

Type of Decision									
Meeting Date	Friday, February 17, 2017				Report Date	Monday, February 13, 2017			
Decision Required		Yes	X	No	Priority	X	High		Low
Direction		Information Only		X	Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed

Snowplowing Changes - Report #17/02/17/1101

Subject: Results of follow up from Deputation at December meeting concerning the plowing of municipal roads

RECOMMENDATION:

That if Council wishes to pursue this issue, it is re-addressed at contract renewal. Mayor Gibson has been apprised of the result and has contacted Mr. Chartier of the results back in December.

BACKGROUND/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

As a result of a deputation by Mr. Albert Chartier concerning snow being deposited in driveways during plowing operations, and a suggestion for modification, and as directed by Council, consultation occurred with the contractor about modifying the way in which plowing was occurring on municipal roads. An opportunity presented itself within days as Mr. Pat Stewart attended at the municipal office.

The situation was outlined, with council's request to determine whether or not there was a possibility of changing the pattern of plowing to avoid pushing so much snow into ratepayers' driveways. As directed by Council, we specifically discussed reversing the vehicle, attempting to plow a narrower swath on the way in the roads, and even lifting the blade.

There are inherent challenges with each option; as have been previously discussed with the contractor, the Clerk and the Road Supervisor in 2015 and early 2016. Mr. Chartier's was not the first request to have this process modified. This is not the first time this discussion has occurred between staff and the contractor. We have come to the same conclusions this time.

1. With the equipment currently being used, it is difficult to plow a narrower path on the way in a road. The width of the plow determines the width of the swath. The wing is required because if it wasn't used, the road would become too narrow too soon.

With heavy snow, the blade alone would not be sufficient to push the snow over the banks. Heavy snow would accumulate on the road and increase the wear and tear on equipment and narrow the roads.

With the current equipment, there is no way to divert some of the snow to the left (the middle of the road) to be collected on the way out.

2. Backing up at each driveway and attempting to clear what was placed in the driveway poses a number of challenges. The first is driver, traveller and equipment safety simply due to increased number of times a plow would have to reverse, and people not being used to this practise from a snowplow and perhaps following too close.

The second is with the increased time required to complete the entire process.

The third is with trespass on private property and the potential for damage to driveways and materials under the snow.

The fourth is again, wear and tear on a piece of equipment normally used at a certain speed to assist with pushing the snow.

3. Lifting the blade and/or wing on the approach to a driveway will result in large volumes of snow accumulating in front of a driveway creating additional challenges. If the snow is left on the road and freezes, it becomes a problem for the municipality due to liability should there be an accident if the resident was not home and able to clear it prior to freezing or accumulating to a dangerous depth. It is our job to remove the snow from the road.

Each driveway would become narrower and narrower, resulting in the homeowner having to clear the banks and the road as well as their driveway, and making egress much more difficult.

In discussing alternatives and options two main points were made by our contractor:

1. You will be hard pressed to find anyone who plows any differently than we currently do, mainly due to simplification of operations and liability for trespass on private property; and
2. He is not interested in changing operations. As we are in the middle of a contract, which he has been successfully filling for quite some time; we really have no other recourse.

In previous searches to find solutions to this challenge, staff canvassed other municipalities. The results were always the same; a municipality does not have a mandate to trespass, even if to remove snow from a private property; and there's no other way to do it.

Financial Considerations/Budget Impact:

Policy Impact:

Others Consulted:

Wilfred Lamure
Pat Stewart
Mayor Gibson

Approved and Recommended by the Clerk

Melinda Reith, Municipal Clerk

Melinda Reith