

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

February/March 2009

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City of Auburn



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Change to *Open Line* Publication Schedule

Welcome to the February/March issue of *Open Line*. Beginning with this transitional issue, *Open Line* will be distributed one month in advance due to the switch to multi-cycle water bills. This will ensure that no matter when you receive your water bill during the month, the news and events in *Open Line* will still be timely and informative.

As a reminder, *Open Line* is also available online at www.auburnalabama.org/openline. We hope you continue to enjoy *Open Line* as your source for City news, events, and information. As always, we welcome your feedback by email at openline@auburnalabama.org or by calling us at 501-7255.

Monthly Sewer Charges and Access Fees to Increase Effective April 1, 2009

At its January 20, 2009 meeting, the Auburn City Council approved an ordinance increasing monthly sewer service charges and system access fees effective April 1, 2009. The changes were recommended in the *Sewer Rate and Access Fee Study*, conducted by Public Resources Management Group, Inc. (PRMG). The study was commissioned by the Council in April 2008 to assess whether the existing rate and fee structure would support sewer expenditures necessitated by state and federal regulatory mandates as well as system maintenance and capacity needs.



Approximately 40% of current and planned projects are in response to new and changing state and federal regulatory requirements. As state and federal regulations for the treatment of water discharged from the system continue to become more stringent, costs continue to climb.

Additional projects and expenditures are divided between necessary system maintenance and capacity requirements. The City of Auburn's Sanitary Sewer System is an aging system that requires rehabilitation to maximize its capacity, efficiency, and longevity to serve Auburn's citizens for the foreseeable future. At the December 16, 2008 City Council meeting, a \$25 million debt issue was approved to fund recent and ongoing rehabilitation efforts. Capacity requirements also represent a significant cost to the system. The Northside Treatment Plant is currently at capacity, with the S5 Sewer Project underway to connect the Northside and Southside plants to take advantage of the excess capacity available at the Southside Treatment Plant. New sewer mains are needed to serve areas without public sewer and to prepare for future demand, while some existing lines need to be upsized.

PRMG's recommendations were reported to the Council on December 17, 2008, having found that the existing rate and access fee structure will not support necessary expenditures. The new ordinance, based upon those results, includes rate increases to offset required regulatory and maintenance costs. Typical residential rates will

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Switch to Multi-Cycle Water Bills Begins March 1

Please see page 3 of this issue of *Open Line* and your insert in this month's water bill for an important note regarding the Auburn Water Works Board's switch to multi-cycle billing.

Monthly Sewer Charges

(continued from page 1)

increase by approximately \$2.55 per month in 2009 and \$3.00 per month in 2010. The new ordinance also includes an increase in one-time sewer system access fees, paid by individuals or contractors



who tie into the City's sewer system prior to the construction of a home or business. The access fee increase will be phased in, with half of the recommended increase in 2009, and half in 2010. The access fee increase helps ensure the costs associated with future growth are not borne by existing customers. The new rate and access fee structure is also designed to help move projects away from funding through debt and toward a "pay as you go" system.

To see the ordinance, which includes a complete rate and access fee structure, please visit www.auburnalabama.org/agenda and click on the Related Information link for the January 20, 2009 meeting. Please go to www.auburnalabama.org/sewer or contact the City of Auburn Water Resource Management Department by e-mail at webwtrswr@auburnalabama.org or by phone at 501-3060 for more information.

**20 CITY
09 FEST
AUBURN**

KIESEL PARK

Auburn CityFest 2009, presented by the *Opelika-Auburn News*, is set for Saturday, April 25 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Kiesel Park. Don't miss Auburn's largest FREE outdoor festival, featuring arts & crafts, food, music, children's activities, and much more. Applications for fine arts and arts & crafts exhibitors are now available online at www.auburncityfest.com.

Volunteer applications are also available. For more information, visit www.auburncityfest.com or contact the CityFest Headquarters at 501-2930.

Board Vacancies

- Five vacancies on the **Metropolitan Planning Organization - Citizens Advisory Committee** will be announced at the February 3 City Council meeting and will be filled at the March 3 meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Commercial Development Authority** will be announced at the February 3 City Council meeting and will be filled at the March 3 meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Mental Health - Mental Retardation Board** will be announced at the February 17 City Council meeting and will be filled at the March 24 meeting.
- One vacancy on the **Library Board** will be announced at the March 3 City Council meeting and will be filled at the April 7 meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Historic Preservation Commission** will be announced at the March 3 City Council meeting and will be filled at the April 7 meeting.



Citizens interested in serving are encouraged to contact their City Council member or notify the City Manager's Office at webocm@auburnalabama.org or call 501-7260.

MEETING SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY

- 2 Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center
- 3 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center
- City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
- 4 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber
- 6 Tree Commission**, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
- 10 Greenspace Advisory Board**, 11:30 a.m., City Meeting Room
- Historic Preservation Commission**, 4 p.m., Development Services Building
- Board of Education**, 6 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room
- 12 Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Council Chamber
- 17 City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
- 19 Water Works Board**, 4 p.m., Water Board Conference Room
- 24 Bicycle Committee**, 7 p.m., Development Services Building

MARCH

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- 3 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center
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- 24 City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
- 26 Library Board**, 10 a.m., Library Board Room
- 31 Bicycle Committee**, 7 p.m., Development Services Building

Meeting times and places are subject to change

For more information, including a map of City meeting locations, please visit www.auburnalabama.org/boards.

Daylight Saving Time



Change Your Clock - Change Your Batteries

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 8. Remember to move your clocks AHEAD one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

The Auburn Fire Division would like to remind citizens to take this opportunity to change the batteries in your home's smoke detectors. A working smoke detector should be placed on every level of your home and in every bedroom.

Additional Parking Spaces Available Downtown

Metered parking spaces are now available on the first floor of the Auburn Municipal Parking Deck, located between Gay Street and College Street. Over 60 metered spaces are available for citizens wishing to shop, dine, and conduct business in downtown. More than 80 businesses, restaurants, stores, apartments, churches, and offices are located within easy walking distance of the parking deck. If you haven't been in a while, now is the perfect time to visit downtown and *ShopAuburn!*

**Enjoy meter-free parking during
Spring Break, March 16 - 20.**

Can We See You?

**Bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians
reminded to wear reflective gear**

With over 32 miles of bicycle and multi-use paths and 62 miles of sidewalk, it's no wonder Auburn citizens enjoy seeking alternative routes of transportation such as bicycling and walking. When you're out biking, jogging, or walking, don't forget to think safety first. Make sure motorists can see you from a distance of at least 500 feet by wearing reflective clothing between the hours of 30 minutes before sunset until 30 minutes before sunrise.

The City of Auburn requires pedestrians and joggers to wear reflective material between the waist and shoulders on the front and back for maximum visibility. Cyclists are required to have an operating headlight on the front of their bicycle and reflectors on the front and rear spokes of the wheels and pedals.

By working together, we can help make Auburn's roadways safer for cyclists, joggers, pedestrians, and motorists. For more information, please contact Brandy Ezelle, City of Auburn Traffic Engineer, at 501-3029.

*Visibility requirements are set forth in
Chapter 13-11 of the City Code.
www.auburnalabama.org/code*



Auburn Water Works Board to Switch to Multi-Cycle Billing

In an effort to provide even more convenient and efficient service to its customers, the Auburn Water Works Board (AWWB) will switch to multi-cycle billing effective March 1.

What does this mean for the customer? Currently, all customers are billed once a month, with bills due by the 15th of every month. Beginning in March, you will still be billed once monthly, but your new monthly due date will be determined by your service location.

Why switch to multi-cycles? Under the current system, water bills reflect water usage from six to eight weeks prior. The new cycles will enable customers to receive a timelier picture of their water usage and will assist in identifying costly leaks or excess usage more quickly.

How do I know when to pay my water bill? Customers received an insert with last month's water bill indicating their new bill cycle. Inserts have also been included in this month's bill.

What about automatic payments? If you use an automatic bank draft through the AWWB to pay your bill, your due date will be automatically adjusted. For any other means of payment, including bill pay programs through banks and credit cards, customers will need to adjust their payment date starting with their payment due in March.

For more information, please visit www.auburnalabama.org or contact the City of Auburn Water Revenue Office at 501-3050.

FEMA Floodplain Maps and Flood Insurance Study Update

Lee County is in the process of updating its Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Floodplain Maps and Flood Insurance Study. The City of Auburn's FEMA Floodplain Maps and Flood Insurance Study will also be updated as part of the countywide map modernization project. State officials will host a Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) Community Coordination Meeting for the City of Auburn on Tuesday, February 24 from 3 p.m. - 6 p.m. in the City of Auburn Meeting Room, located at 122 Tichenor Avenue. The meeting is open to the public.

Printed copies of the proposed maps are available at the Development Services Building, located in the Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex on Ross Street. Maps will be available for public review Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Additional information about the FEMA project, as well as an Interactive Map which will help you determine if your property is located within FEMA's proposed flood plain, is available online at www.auburnalabama.org/fema. You may also contact the City of Auburn Public Works Department by phone at 501-3000 or by e-mail at webpw@auburnalabama.org for answers to your questions.

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Open Line Feedback

Do you have any suggestions, feedback, or story ideas that you would like to share? If so, please contact us at openline@auburnlabama.org or call 501-7255.

up COMING EVENTS

Due to space considerations, we are unable to publicize any events that are not directly affiliated with a City department.



Now Showing and Coming Soon...Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Exhibitions - Mark your calendar for the following Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Exhibitions. The exhibits are free and open to the public Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. For more information on the Gallery or future exhibitions, contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.

- **Found Objects**, through February 14. Two and three-dimensional works utilizing non-traditional materials.
- **Winter Invitational 2009**, February 16 - March 20. New works by area artists.
- **Student Art Exhibition**, March 23 - April 3. Works by Auburn High School art students.

Wednesdays in February and March...Preschool Story Time - Preschoolers ages 3 - 5 years are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for Preschool Story Time every Wednesday at 10 a.m. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



Thursdays in February and March...Toddler Time - Toddlers ages 18 months - 3 years are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for Toddler Time every Thursday at 10 a.m. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

February 4...Magic Tree House Club - Youth in grades K - 5 are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for the Magic Tree House Club February 4 at 3:30 p.m. This month's featured book title is *Dragon of the Red Dawn*. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



First Fridays in February and March...First Friday Tennis Mixer - Join the Auburn Community Tennis Association for the First Friday Tennis Mixers February 6 and March 6 at 6:30 p.m. at the City of Auburn/Auburn University Yarbrough Tennis Center. For more information, contact the Yarbrough Tennis Center at 501-2920.

Register by February 6...Young at Heart Club Trip - Seniors are invited to join the Young at Heart Club for a trip to the River-Center in Columbus to see a performance of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* March 9. Deadline to register is February 6. The cost of the trip is \$35. For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930.



February 7...Academy Sports + Outdoors 20th Annual Love Your Heart Run and Crank Your Heart Ride - Come run or ride for a good cause at the Academy Sports + Outdoors 20th Annual Love Your Heart Run and Crank Your Heart Ride February 7 at Chewada State Park. Choose from a 1-mile or 10K run or grab your bike and register for the 3.5, 11, or 22 mile ride. Proceeds from the run and ride benefit the Exceptional Outreach Organization. To register, visit www.loveyourheartrun.com.

Available February 9...Parks and Recreation Spring Brochure - The Parks and Recreation Spring Brochure will be available February 9 at City facilities and online at www.auburnlabama.org/parks. For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930.



February 10...Puppet Show - Youth of all ages are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for a puppet show entitled *Romero & Julietta* February 10 at 3:30 p.m. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

February 12...Auburn Public Library Children's Valentine's Day Party - Youth ages 3 - 11 are invited to the Auburn Public Library's Children's Valentine's Day Party February 12 at 6 p.m. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



February 17...Auburn Public Library Book Group - The Auburn Public Library Book Group will meet February 17 at 6:30 p.m. Participants may read a fiction or non-fiction book about love. For more information, contact the Reference Desk at 501-3195.

February 19...American Girls Club - Youth in grades K - 5 are invited to join the American Girls Club at the Auburn Public Library February 19 at 3:30 p.m. This month's featured character is Addy. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



February 19...Bilingual Story Time/Cuentos Bilingues - Join the Auburn Public Library for Bilingual Story Time/Cuentos Bilingues February 19 at 6 p.m. The program is open to all ages. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

February 21...Book Discussion with Guest Author - Join the Auburn Public Library for a discussion on *Curses, Conjure, & John the Conqueror: Folk Magic in Alabama* with special guest, author Dr. Alan Brown, February 21 at 2 p.m. This program is open to adults. For more information, contact the Reference Desk at 501-3195.

March 1...Auburn Dog Club Fun Walk - Join the Parks and Recreation Department and the Auburn Dog Club for a fun walk at Kiesel Park March 1 at 2 p.m. The walk is free for participants. Donations of dog food and toys will be collected for the Lee County Humane Society. For more information, contact Melissa Weldon at 501-2946.



March 4...Magic Tree House Club - Youth in grades K - 5 are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for the Magic Tree House Club March 4 at 3:30 p.m. This month's featured book title is *Season of the Sandstorms*. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

March 7...Book Discussion with Guest Author - Join the Auburn Public Library for a discussion on *Southeastern Indians: Culture & Change Over Time* with special guest, author Jackie Matte, March 7 at 2 p.m. This program is open to adults. For more information, contact the Reference Desk at 501-3195.

March 10...Puppet Show - Youth of all ages are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for a puppet show entitled *Three Fairly Silly Fairy Tales* March 10 at 3:30 p.m. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

March 19...American Girls Club - Youth in grades K - 5 are invited to join the American Girls Club at the Auburn Public Library March 19 at 3:30 p.m. This month's featured characters are Samantha and Nellie. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

March 19...Bilingual Story Time/Cuentos Bilingues - Join the Auburn Public Library for Bilingual Story Time/Cuentos Bilingues March 19 at 6 p.m. The program is open to all ages. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

March 24...Public Safety and Self-Defense Discussion - Bring a brown bag lunch and join Officer Scott Mingus from the Auburn Police Division for a discussion on public safety and self-defense March 24 at noon at the Auburn Public Library. For more information, contact the Reference Desk at 501-3195.