

City of Sanford



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



Memorandum

To: City Council
Subject: Manager's Report for February 17th, 2015
Date: February 17th, 2015

EB-5 (Employment-Based Immigration, Fifth Preference)

The EB-5 program is a federal investment visa program run by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The goal of the EB5 program is to incent investment and create American jobs by setting aside a pool of EB5 visa green cards for qualified foreign investors that invest capital into approved EB-5 projects. U.S. companies are able to use this investment for projects that meet the program's eligibility criteria, such as business expansions, development, or adding capacity.

Actions to date are:

1. The York County Advocacy Group, Municipalities and our York State Delegation, are supporting the creation of a York County EB-5 District.
2. Senator Valentino of Saco has direct experience with the Carrabassett District and has offered both support and assistance
3. York Managers' Group has conferred with Kennebunk and Saco having both conducted independent research into two separate law firms who have successfully written a number of EB-5 Districts. The quoted cost to complete a successful process is approximately \$100,000.
4. Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission has agreed to serve as the Agent once a District is in place.
5. York Managers' Group has worked with County Administrator Greg Zinzer to support a \$100,000 County Appropriation to fund the Application; it will be part of this year's County Tax Bill if successful.
6. Once an Appropriation is raised, the York Managers' Group will send an RFP, likely through Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission, to known law firms to fulfill the application process.
7. The District will be York County and will therefore provide an equal opportunity to compete for this venture capital.

City Budget:

Administration has completed a first Draft of the FY 15/16 Municipal Budget. The Target for a 1.5% net impact to net taxation was a goal, an net increase of not more than \$218,383 on the municipal side of the Budget. The current Draft Budget has Appropriations to support Operations as \$152,504 less than last year. Anticipated Revenues are at \$369,320 less than last

year. Net Operational Increase is \$216,816. This does not count the Charter mandated increase to the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) of \$325,261 to be shared by the municipal and school CIP needs. Full details and the resulting Budget Books are being prepared for the Budget Committee, who will start their consideration of the Budgets on March 5th at 6:00PM

RFP's

BAN –Bond Anticipation Note for interim financing of the School Construction Debt has been issued as response are due back on March 3rd, 2015.

Administration also interviewed Joseph Cuetara of Moors and Cabot for potential financial consulting services as it might pertain to the School Construction Bond. Mr. Cuetara received sufficient information to provide a quote as well as further return on his services.

Legal Services – RFP's were issued and four firms have responded;

Eaton Peabody, Bornstein Shur, Skelton Taintor, and Jensen Baird. Interviews have been scheduled with all four firms to complete the process. A future recommendation will be made for a subsequent Council meeting.

Banking Services - RFP's were issued and 6 banks submitted bids;

Androscoggin Bank, Bank of Maine, Kennebunk Savings Bank, Peoples United Bank, TD Bank, and SIS. First and Second reviews as well as follow up interviews were conducted. The results have been reviewed by the Council's Finance Committee with a resulting recommendation for acceptance for the March 3rd, 2015.

Director of Planning and Development – Position was posted on February 5th, 2015 with a deadline to apply of March 5th, 2015 at 4:30PM. To date I have not reviewed the number of or the applications submitted as of yet. A panel will review immediately upon close and start the process of scoring candidates for future interviews. The process is anticipated to be completed no later than April 3rd for the extension of an offer.

York Managers Group – The Managers met last Tuesday in South Berwick for continued discussions on the following topics:

Workforce Investment

EB-5 Designation

County/State Jail funding and pending legislation

York County Rescue provisions to supplement ambulatory care for contracting towns

York Advocacy Group – A phone conference with York Legislators was held on February 11th, 2015. The phone conference was very well attended by York Managers, Congressional Offices, and most importantly our York State Legislators. Topics discussed were;

1. Skilled Workforce Development – where are the needs such as Pratt Whitney, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Others – Financing and coordination with our Career Technical Centers and York County Community College

2. Transportation – Current MDOT Work Plan within York County – annual funding gap of not less than \$150 million – Status of Sarah Long Bridge – Greater need to increase category of funds under the Municipal partnership Initiative or MPI

3. Municipal Broadband – discussed pending bond funding, future pending planning grants, and an invitation to Fletcher Kittredge of GWI to speak to the Group

4. County Jail funding – Support of LD 186 was a consensus to return the County Jails to full county Control – County Administrator Greg Zinser spoke on this topic extensively – subsequently the LPC of MMA voted not to support LD 186 as the York representatives views did not prevail within the State group

Mayors Coalition: the Coalition met last on February 6th and I participated by phone conference. Topics discussed at length are listed;

1. Tax Reform Work Group
2. Broadband
3. Review of Biennial Budget
 - a. State Assistance to Municipalities and Schools
 - i. Revenue Sharing (Part A, p. 549 and Part L of the Budget)
 - ii. Fund for Efficient Delivery of Local & Regional Services (Part A, p. A-17 and Part U)
 - iii. General Purpose Aid to Education (Part A, p. 197 and Part C)
 1. Charter Schools
 2. Title I Funding
 - iv. Fund for Efficient Delivery of Educational Services (Part A, p. A-196 and Part QQ)
 - b. Welfare Programs
 - i. Only Citizens Eligible (Parts ZZ and DDD)
 - ii. General Assistance (Part KKK)
 - c. Tax Reform
 - i. Telecommunications Tax (Part D)
 - ii. Non-Profit Property Tax Exemption (Part E)
 - iii. Homestead Exemption (Part F)
 - iv. BETE/BETR (Part G)
 - v. Sales Tax Reform (Part H)
 - vi. Estate Tax (Part J)
 - vii. Income Tax (Part K)

Work Pending and Under Review:

- Public Works Equipment Fleet Management Program
- Sanford Traffic Impact Fees
- Emerson School Property Purchase and Sales Agreement
- Changes within the Land Stewardship Program pertaining to roads and future road acceptance
- Proposed changes to Chapter 272, Section 2-23 E (2)©, Chapter 272, Section 3-5 E (2)(h), Chapter 272-3-13, Cluster Developments and the Table 1 of Street Design Guidelines to include Rural Local Cluster Subdivision.