



## MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: 12/8/2025

To: Town of Grand Lake Board of Trustees  
From: Steve Kudron, Town Manager

**Re: SMI Snowmaker Request**

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Trustees:

With the Board's recent approval of the 2026 Budget—including an \$80,000 line item for the purchase of an HKD snowmaker—I am submitting this memo to recommend the purchase of an **SMI Polecat with Booster** for **\$29,950 plus freight** from the factory.

After reviewing our operational needs, evaluating available equipment, and consulting with staff, it is clear that the SMI Polecat offers the best combination of performance, reliability, and cost-effectiveness for the Town's snowmaking operations.

The 2026 Budget includes funding to replace and upgrade aging snowmaking equipment to ensure consistent snow coverage on Town-managed winter recreation areas. While the budget anticipated the purchase of an HKD unit, subsequent evaluation has shown that the SMI Polecat with Booster provides comparable or superior performance at a significantly lower cost. This creates an opportunity to meet our operational needs while preserving budget capacity for future snowmaking improvements.

Some of the benefits to this purchase include:

Significant Cost Savings:

The approved budget allocates \$80,000 for a new snowmaker. The SMI Polecat with Booster costs **\$29,950 plus freight**, less than half of the anticipated expenditure.

These savings allows the Town to:

- Stretch capital dollars further
- Potentially purchase additional snowmaking equipment or accessories
- Reduce long-term replacement costs
- Maintain flexibility for future winter operations investments

The financial efficiency of this purchase is a major advantage.

Proven performance and Reliability

The SMI Polecat is widely used in municipal and resort snowmaking operations due to its:

- High output at marginal temperatures
- Consistent snow quality
- Durable construction
- Low maintenance requirements

The addition of the booster increases water pressure and improves performance in variable conditions, an important factor in Grand Lake's climate.

Staff can operate and maintain the unit with minimal additional training.

Long Term Value

Because the Polecat is a well-supported, widely used model, parts and service are readily available. Its lower upfront cost combined with long service life makes it a strong long-term investment for the Town.

Based on performance, cost savings, and operational benefits, I recommend that the Board authorize the purchase of the **SMI Polecat with Booster** for **\$29,950 plus freight**.

This purchase fulfills the intent of the 2026 budget while delivering greater value and flexibility than originally anticipated. It strengthens our snowmaking capabilities, supports winter recreation, and ensures reliable operations for years to come.

I am happy to provide additional details or answer any questions during the next Board meeting.

Suggested Motion:

I move to recommend the SMI Polecat Purchase Agreement be Approved with a Down Payment to be made with 2025 and final payment completed in 2026.