there will be a lively debate in the House on Thursday.

The Coalition's LEAD Bill, LD 1488

Our proposal is being sponsored by Rep. Dion. It was re-referred from the Criminal Justice Committee to the Judiciary Committee last week. We don't have a new public hearing date. Rep. Hobbins (D-Saco) the House Chair of the Judiciary Committee is very supportive.

As we discussed at last Friday's meeting, we will hold a press conference on the date of the public hearing. I am working to build a Coalition in favor of the bill. The Maine Sheriff's Association are on board. I'm reaching out to MMA, MSCC, and the Maine Chiefs of Police. Any outreach you can do to your local District Attorney would be helpful.

The Weekly Legislative Report is also available every Friday afternoon on the Legislature's Web Site at http://www.maine.gov/legis/house/wlr_list.htm.

Medical Botanical/Marijuana Ordinance:

The Planning Board will be holding a Public Hearing on the Draft Ordinance on January 27th, 2016 at 7:00PM here in the City Council Chambers. The City Council will hold a First Read on February 2, 2016 and a Second Read on February 16th, 2016. The Draft Ordinance has been posted on the City's Website on the Home Page with a link to the Draft Ordinance. The Ordinance can also be viewed in the City Clerk's Office.

The City adopted a Moratorium on Medical Marijuana Production Facilities on September 9th, 2015 for 6 months. If the Draft Ordinance is amended, with or without amendments stemming from the Public Hearings, by the end of February it will be inside of the 6 month Moratorium. If not adopted by then, the City Council will need to either vote to extend the Moratorium or take other actions.

The Draft Ordinance sets forth several major elements amending Chapter 280 of the City's Zoning Ordinances:

1. Definitions
2. Performance Standards and applicable Zones where allowed
3. Separates and defines Performance Standards for applicable Zones

4. Separate and defines Performance Standards for Registered Patients, Registered Care Givers
5. Defines Performance Standards for Primary Residence and Commercial cultivation
6. Defines Standards for Single Family, Multifamily, and Commercial Buildings
7. Standards address:
 - a. Density
 - b. Lights
 - c. Security
 - d. Life Safety Codes
 - e. Construction Codes
 - f. Noise
 - g. Odor
 - h. Disposal
 - i. Chemical/Pesticide Use
 - j. Annual License pursuant to Chapter 149
 - k. Signage, Sales, Distribution

Planner Della Valle has send copies to those individuals and businesses that actively participated in the development and discussion of the Ordinance in preparation for the pending Public Hearings.

Southern Maine Aviation:

Administration recently met with Southern Maine Aviation to discuss the continued exceptional working relationship the City has with them as our Fixed Base Operator at the Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport. The meeting was held intentionally to highlight the positive first impressions that Southern Maine Aviation has created for our Airport and especially for the City of Sanford. There are many aircraft that fly into Sanford, many of which have dignitaries as their clients. The City consistently receives positive feedback from businesses and individuals that received a myriad of services from Southern Maine Aviation. Our meeting was to highlight and emphasize their contributions and importance to Sanford.

All too many times we focus on fixing problems and do not focus on the positive. Our recent meeting was to acknowledge the positive and assure that this extremely positive business relationship continues by responding to our partner's needs. Again, I would like to thank Southern Maine Aviation for their exceptional level of services to the Sanford Airport and convey that the City of Sanford is appreciative of their contributions and operations.

Maine Municipal Legislative Policy Committee:

I will be in Augusta on Thursday of this week as Sanford's Representative to the MMA Legislative Policy Committee or LPC. The Committee is comprised of 70 Representatives from across the State who will meet to review any and all legislative Bills that have any form of impacts pertaining to municipalities and their operations. As all Bills are currently viewed as "being in the hopper," this will likely be the only LPC meeting for this Short Session.

The Committee will seek to establish the advocacy position on all impacting Bills and then hand those positions to one of our three lobbyists to advocate before the various State Legislative Committees hearing each of these Bills. I will keep the Council apprised of those positions and the progress as the Short Session progresses.