



## City of Biddeford, Maine

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## Heart of Biddeford

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### Restoration Work on City Hall Clock Begins

**BIDDEFORD** — It's time to restore the Biddeford City Hall clock.

Balzer Family Clock Works removed the E. Howard & Co. clock from Biddeford City Hall on March 28 to begin to make the necessary repairs that will allow the clock to tell time once again.

The clock was originally installed in the tower in the early 1900s as a weight-driven, pendulum-regulated and completely mechanical operating timepiece. Around the 1960's, some of the mechanical components were removed and electric motors were installed to drive the remaining mechanical components for the time function and to ring the bell. Many of the original mechanical components, including the pulleys, weights, and pendulum bob, are now missing and must be replaced.

A large portion of the Balzer's restoration work is to convert the electrified mechanical timepieces back to their fully mechanical operation as they were originally designed. The Balzers will also install an automatic winding system for the weights so that staff will not have to manually wind the clock.

Balzer Family Clock Works has specialized in the restoration of tower clocks since 1985.

"I am excited to have Balzer Family Clock Works restoring this clock," said Phil Radding, the City's Director of Facilities. "The Balzers have vast experience in the restoration of tower clocks and have restored clocks worldwide."

This project is supported by a grant from the American Express Partners in Preservation program, a partnership of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the American Express Foundation. Heart of Biddeford, a nationally designated Main Street program, received the \$150,000 grant in October 2018 thanks to community support for the project in a nationwide online voting contest. The grant funding will allow the clock to be restored without the use of any taxpayer funding.



*Image: Chris, Linda, and Richard Balzer of Balzer Family Clock Works remove the clock from the Biddeford City Hall clock tower.*

“After all the hard work this whole community put in to winning the \$150,000 grant, it is so exciting to see this work beginning,” said Heart of Biddeford Director Delilah Poupore. “Each step restores a bit more of Biddeford's history and sense of place.”

Restoring the clock to working order and reinstalling it in City Hall is the first step of this preservation project. The Balzers estimate that the timepiece will be back in the clock tower in October 2019. The second step will be to restore the four dials of the clock and the clock hands. This second phase of work will also be completed by Balzer Family Clock Works.

For more information about the City Hall clock restoration process, please contact Phil Radding at [Philip.radding@biddefordmaine.org](mailto:Philip.radding@biddefordmaine.org) or visit [www.balzerclockworks.com](http://www.balzerclockworks.com).

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