



January 3, 2019 Department of Public Services

The following items are designed to present information on Public Services Department work items recently completed, those expected to occur during the upcoming month, and other items of potential interest to the public. Information is subject to change at any time due to staff availability, weather events or other emergency situations, or numerous other factors. Items are not necessarily in order of importance, and may not be repeated in their entirety from month to month unless there is a need for continued reporting.

1. Citizen Request Module (CRM) items – The City uses the “My Monroe on the Go” application to track citizen requests. During the month of December, a total of 20 service requests were entered requiring action from this department, down significantly from 31 the previous month. Seven (7) of these were pothole concerns or other road hazards, four (4) were forestry-related, four (4) were logged refuse collection referrals, two (2) were malfunctioning street lights, two (2) were signs issues, and one (1) was a dead animal.

As per the Department operations manual, all code enforcement items where property owners will eventually be billed are entered by staff and tracked within the Action Line system for record-keeping purposes, and other non-emergency requests for service received via phone call are generally logged into the system as well.

For the entire year 2018, DPS responded in one fashion or another to 798 requests submitted through the CRM. It should be noted that with the new system, High Grass and Weeds referrals, which was the largest-volume category from 2008–2017, are now forwarded through the Building Department, so the 2018 total is significantly less than the 2017 total of 1298. The major categories were as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>2018 Items</u>
Forestry Issues	336
Pothole / Road Hazard	228
Refuse / Recycling / Yard Waste	97
Street Light Outages	61
Signs	36
<u>Other Items</u>	<u>40</u>
Total Department	798

2. Forestry Activities – in the month of December the Forestry work group completed 15 tree removals and trimmed 14 trees, and brush was cleared in one (1) City alley. Furthermore, the year-end statistics are estimated at 252 tree removals, 804 tree trims and 231 tree plantings. Projects being planned this winter include tree maintenance at City Parks, tree maintenance downtown south of the river, and stump removals city wide.

3. Yard Waste Collection – yard waste collection ended for the season with collection the week of December 10, and will resume again the week of April 1.
4. Enterprise Fleet Management Program – the City Council approved of entering into a contract with Enterprise to lease vehicles to the City in lieu of cash purchases, and said vehicles are then replaced on a five-year cycle to minimize maintenance costs. City staff will continue to perform the maintenance, and staff is finalizing the vehicle specifications for the first 18 vehicles. As a part of the program, we will also be switching to a different fueling program that should afford more widespread fueling options. The first 18 vehicles have been ordered and will be delivered in the next 2-4 months, depending on the units, with six (6) having been delivered at the end of December. Significant time is being spent in transitioning to the Enterprise maintenance program, which will better allow for determination of costs and maintenance history. We will also still be responsible for the installation of any after-market items, and a request to purchase four (4) V-plows for new units was approved at the December 17 City Council meeting.
5. Vactor Truck / Storm Cleaning – the City Council approved the purchase of a new vactor truck to be used in cleaning catch basins and storm sewers at the August 6 meeting, and we accepted delivery in September. Due to freezing conditions, this unit is typically not used much during the winter months, though some of our backlog was eased this past fall as we prioritized this work.
6. Cold Patching – this continues to be a primary work activity, as it generally is for most of the year. Citizens should feel free to contact Public Services staff via the citizen request module, phone, or email to report potholes, and we will do our best to handle complaints as quickly as possible. We typically try to address any complaints within 48 hours most of the year. Obviously, during inclement weather, resolution of potholes tends to be more problematic but we do attempt to handle these as soon as the weather stabilizes after receiving the complaint.
7. Holiday Decorations / Events – DPS staff installed decorations ahead of the downtown tree lighting on November 17. As in previous years, the DDA volunteers were responsible for decorating any poles and locations that can be reached with ladders, and our staff installed the overhead decorations at the three (3) banner locations, the lights on the large tree in front of the courthouse, the light poles on the Monroe Street Bridge, and the lit decorations mounted on various light poles. Staff was also responsible for traffic control, electrical connections, and other logistics related to the downtown Christmas Magic parade on December 15. Removal of the decorations each year is always subject to weather conditions, though they are always left up through New Year's Day. Unless there are unexpected weather conditions, staff is expected to be completed with all removal by the beginning of next week. As might be expected, significant staff time is spent preparing and removing each year's decorations, and staffing the events on behalf of the City.
8. Winter Operations Policy – the Department issued our official winter operations policy document on November 28, which is largely identical to last year's policy. The Parks and Recreation Department will again handle snow removal activities at the various park facilities, including Munson Park and Mark Worrell Trail in particular for more targeted attention to our facilities that remain most heavily-used during winter and snowy conditions. At present, all 14 Teamster personnel are currently budgeted to remain under the supervision of the Public Services Department during winter operations, with Parks retaining one (1) Teamster assigned to their operations and available for winter activities. For the month of December, favorable weather required only spotty salting responses and no plowing.

9. Downtown curb line snow removal contract renewal – after two (2) years with a dedicated service contract, in 2017-18 the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) chose not to enter into a contract to remove the continuous row of snow from the top of the curbs in the downtown area that results from both roadway plowing and sidewalk clearance by property owners. As such, DPS staff will be again tasked fully with this work in 2018-19. With these activities generally considered to be a lower priority than street and parking lot clearance City-wide, in larger storm events this activity may be postponed 3-4 days until it can be undertaken.
10. Miscellaneous Winter Projects – as with every winter, the Department keeps a list of potential projects that can either be accomplished inside, or could be addressed appropriately in a year without bitterly cold temperatures and / or excessive snow. Additional low-limbining of trees is always a major priority as it is probably the single most consistent departmental activity where proactivity will yield long-term dividends in the form of fewer emergency call-outs. We typically like to also make headway on sign replacement during the winter, specifically those stop and street name signs necessary to meet Federal retro-reflectivity guidelines and that may not require new channels to be driven into the ground. This year's focus will be on parking and miscellaneous signs on the south side of the River.

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