



AGENDA ITEM # 9.1

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

Report Prepared by: Jason Gorr – Public Works Director

Date: September 3, 2019

Subject: Snow Plowing Policy

Report: The Snow Plowing Policy was recently updated and descriptions, goals of service, process, parking restrictions, resident responsibilities, and complaint procedures are specified and detailed within. Please note the specific and minor modification made to the fire hydrant snow removal requirements as previously discussed.

Council Action Requested: Council motion approving the Snow Plowing Policy as presented.



SNOW PLOWING POLICY

AMENDED: 9-3-19

1. Introduction

The City of Pequot Lakes believes that it is in the best interest of the residents for the City to assume basic responsibility for control of snow and ice on City streets. Reasonable ice and snow controls are necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The City will provide such control in a safe and cost-effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personnel and environmental concerns. (To be provided by City employees, equipment, and/or private contractors.)

2. Who is performing the snow removal?

The City of Pequot Lakes Public Works Department has four employees who conduct snow and ice removal when needed. Their normal operations are suspended until all priority snow event tasks are completed. During business hours the Administration Staff handles questions/concerns about snow removal and delivers communication to the Public Works Director at the earliest opportunity. Please contact Pequot Lakes City Hall at (218)568-5222 with any questions or concerns about snow and ice removal operations and they will be addressed as soon as possible. As appropriate, someone from the Public Works Department will call back or take care of the issue as soon as possible. **In the event of an emergency, please call 911.**

Please do not stop the snowplow operator to ask questions as it only slows the operation down and puts all at risk. Operators have been instructed to relay all questions to the Public Works Director because he is responsible for snow and ice removal operations and makes decisions as to when operations will commence and how they will be carried out.

3. What equipment is used?

The City uses 3, 6-yard Dump Trucks with plows and wings to plow three separate truck routes. They consist of the Perimeter Route (2015 Mack Truck), the West Downtown Route (2019 Mack Truck), and the East Downtown Route (2001 Sterling Truck). See attached map for further details.

Two Ford F350 Trucks with Hiniker Plows and one with a sander, are utilized to plow City owned lots, alleys, trails, and properties. They are also integral for support and coordination of outlying areas.

A 1996 John Deere 310D 4x4 Tractor Backhoe with loader bucket is utilized to load trucks with salt/sand, clear and load snow piles in the downtown area, and open up areas of ice accumulation and drainage needs.

A John Deere 326D Skid Steer with bucket, blower, and broom attachments is utilized to help remove snow and ice from walkways, lots, smaller roads, and trails. This may also be used to move piles and potentially load trucks. A 22' Felling Trailer is essential in the transport of this piece of equipment as many of the City's streets are of great distance apart.

Other pieces of power equipment utilized by City Staff include a Cub Cadet Walk Behind Blower and several Stihl Backpack Blowers for the clearing of walkways.

4. When will the City start snow or ice control operations?

The Public Works Director will decide when and how to begin snow or ice control operations. Criteria that typically initiates plowing operations include:

- Snow accumulation of 3 inches or more.
- Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel.
- Icy conditions which seriously affect travel.
- Timing of a snowfall and when it has the potential to disrupt heavy use of streets.
- Significant precipitation after hours and drifting may cause a delay or suspension of a plow event. If possible, Staff time will be optimized and timed to clear main streets prior to heavy traffic periods.

Snow and ice control operations are costly and involve the use of limited personnel and equipment. Consequently, snowplowing operations will not generally be conducted for snowfall of less than 3 inches.

5. Suspension of Operations

Operations shall continue until all roads are passable. Widening and clean up operations may continue immediately or on the following working day depending upon conditions and circumstances. Safety of the plow operators and the public is important; therefore, snow plowing/removal operations may be terminated after 10-12 hours to allow personnel adequate time for rest. There may be instances when this is not possible depending on storm conditions and other circumstances.

Operations may also be suspended during periods of limited or zero visibility. Any decision to suspend operations shall be made by the Public Works Director and shall be based on the conditions of the storm.

6. Plow Routes and Sequencing

There are streets, public sidewalks, and public parking lots under the City's jurisdiction which are affected by this Policy. Sidewalks maintained by City personnel and sidewalks servicing public facilities may be cleared by City forces after street routes are completed. City parking lots shall also be cleared by City personnel; however, they may be cleared in conjunction with street routes or after street routes have been completed.

The Public Works Director has the responsibility of determining plow routes and the sequencing of operations. The Public Works Director shall retain the latitude to adjust sequencing of route assignments based on storm conditions, equipment availability, and/or other conditions warranting changes.

7. Priorities and schedule for which streets will be plowed

The City has classified City streets based on the street function, traffic volume, and importance to the welfare of the community. High volume streets which connect major sections of the City and provide access for emergency fire, police, and medical services will generally be given priority in the sequence.

The second priority streets are those streets providing access to schools and commercial businesses.

The third priority streets are low volume residential streets.

8. Level of Service

The intent of this Policy is to provide safe winter driving conditions appropriate for the type of travel necessary on City streets. The level of service described herein shall be considered a guideline with the understanding that immediately after a storm the level of service provided may be less than described herein and may vary across the City depending on storm conditions and other circumstances.

Streets shall be plowed and/or sanded to provide intersection approaches and curves to be as safe as conditions allow. Any chloride-based products will be used at safe minimal levels to achieve the conditions stated above with a priority for safety and a goal of minimizing environmental impacts.

9. Parking Restrictions

On-street parking is not compatible with efficient snow plowing operations. Vehicles left parked on the street for extended periods of time create problems for snow plows as well as safety problems with packed snow and ice around the vehicle.

Vehicles left on the streets during the posted winter months are subject to ticketing and/or towing (if interfering with potential snow removal operations). These enforcement actions are in conformance with City ordinance.

10. Responsibility of Residents

Snow storms create numerous problems and inconveniences. This Policy has identified streets, sidewalks, and parking lots that the City will clear. The residents will also have certain responsibilities. These include clearing their own driveways and private sidewalks, clearing areas for trash cans, and clearing around mailboxes.

Snow removal around fire hydrants located on, or adjacent to, private property are the responsibility of the property owner. A diameter of 6 feet minimum must be cleared to allow for emergency access with care given not to damage the hydrant or nearby gate valve (on ground level).

Areas should be cleared without depositing any snow into the street. There also must not be any large piles which obstruct vision of driveways or walks. Trash cans must not be placed on the street surfaces. The City will not clear private drives or walks.

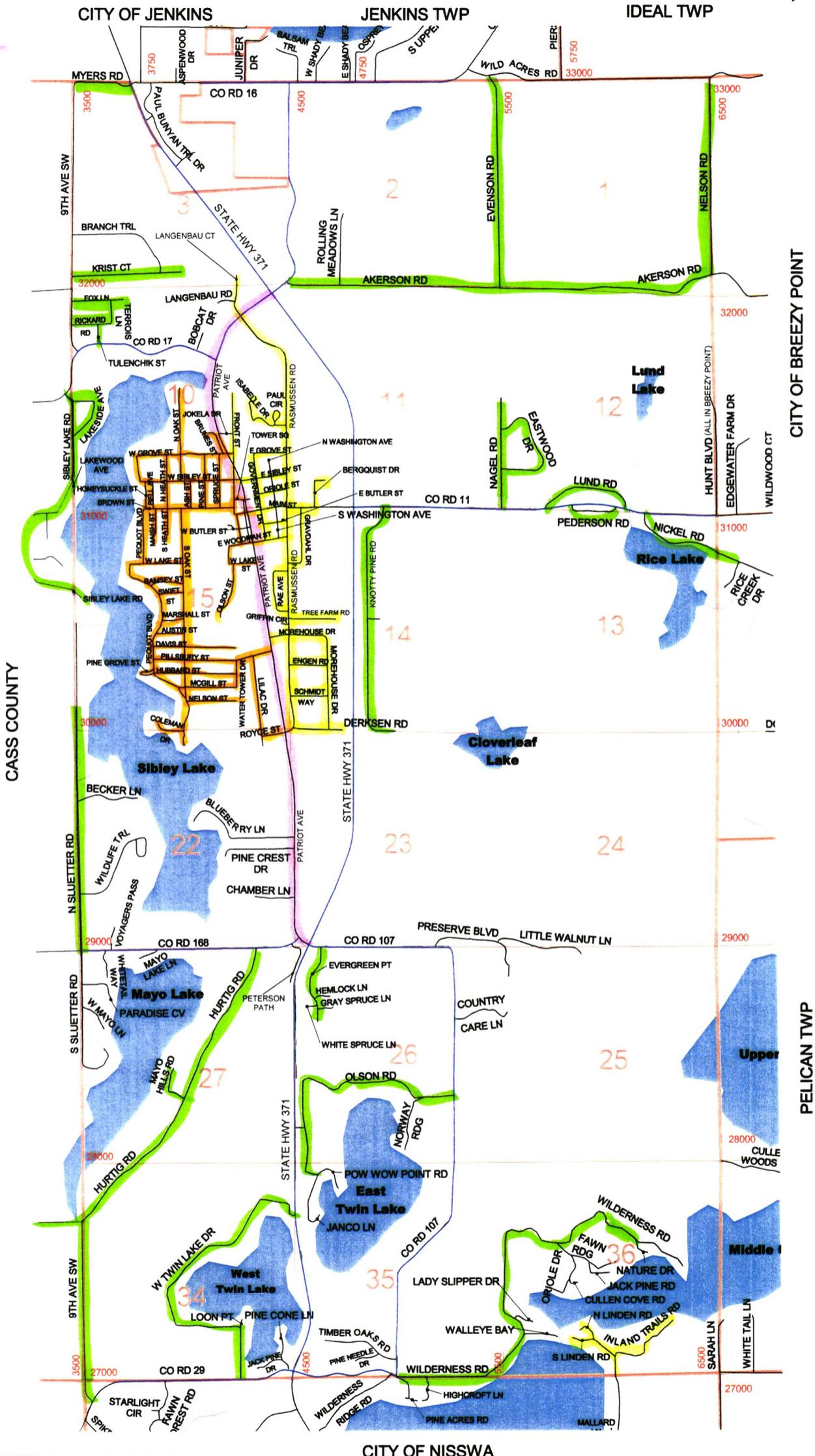
Snow plowing can cause additional snow to be deposited in driveway approaches and around roadside obstacles. Operators are instructed to attempt to minimize these instances; however, it is not practical to eliminate the situation. Residents should be aware they may have to clear their driveways a second time after their street has been plowed.

Complaints regarding snow and ice control or damage shall be taken during normal working hours and handled in accordance with the City's normal complaint procedure. High priority complaints (those involving access to property or problems requiring immediate attention) shall be handled on a priority basis. It should be understood that complaint responses are to ensure that the provisions of this Policy have been fulfilled and that all residents of the City have been treated uniformly. It is the City's intention to log all complaints and upgrade this Policy as necessary in consideration of the constraints of our resources.

Perimeter
 West Downtown
 East Downtown

City of Pequot Lakes

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UPDATED Mar. 6, 2018

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