

THE BREWER CHRONICLE

SEPTEMBER 2024
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE CITY OF BREWER

September Calendar

Monday, September 2

City Hall Closed in observance of Labor Day

Monday, September 9

Planning Board Meeting, 6pm, City Council Chambers

Tuesday, September 10

City Council Meeting, 6pm, City Council Chambers

Tuesday, September 10

First half of property taxes due

Thursday, September 19

Tax Office closed for staff training

Monday, September 30

Quarterly Water and Sewer Bills due

The Brewer Public Library, located at 100 South Main Street, holds a wide variety of ongoing events throughout the year. [Click here](#) to learn more about what the Brewer Public Library has to offer!

Please visit the City website calendar for more information on these events

Brewer City Council Tours Hampden Waste Plant

Several Brewer councilors recently had the opportunity to tour the Municipal Waste Solutions waste recycling and processing plant in Hampden and receive an update on re-opening plans.

James Condela, CEO of Innovative Resource Recovery (Innovative), led the tour. Innovative is the private sector partner that is financing the plant's restart.



Innovative CEO James Condela explains how the optical sorters work to separate out recyclables.



Deputy Mayor Soubanh Phanthay, Mayor Jenn Morin and Councilor Daniels in front of the MRF

Innovative is finalizing design plans, has hired a Construction Project Manager, and will be ordering large equipment soon. They anticipate having the front end of the plant—the materials recovery facility (MRF) that separates out traditional recyclable materials like plastic, metals, cardboard, etc. from your trash—operational in mid-2025. Innovative expects the back end of the plant, which will anaerobically digest the organics in the waste stream and convert them to renewable natural gas, to be up and running in the first half of 2026.



Odor abatement air scrubber system in the foreground; anaerobic digester in background

When fully operational, the plant will divert over 50% of the incoming waste from landfill by recycling traditional commodities and converting organic matter to natural gas. Innovative plans to look for additional waste diversion opportunities once both the front end and back end are complete.



Mayor Jenn Morin, Councilor Michele Daniels, Deputy Mayor Soubanh Phanthay, and Finance Director Karen Fussell standing on the tip floor with the MRF in the background.

City Manager Steve Bost Retires After 25 Years of Service

Brewer City Manager Steve Bost has announced his retirement after 25 years of service. We extend our appreciation to Steve for his unwavering commitment to our great City.

In a statement from City Manager Bost to Brewer staff, he wrote “It has truly been an honor to have worked with you as a team over the years, on projects and initiatives large and small. The objective has been, and will continue to be, ensuring that Brewer remains a great place to live, work, grow a business, and raise a family. It also benefits by having an exceptional education system. I am grateful for the support from our elected leaders and the community over the years.”

We invite all community members to join us in expressing our appreciation for his years of service and wishing him the very best in his well-deserved retirement.

Blood Drive at Jeff's Catering on September 3

The American Red Cross is experiencing an emergency blood shortage as the nation faces dangerous levels of heat and people head out for final summer travel plans. Since July 1, the Red Cross national blood supply has fallen by more than 25%, and blood donors of all types, especially those with type O blood, are urged to give as soon as possible to help patients receive lifesaving medical care. More information is [available here](#).

Jeff's Catering
15 Littlefield Rd., Brewer, ME 04412
Tuesday, September 3, 2024
12:30PM - 5:00 PM



Please call 1-800-REDCROSS to schedule an appointment, or visit redcrossblood.org and enter sponsor code: Brewer. Scan the above QR code to schedule an appointment.

Come to give blood Sept. 1 to Sept. 15 at for an EXCLUSIVE Red Cross raglan shirt, while supplies last. The Red Cross requires 29 Whole-Blood Donors and 9 Power Red Donors.

Brewer Water's Latest Investment: Enhancing Service with New Equipment

Thanks to the support of the Maine Drinking Water Program (MDWP) and its Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), Brewer Water has recently acquired a vacuum excavation vehicle. This purchase was made possible through a 55% loan forgiveness program, with the remaining cost covered by a 0% interest loan from the DWSRF.

This state-of-the-art vehicle is a crucial addition to our operations, enabling us to economically verify materials on both sides of customers' curb stops, as required by the federally mandated Lead Service Line Replacement program. Beyond this, the vehicle will benefit Brewer Water customers for years to come by assisting in the renewal of service lines, maintaining valve boxes, supporting larger excavation projects, and accurately locating underground utilities.

This investment demonstrates our ongoing commitment to delivering safe, reliable, and efficient services to our community.



Upcoming Important Dates and Reminders

City Hall Closed Monday, September 2

City Hall will be closed Monday, September 2 in observance of Labor Day. Please note that trash collection will be moved out one day due to the holiday.

Planning Board Meeting Scheduled for September 9

The Brewer Planning Board will hold its regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, September 9, 2024 at 6pm in the City Hall Council Chambers, located at 80 North Main Street. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Johns, City Planner at (207) 989-8431.

City Council Meeting Scheduled for September 10

The City Council will hold its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, September 10 at 6pm in the City Hall Council Chambers, located at 80 North Main Street. The agenda will be posted on the City website and at City Hall. [Click here](#) to view the Council meeting schedule, or to review past agendas and minutes. City Council meetings may be viewed live on the [City website](#). Meetings are also recorded and posted on the City's website and may be viewed at any time.

First Half of Property Taxes Due September 10

The first half of property taxes are due on Tuesday, September 10. Payments may be made at the Tax Office, mailing your payment to City Hall (80 North Main Street), or placing payment in the drop box located outside the lower level door of City Hall. Property owners also have the option to [pay their bill online](#). Please do not mail cash. Including the remit slip and/or the bill number will help ensure that we post your payment to the appropriate account. For more information about property tax billing any payments, please visit the [City website](#).

Tax Office Closed Thursday, September 19

The Tax Office will be closed all day on Thursday, September 19 for staff training. The rest of City Hall will remain accessible. Residents are reminded that many services are available online, [including property tax, sewer, and water payments, vehicle and ATV re-registration, hunting and fishing licenses](#) and more.

Quarterly Water and Sewer Bills Due September 30

Quarterly water and sewer bills are due September 30. [Click here](#) to make a payment online. For more information, please visit the [City of Brewer Water District website](#).

Exciting News From Brewer Water!

Thanks to the generous support of the Maine Drinking Water Program (MDWP) and its trusty sidekick, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), Brewer Water is rolling up its sleeves to replace some of our main lines on Nottingham Way, Alan-A-Dale, and Birchwood, with work kicking off this fall.

Nottingham Way is first up, with construction starting on Wednesday, August 28th. If Nottingham is part of your daily route, we recommend finding an alternate path—our construction crews are great, but traffic jams aren't anyone's idea of fun.

This project is made possible through a generous 35% loan forgiveness program (because we're always looking to score the best deal for our customers), with the remaining cost covered by a low-interest loan from our friends at the DWSRF.

By targeting these key areas in our system, we're not just fixing pipes—we're improving our infrastructure to serve you better, both now and in the years to come.

This investment is yet another way we're demonstrating our unwavering commitment to delivering safe, reliable, and efficient services to our community—at the best possible price. After all, your water is our business, and we're all about keeping things flowing smoothly!



Brewer Public Safety Holds Young Citizens Public Safety Academy

Encouraging an interest in Public Safety and supporting a well-served community are values that all would hope to instill in future generations. During the past two years the Brewer Public Safety Department has aspired to do this through the Young Citizens Public Safety Academy. This program, similar to a summer camp, was resurrected in the Summer of 2023 and was an overwhelming success! Many students who attended the initial reinstated academy pleaded for the opportunity to do it again and the Brewer Public Safety Department not only listened, but attempted to surpass their expectations.

The initial academy was comprised of rising 5th/6th grade students during the first week and 7th/8th grade students the second week, all from the Brewer Community School. The focus of this weeklong academy was dedicated to providing young citizens exposure to various aspects of Public Safety. Students had the opportunity to learn and understand firsthand what services police officers, firefighters and EMS personnel perform on a daily basis. This knowledge was further enhanced with the chance for students to have a behind the scenes look at facilities like the Penobscot County Jail and the Maine Forest Ranger base. Furthermore, students engaged in activities such as firefighter muster drills, fire equipment try-ons and even the ability to handle the equipment used in lifesaving operations, like the Jaws of Life.

For the Summer academy of 2024, Brewer Public Safety Department wanted to provide even more enhanced experience to area youth, along with expanding the demographic of students reached. Week 1 of this academy was comprised of 5th-7th grade students who again focused more on exposure to Public Safety. Week 2, which contained grades 8 thru 12, was designed as a career exploration opportunity, both of which included students from surrounding communities. Additionally, the areas of Public Safety were further expanded, for instance, students were allowed to visit the Maine Air National Guard base for a live training event by the Base Fire Department. Students witnessed a simulated aircraft fuselage engulfed in flames and the actions required to fight a blaze of this magnitude. These students were also trained in various essential skills, such as First Aid and CPR, competency in which may help them one day save a life, no matter their career of choice.

Though these incredible academies were hosted by the Brewer Public Safety Department, they would not have been remotely possible without the wonderful support of our community sponsors and partners. All aspects of Public Safety came out to support all four academies providing instruction, demonstrations, and tours:

Maine Drug Enforcement Agency
Penobscot County Sheriff's Office
Bangor Police Department
Maine Forest Rangers
Maine State Police
Walmart Loss Prevention
Penobscot County Corrections Division
Penobscot Regional Communications Center
LifeFlight of Maine
Maine Air National Guard

Young Citizens Public Safety Academy, Continued...

From lunches provided to students, to transportation for field trips and even vehicles to demonstrate the extrication tools on, we were grateful for the outpouring of support from all! Beyond this generosity already mentioned was further donations by area business seen below, for which we are incredibly appreciative:

Nichols Plumbing
Brewer Kiwanis Club
Walmart
Downeast Toyota
Mason's Brewing
Jason's Pizza
Harvest Moon Deli
Southern Spoon
W.S. Emerson
City of Brewer
Bouchards Towing
Winterport Boot
Cyr Bus Company
Brewer School Department
Penobscot Conservation Club

These academies have provided 73 students a chance to see firsthand what Public Safety is all about and hopefully promoted a genuine interest in being the next generation to serve their respective communities. While these weeks have been truly incredible, the hope of the Brewer Public Safety Department is to have future academies be the example of continuous improvement. Again, the Brewer Public Safety Department is beyond appreciative of our community support and sponsors for making this academy possible and hope to reach as many students as possible in the future.

Putting a program like this together requires a tremendous amount of effort with planning and logistics taking place in the winter and spring. Our two School Resource Officers were instrumental in resurrecting the program and launching it. Of course, this wouldn't have been possible without the staff support of Fire and Police who were with the attendees every day and pulling it all together. We also would like to recognize our Economic Development team for networking with our business community letting them know about this fantastic offering.

Resources for Seniors After The Maine Legislature's Repeal of the Property Tax Stabilization Program

In July 2023, the Maine legislature repealed the Property Tax Stabilization Program. While this program allowed certain residents over 65 to freeze their property taxes, the repeal of this legislation has left participating residents with higher tax bills than they anticipated. However, there are other State programs and exemptions that are available to qualifying applicants, which may help to mitigate the impact.

The Property Tax Fairness Credit, which currently allows eligible Mainers to take a \$1,500 credit, has increased to \$2,000; it also loosens limits on the program in a way that allows the benefits to remain constant for a Mainer whose spouse passes away. The income limit may also increase. Note: This program is not administered by the City of Brewer; to claim the credit, a resident must file Form 1040ME and Schedule PTFC/STFC for the tax year during which the property tax or rent was paid. For help, call Maine Revenue Services at 207-624-9784.

Maine Legislature Repeals Property Tax Stabilization Program, continued...

The State Property Tax Deferral Program, a lifeline loan program that covers the annual property tax bills of Maine seniors age 65 and older who cannot afford to pay them on their own, has been expanded. It doubles the income limit on that program to \$80,000 and also raises asset limits. Taxes must be paid back when the home is sold or becomes part of an estate. Note: This is a State program and is not administered by the City of Brewer. Questions on this State managed program can be referred to Maine Revenue Services, Property Tax Division, at 207-624-5600 or prop.tax@maine.gov.

There are also other exemptions that residents may qualify for, including the Homestead Exemption, Veteran's Exemption, and Blind Exemption. For more information on these exemptions and programs, please contact the City of Brewer Assessing Office at 207-989-7560, or visit the [Assessing Department website](#).

Brewer Public Library Updates

New Community Partnerships Benefit Brewer Public Library

A couple of new community partnerships look to bolster programming at the Brewer Public Library. Thanks to the Daniel E. Geagan Post of the American Legion, you can now drop off your old, worn, or damaged U.S. flags at the Brewer Public Library. Simply deposit your flag in our new U.S. Flag Retirement Drop Box near the front door and your flag will be properly retired by the American Legion.

Also, the Brewer Public Library has once again been chosen as the beneficiary of Hannaford's Bloomin' for Good program! Throughout September, the library will receive \$1 from every Bloomin' for Good bouquet purchased at the 383 Wilson Street Hannaford in Brewer. Buy a bouquet for your favorite teacher, or for your child as they return to school, and support your local library! Win, win! The donations will help support the library's children's programming.

Seasonal Program Favorites Return at the Brewer Public Library

Fall is on its way, which means seasonal programs return at the Brewer Public Library. Starting Tuesday, September 3rd, bring your newborn to five-year-old children to the library for stories, a snack, and a craft with Miss Shelley. The following day at 3:30pm, say hello to our Tail Waggin' Tutors, Jade and Andie. If your child loves to read, needs help with their reading, or simply enjoys dogs, sign them up for a fifteen-minute block with one of our furry friends. They're great listeners!

Brewer Has a New Facebook Page!

The City of Brewer is excited to announce the launch of its [official Facebook page](#), a new digital platform designed to provide timely and important information to residents and those who work in Brewer. Follow the City of Brewer to stay up to date on all that is happening in Brewer!

Sign Up for Notify Brewer!

Want to know what's happening in Brewer? Join Notify Brewer, the City's new alert system that sends important and timely information directly to you through your preferred communication methods, whether email, text or phone. Visit the [Notify Brewer signup page to join!](#)

Brewer Parks and Recreation

Brewer Parks & Recreation: Limited Openings for the After School Program

The Brewer Parks & Recreation Department has a limited number of opening in their After School Program, serving youngsters in grades k- 6. The program is open until 6:00 pm daily and for extended time during school breaks. In addition to supervised care, students will participate in active games, crafts and social activities. During the winter months students will even be able to use the hill and ice rink for sledding and ice skating. For more information contact After School program Coordinator Lauren Moffitt at lmoffitt@brewermaine.gov.

Brewer Parks & Recreation Department Fall Program Dates

Youth Soccer	September 7th	Grades PreK – 5
Youth Cheering	September 8th	Grades K - 8
Pound Fitness	September 4th	Adult Monthly Classes
Adaptive Yoga	September 5th	Adult Monthly Classes
Karate	September 10	Youth & Adult Monthly Classes
Senior Fitness	September 30	Adult Mon/Wed/Fri

To register or for more information, please visit the [Brewer Parks and Recreation webpage](#).

Absentee Voting for November 5, 2024 General Election

Absentee ballot applications for the November 5, 2024 General Election are available at City Hall and on the [City's website](#). Absentee ballots may also be requested electronically through the [State of Maine Absentee Ballot Request system](#). Please note, absentee ballots will not be available at City Hall or mailed to voters who submitted absentee ballot requests until early October, 2024. Questions may be directed to the City Clerk's office at (207) 989-7050 or city-clerk-office@brewermaine.gov.

Brewer City Council

Jenn Morin, Mayor

Soubanh Phanthay, Deputy Mayor

Michele Daniels, Councilor

Dani O'Halloran, Councilor

Bill Kimball, Councilor