



# The Biddeford Beat

THE CITY OF BIDDEFORD WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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## PARKING GARAGE UPDATE

On September 17, the City Council voted to authorize the City Manager to enter into a Joint Development Agreement with Treadwell Franklin Infrastructure Capital and James W. Sewall Company to build a downtown parking garage as well as complete the next phase of the RiverWalk. The project as approved will not use residential property tax dollars or raise the tax rate. [Click here](#) to watch a video of Tuesday's Meeting.

On Visit [www.biddefordmaine.org/parkinggarage](http://www.biddefordmaine.org/parkinggarage) for a complete description of the details of the proposal. The website has also been updated to include answers to questions that have been asked at the September 10 City Council Workshop and on social media.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are located in the Council Chambers at City Hall unless otherwise stated. Live meetings can be viewed on the [City of Biddeford website](#) or on the Public Access Channel.

**Tuesday September 24, 2019**  
 10:00 a.m. Biddeford Fire Advisory Committee Meeting @ Central Fire Station  
 6:00 p.m. My Neighborhood Network Meeting (Bacon Street Neighborhood) @ 46 Sullivan Street

**Wednesday September 26, 2019**  
 6:30 p.m. Airport Commission Meeting (Live)

**Tuesday October 1, 2019**  
 5:00 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting (Live)  
 6:00 p.m. City Council Meeting (Live)

**Wednesday October 2, 2019**  
 6:00 p.m. Planning Board Meeting (Live)

All meetings are subject to change. [Click here](#) to view updates on the full city calendar.

A rendering of the garage:



## MY NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK MEETING 46 Sullivan Street Tuesday, September 24, 6:00 p.m.

Are you interested in seeing a dog park in Foav Court? "My Neighborhood Network" wants to hear from you! Join your neighbors for a dessert social at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 24 at 46 Sullivan Street. Kids are welcome to join, with an adult.

For more information, call 284-9105 or email [linda.waters@biddefordmaine.org](mailto:linda.waters@biddefordmaine.org).

## FOURTH ANNUAL EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER BANQUET

On Thursday evening, the City of Biddeford hosted its Fourth Annual Employee and Volunteer Banquet.

Nearly 200 employees and volunteers from each of the City's departments attended the event to celebrate the past year's accomplishments. The following employees received special recognition for their above-and-beyond service this year:



**Bill Gooch**, the Information Technology Manager at the Police Department, was named the City of Biddeford's 2019 Employee of the Year. Gooch began his career in 1998 as a dispatcher, and his skill and aptitude with working with computers led him to be appointed to his current role as IT Manager. "Day or night, weekends or holidays, Bill will deal with computer access problems for the Police and Fire Departments and will resolve issues in a pleasant and effective way, never complaining that he gets awakened at 2:30 in the morning on any given day," said Police Chief Roger Beaupre. "Bill is a dedicated, proficient, accommodating and extremely knowledgeable employee who is a credit to his profession. The City of Biddeford is extremely fortunate to have this caliber of an employee on staff."

**Tom Milligan**, the City Engineer, was presented the Technical Professional Award. Milligan, who has 25 years of service with the City of Biddeford, has diligently managed the workload of the Engineering Department this year despite a shortage of staff members. "Tom is a key player in keeping the City in compliance with DEP and EPA regulations and oversees the City's sewer separation projects with experience and professionalism," Demers said. "He is a dedicated and loyal employee and we are proud to have him with us."



Public Works Director **Jeff Demers** received this year's Management Team Member Award. Demers started his career with the City of Biddeford 23 years ago in the Wastewater Division and has served as the Public Works Director since February 2018. In the short time that he has held his role, Demers has made a number of significant improvements to the Public Works Department. Additionally, residents that call are often pleased with how quickly and efficiently their questions and concerns are addressed by Demers.

The Customer Service Award was presented to **Patricia Conway**, who is a shared Administrative Assistant for Public Access Television in the mornings and Recreation in the afternoons. "Patricia does a great job of balancing the administrative needs of two very different departments each day. Here at the Rec Department, she is very attentive to community members, supportive of staff, and sometimes so dedicated to completing a task that we have to remind her it's time to go home," said Carl Walsh, Recreation Director.





**Robert Mertz (Full Time)**  
EMS/Firefighter of the Year



**Steven Speckin (Call Force)**  
Firefighter of the Year



**Chaplain Kevin Jacques**  
FD Leadership Award



**Nikki Billingslea**  
Recreation Department Award



**Rob Simmons**  
Officer of the Year



**Det. J. Lamar Quarles**  
Investigator of the Year



**Richard Dutremble**  
Retired from City Hall (30 years)



**Henry Morin**  
Retired from Public Works (12 years)



**John Pothier**  
Retired from FD (32 years)

**Not pictured:**

Assessor's Office Award: Quang Minh Le  
Code Enforcement Office Award: Meghan Fenton  
Technology & Communication Department Award: Jerry Gerlach  
Civilian Employee of the Year: Dispatcher Dylan Martin

We also recognized 44 employees who have each provided at least 15 years of service to the City. In total, these 44 individuals have provided over 800 years of service to Biddeford! Congratulations to all who were recognized, and thank you to all employees and volunteers for your service.

Note: this year's Volunteer of the Year award will be presented at an upcoming Council meeting.

## HANDS-FREE DRIVING LAW

Maine's Hands-Free Driving Law went into effect on September 19. The new law prevents you from holding any electronic device while driving. Per the Maine State Police, violations will be subject to a \$230 fine for the first offense and at least \$325 for any additional offense in a three-year period. (The Biddeford Police Department does not determine the amount of these fines.)

Here is what you can and can't do under the new law:

- X You CANNOT have a phone conversation while holding your phone in your hand.
- X You CANNOT send or read a text message or social media notification at any time while driving, including at a stoplight, stop sign, or other temporary stop.
- X You CANNOT enter a destination into your phone's GPS directions app while driving. You must pull over and park in a safe location before programming your phone. You CAN continue to use your phone for directions as long as you are not holding it in your hand.
  
- ✓ You CAN and SHOULD pull over in a lawful and safe location to make a phone call or respond to a text message.
- ✓ You CAN answer a call if you use a hands-free option and do not have to hold the phone to use it.
- ✓ You CAN use speak-to-text features such as Siri.
- ✓ You CAN have a phone conversation if you are wearing a remote headset, or if your phone is hooked up through your radio via Bluetooth or USB (as long as you are over 18 and are not operating under a permit or an intermediate driver's license).
- ✓ You CAN ask Siri or other voice-controlled phone assistants to read you a text message out loud.
- ✓ You CAN call law enforcement or emergency personnel in an emergency.
- ✓ If you are listening to music or a podcast on your vehicle's stereo system, you CAN touch your phone's screen to skip to the next track.
- ✓ You CAN use *one* single swipe, tap or push of the finger to activate a hands-free feature (for instance, activating your Bluetooth headset to answer a phone call).

This weekend, downtown Biddeford will come alive with free music and more during River Jam Festival and Fringe Fest! Visit [www.riverjamfest.com](http://www.riverjamfest.com) for a full schedule of activities and events.

Here are a few things to know before you go:

Main Street will be closed between Washington Street and Alfred Street from 4:00 - 10:00 p.m. on Friday evening to accommodate Fringe Fest.



On Saturday, Water Street will be closed between Pike Street and Main Street from 6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

On-street parking in Biddeford is always free, and you can also get your first two hours of parking free in the Yellow Lot (on Franklin Street). For information about paid parking in downtown parking lots, visit <https://www.biddefordmaine.org/2844/Visitor-Parking>.

## ELM STREET CONSTRUCTION

Beginning the week of September 30, drivers should expect delays when travelling on Elm Street. A construction project taking place between the Sleepy Hollow Motel and Audie Insurance Agency will reduce traffic to one lane. The project is expected to be completed by October 17.

The project is being completed as part of the City's ongoing sewer separation process. The previous single-pipe system will be replaced with separate sewers for water and storm water flows. Once the replacement is complete, storm water will be discharged directly into receiving water, while wastewater will be treated before discharge.

## DIZZY BIRDS RIBBON CUTTING

Mayor Alan Casavant joined Dizzy Bird Rotisserie for their official ribbon cutting on Thursday. The restaurant, which has now been open for about 6 months, has been a great addition to the Main Street foodie community.



## FMI RECOGNIZED BY CITY COUNCIL

At Tuesday's meeting, the City Council recognized Fiber Materials, Inc.'s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. FMI is a national leader in the aerodynamics and defense industries, creating products that have travelled to Mars. We are pleased that this company calls Biddeford home.



**NATIONAL  
RECOVERY  
MONTH 2019**  
30th Anniversary

Anyone seeking assistance with substance use for self, a friend or a loved one, please contact the **Saco Biddeford Opiate Outreach Initiative (SBOOI)**:

**207-571-1652 ext. 7190 or 207-710-1785**

People recover...this can be your time!