

August 2021 Public Works Report

Roads

- As the drought of this summer wore on, so did the efforts of the road crew, who spread water with the tanker built in-house to promote effective grading and keep the gravel road network maintained. However, 8/3 – 8/4 and 8/10 – 8/11 saw nearly 17,000 gallons of liquid calcium chloride applied on the north end roads by a contractor. We will be testing flake magnesium chloride applied directly to specific watered roads next month, in anticipation of cutting costs next year, and looking at alternately using this proven method next season if tests are successful.
- This month I met with the Ashland County Highway Commissioner to discuss our options for mixing the multiple materials on site at the airport with the goal of blending and making dense graded base road gravel. This has been discussed over the past few years and it is time to revisit the possibility, as the Town's stockpile is getting very low.
- The easternmost end of Amundsen Lane had some clearing, ditching, and lifting done to allow access by Fire/EMS, as well as Town snow removal equipment and service providers with tanker trucks. This portion of Town road has not been improved for many years and safe access was getting very limited.

Parks

- The Big Bay Town Park pit toilets have finally received an overdue makeover which included deep cleaning, new fan motors, pest control, new paint, and epoxy floors. They are the only year-round option for public park bathrooms, and that is why they remain. Thanks to Ray for a fantastic job!
- Summer maintenance and cleaning tasks for all the Parks were steady throughout the month due to the influx of visitors, but the Parks crew held it together. Great behind the scenes job by everyone.

Airport

- While Major Gilbert Field 4R5 is not usually mentioned in the PW report, I would like the public to be aware that the Roads crew and myself worked with Airport Manager Paul Wilharm and spent considerable time this month taking advantage of the drought conditions. With the TV145 tractor disc cutter and Evan's Diamond mower attachment, we were able to brush cut and clear large areas, including more effort around the AWOS weather station, that has otherwise been inaccessible for years due to swampy conditions. We will do our best to continue this work while conditions allow. We are not able to mow down tag alder forest in standing water with our equipment.

Misc./Admin

- As we head into the budget season, I look forward to working with other Department Heads to find cost effective ways to reach collective goals. The trends are clear that there are more and more visitors each season, and more year-round residents, and I know we'll do the best we can.

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Schram, Public Works Director