



City Council
**Maintenance &
Development Sub-
Committee**

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Lavar Click-Bruce (Chair)

~Final~

**February 12,
2026**

4:00 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Call To Order

4:00 PM Meeting called to order on February 12, 2026, VIRTUAL participation only.

Roll Call

Virtual

Lavar Click-Bruce (Chair) **In person at 4:20 PM*

Kateri Walsh

Justin Hurst

Victor Davila

Chris Cignoli (Director DPW)

Jonathan (Constituent)

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Brian Santaniello	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Gerry Martin	City Councilor — Ward 7	Excused	
Maria Perez	City Councilor — Ward 1	Absent	
Malo Brown	City Councilor — Ward 4	Excused	
Zaida Govan	City Councilor — Ward 8	Excused	
Kateri Walsh	City Councilor At Large	Virtual	
Justin Hurst	City Councilor At Large	Virtual	
Victor Davila	City Councilor — Ward 6	Virtual	
Michael Fenton	City Councilor — Ward 2	Absent	

Jose Delgado	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Lavar Click-Bruce	City Councilor — Ward 5	Present	
Melvin Edwards	City Councilor — Ward 3	Excused	
Tracye Whitfield	City Councilor At Large	Excused	

Public Portion

Discussion on snow removal throughout the city.

Minutes:

Maintenance and Development Committee Meeting Summary

Date: Thursday the 12th

Time: 4:06 p.m. – 5:02 p.m.

Council Chair Click-Bruce called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. Participants included Councilor Victor Davila, Councilor Kateri Walsh, Councilor Justin Hurst, Constituent Jonathan, and Director of Public Works Chris Cignoli, P.E.

Council Chair Click-Bruce stated the purpose of the meeting was to address resident concerns regarding snow removal operations, including street plowing, treatment timing, and related issues raised at recent neighborhood meetings.

Chris Cignoli, P.E., explained that there is no fixed snowfall depth that automatically triggers plowing. Decisions are based on multiple factors, including pre- and post-storm temperatures, snow type (wet versus light/fluffy), timing, and forecasted conditions. He cited recent examples:

- A recent 2.5-inch snowfall of light, fluffy snow did not require full plowing because treated roads packed down and cleared with sun exposure.
- Storms on January 17 and 19 required full citywide plowing due to wet snow and anticipated freezing temperatures. These events occurred within 36 hours of each other.

He clarified that regardless of whether full citywide plowing occurs, the City treats main roads, secondary roads, and hill routes before, during, and after storms.

Constituent Jonathan described a situation on Masrico Street, where a plow appeared to sit at the end of the street and did not plow despite 3–4 inches of snow accumulation. He expressed concern, particularly given elderly residents in the area. Chris Cignoli responded that operators may be staged for sanding/salting or coordinating with other vehicles and stated that “we’re not allowed to plow yet” would not be the preferred explanation. He emphasized that crews are instructed to lower plows as needed and that city plows typically work in tandem. He also noted that in some cases, private driveway contractors may plow portions of streets, which can create

confusion.

Council Chair Click-Bruce referenced additional concerns raised at a Pine Point meeting regarding Pearson and Arnold Streets and stated he would follow up offline.

Councilor Victor Davila requested an update on snow and ice expenditures. Chris Cignoli reported:

- Snow and ice budget: \$1.591 million.
- Current deficit spending: approximately \$700,000 as of the prior Friday.
- Projected year-end deficit: estimated between \$700,000 and \$1 million.
- Total projected spending likely to exceed \$2 million.

He identified salt as a primary cost driver, with salt expenditures projected near \$800,000 compared to a budgeted line item of approximately \$450,000–\$600,000. He noted that a major storm three weeks prior cost approximately \$571,000. Additional expenses include contractor payments, vehicle maintenance, fuel, and repairs. He stated that discussions with Finance would occur later in the season regarding transfers or other funding mechanisms.

Councilor Davila raised concerns about side street conditions, specifically in the Cozy Corner neighborhood (Garfield, Fergley, Magnolia, Washington, Washington Boulevard, Florentine Gardens), as well as Hartford Terrace and Bither Street off Allen Street. He also reported concerns about Frederick Harris School related to ice accumulation from rooftops. Chris Cignoli clarified that school facility issues fall under the Facilities Department (John Kerrigan).

In response to reports of plows traveling with blades raised, Chris Cignoli stated that city plows operate in tandem and that isolated plows observed may be private contractors not working for the City.

Councilor Kateri Walsh raised concerns about high snowbanks limiting visibility at intersections and inquired about staffing levels. Chris Cignoli stated:

- Ten years ago, approximately 150 contractors worked with the City; currently fewer than 100.
- Previously 10 trucks per section; currently approximately 5–6 per section.
- The City has lost larger contractors with heavier equipment.
- DPW is approximately 10 drivers short.
- Recruitment is challenged by civil service processes, insurance costs for contractors, and workforce shortages.
- Contractor pay rates are competitive (approximately \$145 per hour for smaller vehicles),

and contractors are paid within 7–14 days after storms.

He noted misinformation persists that contractors are not paid promptly, which he described as inaccurate.

Councilor Walsh also asked about pothole response. Chris Cignoli stated that two crews are currently addressing potholes. He advised that road conditions may worsen before improving due to deep frost levels and thaw cycles. Residents may file damage claims through the Law Department, though claim approval is determined through a formal review process.

Regarding parking bans, Chris Cignoli reported improved compliance compared to previous years but stated that noncompliance remains significant, particularly in densely populated areas such as the South End. The City maintained the parking ban for approximately two weeks following the major storm to facilitate snow removal and conducted extensive ticketing and towing in coordination with the Police Department and CJs. He clarified that towing contracts are managed through the Police Department and that DPW is not responsible for contract terms.

Councilor Justin Hurst emphasized the importance of public communication about ongoing snowbank removal efforts. Chris Cignoli reported coordination with the Mayor's Office of Communications, media interviews, neighborhood councils, social media platforms, flashing message boards, and direct email outreach. He noted that complaint patterns evolve over time—from plowing adequacy to snowbank height and sidewalk conditions.

Councilor Hurst also asked about coordination with the School Department during storms. Chris Cignoli stated that DPW coordinates with the School Department's safety office regarding cancellations, delays, and plowing timing.

Additional topics discussed:

- Traffic signal sensor malfunction near Exclusives Barbershop was identified as a faulty controller/sensor and addressed.
- Concerns about towing financial burdens on low-income residents were acknowledged.
- Landlord refusal to allow driveway parking during bans was noted as a recurring issue.
- Downtown garages were opened during the major storm to alleviate parking pressure.
- Increased complaints were received regarding uncleared sidewalks and private properties. Enforcement falls under ordinance/code enforcement.

Council Chair Click-Bruce raised concerns about sidewalk safety near schools and private properties and suggested further discussion regarding enforcement and safety priorities.

Councilor Davila raised concerns about buried fire hydrants. Chris Cignoli stated residents are responsible for clearing hydrants, though enforcement is limited. The Fire Department occasionally requests assistance from DPW. Bus stop clearing was also discussed, with

coordination involving PVTa and partner organizations.

Regarding staffing, Chris Cignoli stated that DPW has experienced difficulty hiring drivers. Two recent hires declined after signing offer letters. He attributed hiring challenges to competition with higher-paying employers and workforce shortages. Contractors are not subject to city residency requirements; regular employees must comply with civil service requirements and have two years to establish residency if applicable.

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]