



Timberline Special Service District Administrative Control Board - Board Report

Subject: Summer Road Maintenance
Author: Logan Jones
Date: July 30, 2024
Type of Item: Consideration of Approval

Board Inquiry: Disparity in Maintenance Management - Winter vs. Summer

As we evaluate our current maintenance strategies, it is important to address a key discrepancy in our staffing approach. We employ a dedicated team of three to ensure our roads are well-maintained during the winter months, which has proven effective in delivering uninterrupted snow plowing services. However, when it comes to summer maintenance, we rely on volunteer board members to manage planning, procurement and management, despite the equally critical nature of this work.

Given the labor-intensive and strategic/budgetary demands of summer road maintenance, why do we continue to rely on volunteer board members for this essential task rather than employing a qualified professional to oversee it?

Hiring a dedicated road maintenance supervisor would not only alleviate the burden on board members but also ensure that long-term planning, budgeting, and procurement are handled with the same level of expertise and consistency as our winter operations. This strategic shift would enable us to develop comprehensive maintenance plans, improve budget accuracy, and ultimately enhance the quality and reliability of our infrastructure.

Recommendations

1. Budget for a road maintenance supervisor in the upcoming budget cycle. Begin the search for the right person, as soon as possible.
2. Adjust our road planning process to ensure maintenance is quoted and procured one summer in advance. This approach will enable more accurate budgeting and scheduling.

Analysis

The TSSD has allocated significant funds towards summer road maintenance over the past six years, with the following expenditures:

- 2018: \$52,103.75
- 2019: \$50,840.51
- 2020: \$47,829.85
- 2021: \$26,953.83
- 2022: \$35,855.55
- 2023: \$35,901.50

When Eric assumed the role of Treasurer and analyzed the historical data, he identified a trend of substantial spending on road maintenance, coupled with the depletion of savings funds. This pattern highlights that our current approach and lack of long term planning is unsustainable.



Despite the significant improvements in road quality since 2018, we still lack a clear understanding of the long-term maintenance and replacement needs for the past six years of enhancements. Here are some insights we've gained and areas where further research is necessary regarding summer road maintenance:

- Cleaning Ditches
 - Cost: \$9,000 per year
 - Importance: High - Full ditches create significant road maintenance issues.
 - Reason: Large loose gravel from new road surfaces easily fills ditches, capturing small sediments and blocking culverts and ditches entirely.
- Asphalt Maintenance
 - Cost: \$3,000 to \$15,000 every few years
 - Importance: High - We need to consider our asphalt an investment and aim to extend its lifespan.
 - Reason: Routine maintenance of asphalt is essential.
 - Issues:
 - While contacted companies recommend action, they cannot guarantee a quality job due to adjacent gravel surfaces that wear off seal coats quickly.
 - More research is needed for a type 2 slurry or chip seal treatment. Some vendors have indicated their schedules are already full for 2024.
 - The neighborhood's single access road complicates maintenance, as closing one lane for seal treatment would require full-time flaggers and significantly impact residents for 48 hours or more.
- Recycled Asphalt or "Millings"
 - Cost: Undetermined
 - Importance: High - This material now comprises the majority of the surfaces on our neighborhood roads.
 - Reason: To maintain driving surfaces.
 - Issues:
 - Uncertainty about the longevity of certain stretches staying compacted.
 - Potential complications when re-grading sections, such as the Eastern end of Ponderosa, and the possible need for a milling machine to make this material spreadable again.
 - Considering whether chip sealing certain sections of roads would be more effective.
 - Determining the best methods for dust mitigation.

Key Learnings and Needs for Summer Road Maintenance

1. Strategic Planning: It's evident that without a comprehensive, long-term maintenance plan, our efforts are reactive rather than proactive, leading to inefficient use of resources and unpredictable outcomes.
2. Professional/Non-volunteer Oversight: The complexities and technical demands of summer maintenance highlight the need for a dedicated road maintenance supervisor. This role would ensure that maintenance activities are planned, budgeted, and executed with professional oversight.
3. Budget Accuracy: Procuring maintenance services one summer in advance will improve our ability to budget and schedule work more accurately, avoiding the pitfalls of last-minute decisions and cost overruns.
4. Infrastructure Longevity: Understanding the long-term impact and maintenance requirements of the improvements made since 2018 is crucial. This includes researching the best maintenance techniques for asphalt and recycled asphalt surfaces, as well as effective ditch cleaning strategies.



In conclusion, to address these issues and ensure the sustainability of our road maintenance efforts, I propose hiring a road maintenance supervisor. This employee would be responsible for developing long-term maintenance plans, managing procurement processes, and ensuring that all summer maintenance activities are carried out efficiently and effectively. This strategic shift would enable us to enhance the quality and reliability of our summer maintenance operations, ultimately benefiting the entire community.

Opportunities

This year we assumed that we could likely get away with a smaller amount, or no, summer road maintenance funds in order to get a better grasp on cash flow, increase depleted equipment savings funds and purchase a skid steer and blower to ensure plowing services can go uninterrupted despite one machine being in need of repairs and enable some inhouse summer maintenance.

Looking into the future, it makes the most sense to change our road planning process so that maintenance is quoted and procured one summer before it is performed. By proceeding in this way, we can budget and schedule more accurately.

Without a master plan to guide maintenance work towards a known goal, we are operating blindly in terms of both budget and vision. This job is far too labor-intensive to expect a volunteer board member to perform.

I propose hiring a road maintenance supervisor in the upcoming budget to help develop long-term road plans and perform procurement for each summer approximately one year ahead. This change would allow all board members to focus on more strategic planning and the approval of well-developed and researched plans.

So what are the plans for Summer 2024 Maintenance?

Procure work for spring of 2025 - I think that is where my time is best spent.

What must be done in 2024?

- Ditch cleaning (Fall 2024)
 - Budgeted \$8,000
- Chip seal or crack seal
 - Quoted \$2,000 to \$12,894 (Waiting on final quotes and recommendations)
- Dust Control: Quoted -
 - Quoted - \$6,500
 - Plus the water truck needed approximately \$1,500 for rental and operator.
 - Total Expected: \$8,000

Any remaining funds could be spent on four identified “soft spots” in roads or general grading and compacting on trouble areas.