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2026 MAR -9 A 9:53

The Committee on Government Operations, Public Safety & Public Service met on Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 6:00pm in City Council Chambers.

The meeting was recorded by ECTV and can be viewed on the City of Everett website.

Members present were Councilor Holly Garcia, presiding and Councilors Michele Capone, Stephanie Martins and Peter Pietrantonio.

The Committee met on a Resolution offered by Councilor Peter Pietrantonio: That the Director of Inspectional Services appear at this meeting to answer questions about the recent snow storm.

Director of Inspectional Services David Palumbo, Executive Director of City Services Bob Knox and Police Sergeant Joe Gaff were also present.

Councilor Pietrantonio asked Mr. Palumbo what is staffing situation was like for the storm and Mr. Palumbo explained that five Code Enforcement Inspectors were on duty as essential employees during snow emergencies. Mr. Palumbo noted that in the first storm 48 tickets were issued and 40 warnings were given. Councilor Pietrantonio remarked that he just wanted assurances that all resources were being utilized for these storms. Mr. Palumbo assured him that his Department was better organized for the second storm and that they removed over 800 space savers. Mr. Palumbo suggested that the Snow Removal Ordinance should be changed since he is unable to enforce anything until 12 hours after the declaration of a snow emergency has ended. Councilor Capone mentioned that she received fewer complaints on the second storm than she did on the first storm. She asked how long could a vehicle be buried in snow and Sergeant Gaff explained that the Police Department maintains a spreadsheet that identifies the locations of these buried vehicles and that there is a 48 hour requirement to clear the vehicle of snow but what they do is knock on the door of the owner and if no response they leave a notice on vehicle with the final action being a tow if the vehicle still is cleaned within a week. Councilor Capone inquired to what the #1 complaint was from the snow storms and Mr. Palumbo responded that it was various things but many complaints about space savers, but asked the Committee how heavy handed did they want to be in having tickets issued and felt that some discretion was needed in these situations. Councilor Martins asked what was DPW's plan in addressing these storms and Mr. Knox responded that every storm was different based on the time it was arriving, temperature, existing snow on the ground, etc., but noted that the main roads are the focus at the beginning of a storm. He remarked that you're never going to please everyone and acknowledged that he inherited a great staff. Councilor Martins asked what routes are covered by DPW versus the Contractors and Mr. Knox explained that it was being done by a combination of multiple pieces from both DPW and Contractors and agreed to provide her with a list of the Contractors. Councilor Martins also asked who covers City and School properties and Mr. Knox responded that the Schools is responsible for handling their property and that the DPW and Facilities handles the City property when it comes to snow removal. Councilor Martins inquired if there were supervisors driving around verifying that work is being completed and Mr. Knox stated yes that the City was broken down into four sections with 19 plows. Sergeant Gaff remarked that there was no magic to this and referenced how both storms hit on a Sunday at different times of the day and mentioned how they had to take into consideration church services and businesses still being open even though the City had provided a 24 hour notification of a snow emergency before the storm arrived. He informed the Committee that in the first storm they issued 355 tickets and towed over 200 vehicles and that in the second storm they issued 372 tickets and towed 225 vehicles. Councilor Martins suggested that to be more effective in communicating with residents the City should provide notifications if different languages. Councilor Capone felt that the City was very responsive but suggested that the City have an isolated snow hotline but Sergeant Gaff explained that the 311 constituent services line is the ideal place for these types of snow calls since an Excel spreadsheet can be sent to DPW to address the issues that were called. Mr. Knox concurred that 311 was the best landing spot for these types of issues. Councilor Capone asked what was the turnaround on these 311 calls and Mr. Knox stated that they prioritize the importance of the calls.

Sergeant Gaff noted that if it was a true emergency then DPW would ask him to assess the call location. Mr. Knox informed the Committee that no other surrounding communities spend more than the City of Everett on snow removal. Sergeant Gaff advised that patience is important and reminded the Committee that the City was only 6" away from the blizzard of 78 total snowfall amount. Councilor Capone inquired how DPW would address the ice storm projected for this evening and Mr. Knox explained that this would be mostly a salting event with the hills being done first which would ultimately burn off any snow without plowing being needed. He referenced the upcoming warmer weather forecast which would help in melting the existing snow piles. Councilor Pietrantonio remarked that it was nice having a good DPW Director. Mr. Knox thanked him and introduced some of his supervisory staff in attendance. Councilor Pietrantonio asked if the City helped the Schools with snow removal in the first storm and Mr. Knox confirmed that DPW had to pull crews off their routes to assist the schools with snow removal. Councilor Pietrantonio asked if the City had to help then with snow removal in the second storm and Mr. Knox responded that the City only assisted with salting not snow removal. Councilor Pietrantonio asked what the overall costs were for both storms and Mr. Knox informed the Committee that the first storm cost the City \$425,000 and the second storm \$202,000. Mr. Knox announced that he was proud of the work DPW and the contractors did on these two storms. Councilor Pietrantonio asked how many hours did DPW employees work during the storm and Mr. Knox acknowledged that some worked 30+ hours straight and that managing fatigue became a factor. Councilor Pietrantonio asked if a snowplow driver stopped to take a quick nap if that was an issue and Mr. Knox disclosed that they were entitled to breaks. Councilor Martins asked if there were any plans to remove some of the existing snow piles around the City and Mr. Knox responded no that snow removal was too costly and that warmer weather was forecasted which would help melt the snow. Councilor Martins suggested that the City consider offering shoveling services to seniors and Mr. Knox mentioned that they did have conversations on it but there was no end result but expected further discussions before next winter. Chairperson Garcia asked Sergeant Gaff so the public could hear to confirm that space savers were not allowed and Sergeant Gaff confirmed that they were not allowed. Chairperson Garcia asked if the noise ordinance was being enforced during snow emergencies and Sergeant Gaff stated that it was not. Chairperson Garcia referenced complaints about the City plows blocking driveways after they had already been shoveled out and Mr. Knox suggested that the residents wait until the end of the storm if possible to shovel out the driveway access.

The Committee voted: To report back to the City Council with a recommendation to refer back to Sponsor.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

The Committee on Government Operations, Public Safety & Public Service met on Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 6:00pm in City Council Chambers.

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Members present were Councilor Holly Garcia, presiding and Councilors Michele Capone, Stephanie Martins and Peter Pietrantonio.

The Committee met on a Resolution offered by Councilors Stephanie Martins and Stephanie Smith: That a representative of DPW appear at this meeting to answer questions for transparency regarding snow removal planning and strategy during snowstorms and post storm clean up.

Director of Inspectional Services David Palumbo, Executive Director of City Services Bob Knox and Police Sergeant Joe Gaff were also present.

Councilor Pietrantonio asked Mr. Palumbo what is staffing situation was like for the storm and Mr. Palumbo explained that five Code Enforcement Inspectors were on duty as essential employees during snow emergencies. Mr. Palumbo noted that in the first storm 48 tickets were issued and 40 warnings were given. Councilor Pietrantonio remarked that he just wanted assurances that all resources were being utilized for these storms. Mr. Palumbo assured him that his Department was better organized for the second storm and that they removed over 800 space savers. Mr. Palumbo suggested that the Snow Removal Ordinance should be changed since he is unable to enforce anything until 12 hours after the declaration of a snow emergency has ended. Councilor Capone mentioned that she received fewer complaints on the second storm than she did on the first storm. She asked how long could a vehicle be buried in snow and Sergeant Gaff explained that the Police Department maintains a spreadsheet that identifies the locations of these buried vehicles and that there is a 48 hour requirement to clear the vehicle of snow but what they do is knock on the door of the owner and if no response they leave a notice on vehicle with the final action being a tow if the vehicle still is cleaned within a week. Councilor Capone inquired to what the #1 complaint was from the snow storms and Mr. Palumbo responded that it was various things but many complaints about space savers, but asked the Committee how heavy handed did they want to be in having tickets issued and felt that some discretion was needed in these situations. Councilor Martins asked what was DPW's plan in addressing these storms and Mr. Knox responded that every storm was different based on the time it was arriving, temperature, existing snow on the ground, etc., but noted that the main roads are the focus at the beginning of a storm. He remarked that you're never going to please everyone and acknowledged that he inherited a great staff. Councilor Martins asked what routes are covered by DPW versus the Contractors and Mr. Knox explained that it was being done by a combination of multiple pieces from both DPW and Contractors and agreed to provide her with a list of the Contractors. Councilor Martins also asked who covers City and School properties and Mr. Knox responded that the Schools is responsible for handling their property and that the DPW and Facilities handles the City property when it comes to snow removal. Councilor Martins inquired if there were supervisors driving around verifying that work is being completed and Mr. Knox stated yes that the City was broken down into four sections with 19 plows. Sergeant Gaff remarked that there was no magic to this and referenced how both storms hit on a Sunday at different times of the day and mentioned how they had to take into consideration church services and businesses still being open even though the City had provided a 24 hour notification of a snow emergency before the storm arrived. He informed the Committee that in the first storm they issued 355 tickets and towed over 200 vehicles and that in the second storm they issued 372 tickets and towed 225 vehicles. Councilor Martins suggested that to be more effective in communicating with residents the City should provide notifications if different languages. Councilor Capone felt that the City was very responsive but suggested that the City have an isolated snow hotline but Sergeant Gaff explained that the 311 constituent services line is the ideal place for these types of snow calls since an Excel spreadsheet can be sent to DPW to address the issues that were called. Mr. Knox

concluded that 311 was the best landing spot for these types of issues. Councilor Capone asked what was the turnaround on these 311 calls and Mr. Knox stated that they prioritize the importance of the calls. Sergeant Gaff noted that if it was a true emergency then DPW would ask him to assess the call location. Mr. Knox informed the Committee that no other surrounding communities spend more than the City of Everett on snow removal. Sergeant Gaff advised that patience is important and reminded the Committee that the City was only 6" away from the blizzard of 78 total snowfall amount. Councilor Capone inquired how DPW would address the ice storm projected for this evening and Mr. Knox explained that this would be mostly a salting event with the hills being done first which would ultimately burn off any snow without plowing being needed. He referenced the upcoming warmer weather forecast which would help in melting the existing snow piles. Councilor Pietrantonio remarked that it was nice having a good DPW Director. Mr. Knox thanked him and introduced some of his supervisory staff in attendance. Councilor Pietrantonio asked if the City helped the Schools with snow removal in the first storm and Mr. Knox confirmed that DPW had to pull crews off their routes to assist the schools with snow removal. Councilor Pietrantonio asked if the City had to help then with snow removal in the second storm and Mr. Knox responded that the City only assisted with salting not snow removal. Councilor Pietrantonio asked what the overall costs were for both storms and Mr. Knox informed the Committee that the first storm cost the City \$425,000 and the second storm \$202,000. Mr. Knox announced that he was proud of the work DPW and the contractors did on these two storms. Councilor Pietrantonio asked how many hours did DPW employees work during the storm and Mr. Knox acknowledged that some worked 30+ hours straight and that managing fatigue became a factor. Councilor Pietrantonio asked if a snowplow driver stopped to take a quick nap if that was an issue and Mr. Knox disclosed that they were entitled to breaks. Councilor Martins asked if there were any plans to remove some of the existing snow piles around the City and Mr. Knox responded no that snow removal was too costly and that warmer weather was forecasted which would help melt the snow. Councilor Martins suggested that the City consider offering shoveling services to seniors and Mr. Knox mentioned that they did have conversations on it but there was no end result but expected further discussions before next winter. Chairperson Garcia asked Sergeant Gaff so the public could hear to confirm that space savers were not allowed and Sergeant Gaff confirmed that they were not allowed. Chairperson Garcia asked if the noise ordinance was being enforced during snow emergencies and Sergeant Gaff stated that it was not. Chairperson Garcia referenced complaints about the City plows blocking driveways after they had already been shoveled out and Mr. Knox suggested that the residents wait until the end of the storm if possible to shovel out the driveway access.

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