



CAO Report

January 10, 2022

We had a cold and wintery holiday break and New Year and I am proud of the work that staff did to maintain roads in the community with all the snow we are experiencing. The efforts continued during the statutory days with crews running shifts to maintain access and taking time also for family. These efforts were complicated by some equipment failures during the period (including one of our plough trucks) which delayed snow removal in certain areas for a short period while repairs were being made. It is important to note that when a piece of key equipment goes down, while the repair might be made quickly the removal snow in certain areas like the downtown core can be impeded until cars are no longer parked on the streets, usually in the early hours of the morning.

The cold snap also resulted in water mains breaking in three different locations over the period. Fixing a water main in conditions where it is 20 below plus wind chill make things challenging. Exploratory excavation with frost in the ground, complicated by water pouring in the hole from the broken line, and water vacuum trucks or tenders seizing up certainly add to the complexity. Also, on one of the breaks the water found a way to an old wood stave water main underground and moved almost a hundred feet before it surfaced. It was the expert sleuthing of our public works staff that determined what was happening, ultimately finding the location of the true leak below the road elsewhere. Of course, a temporary boil water order was mandated with the removal of positive pressure in the lines and so for some residents, this was an inconvenience, and we appreciate the patience of the community as we dealt with the issues. For other residents, they had assumed their water was shut off because of the District break only to find out later that their own water lines on their own property were in fact frozen. We used Facebook and the afterhours phone line to good effect to guide residents during this period.

With the emergence of the new Omicron variant, we continue to maintain a high degree of vigilance to protect our employees and community as well as needed community services. Our COVID 19 Return to Work Policy, Communicable Disease Policy and Working from Home Policy have all been revisited and redistributed to staff with some modifications. Staggered work breaks and start and end times are being utilized, as well as increased surface cleaning. Social distancing is maintained, hand sanitizer and hand washing is encouraged, and masks continue to be worn in the indoor public spaces. Vaccination including boosters are encouraged and staff are provided time if necessary to be vaccinated. Where possible we are encouraging staff to use Zoom or Microsoft Teams for meetings and we are postponing the in-person public hearing regarding short term rentals that was scheduled for January 24, 2022. Finally, for your information Council -- at the end of the week administration is expecting that masks will once again be required for everyone attending a meeting in-person in Council Chambers.

Overall, we are certainly off to an exciting start to 2022 and we will continue to monitor things and respond accordingly as the year unfolds.

Respectfully submitted,

Graham Statt, Chief Administrative Officer