

## November 2019 Public Works Report

### Roads

- As I write this, we have made a dent in the snow removal from the epic blizzard of 11/30-12/1. We will continue to do all that we can to keep roads clear, widened, sanded, and safe. There will be subsequent snow clean-up operations for weeks into December. Only twice in my life as a kid in Washburn have I seen snow come down at that rate – Fall of 1991 and Winter of 1996. The Town's road equipment is being pushed to the limits and we have the 410 and 444 loaders, along with the 772 Grader operating as much as possible to keep the primary roads open. The TV145 tractor with snowblower attachment should be operational soon but is suffering from an electrical issue. **I would like to thank all residents of secondary roads for their patience**, as the heavy tandem plow trucks were unable to open the roads due to the volume of snow on top of non-frozen, soft gravel. The amount of heavy, wet snow was an unfortunate recipe for a mess and could only begin to be removed by equipment. For those who had to complain, as well as a general explanation of our order of operations for efficiency and safety, I ask that you consider these facts -
  - Road equipment is stored outside this winter due to Fire equipment.
  - We do not have a diesel mechanic and do much of the maintenance ourselves with Pete at the helm.
  - We have 4 full-time/1 part-time crew members to cover about 90 lane miles of road. That doesn't include any parking lots, intersections, the dock or the airport.
  - Fire/Emergency Service accessibility comes first, then the dock, then the roads in order of priority and importance, then the crucial buildings. With 3-foot drifts over large areas such as that, you can do the math and deduce the volume of snow to move.
  - The crew operated equipment as much as physically possible during and after the storm to ensure accessibility as quickly as possible. Some lower priority areas will not be opened until early December.
  - There was an open position for full-time Road Crew/Operator from 8/29/19-11/19/19, anybody that didn't apply to join the team to help out shouldn't be whining.

### Parks

- Holiday decorations were put up at the gazebo, the blue snowflake was adjusted from seizure mode to straight 'on' on the second day.
- The Rec Center remodel has been cut from the 2020 budget, so expect porta-potties again next summer. C&S Design and Engineering has made up some great plans for larger restrooms, but the remodel itself will have to wait.

### Misc./Admin

- Pete and I met with Emmer Shields and Matt Erickson of Ashland County to go over expectations/standards for the future, erosion and culvert monitoring, and general County H maintenance. Matt has taken Emmer's position as Highway Commissioner and I look forward to continuing a good relationship between the Town and County. Congrats to Emmer - your legacy, knowledge, experience, humor, and strength in character will be remembered here.

Be Safe and Happy Holidays,  
Respectfully Submitted, Ben Schram, Public Works Director

