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PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE
AND TELECONFERENCE
DECEMBER 20, 2023

ATTENDANCE:	Eric Rains, Chair Matthew Seebeck, Vice Chair Peter Fullam
STAFF	Jim Travers, Director, TMP Bryan Lutz, Asst. Parking Director
OTHERS:	Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Rains called the meeting to order at 6:00PM

1. PUBLIC COMMENT, LIMITED TO THREE MINUTES EACH SPEAKER

There were no public comments this evening.

3. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT

Mr. Manousos reported and said overall the fund balance for November was favorable to the budget, and on the revenue side there was a slowdown in transient activity but was offset by an increase in violation revenue, and the expenses were under budget. He said year to date the fund balance was favorable to budget as well and was mainly due to transient revenue and some expense savings. He said from the month and year to date comparison the revenue is up almost 8% compared to last year due to the rail stations, and transient revenue was down 1.3%, permit activity is up 4.5% compared to last year and permit revenue is up 5.4% compared to last year.

Mr. Manousos said there have not been any impacts to report from the Walk Bridge project in November.

Mr. Manousos reported on the variance report and said there were no variances on the revenue side to report, but there were a few on the expense side for maintenance, snow removal, and vehicle repairs.

Mr. Rains asked if the revenue for the beach violation is reported under the revenue line on the financial statement. Mr. Manousos said that Recreation and Parks keeps the parking revenue, and the Parking Authority receives the citation revenue. Mr. Rains asked if the cost of that shared role is known. Mr. Manousos said “no” because that is their expense and there is a separate contract with Recreation and Parks, and they pay for the enforcement cost. Mr. Travers said Recreation and Parks pays for the contract and the Parking Authority uses its own vehicles to do the enforcement as well as all enforcement tools, so the Parking Authority keeps any revenue for parking violations, but they keep the revenue for any meter payments to offset the expenses. Mr. Rains suggested tracking the revenue under the violations line to know what those numbers are. Mr. Rains asked if there are any other shared relationships. Mr. Travers said “yes” with Spinnaker for the apartments located at the East Norwalk Railroad Station and in that agreement the Parking Authority has 110 parking spaces and receives all of the revenue for those parking spaces, however when the agreement was made there was a requirement that the development would provide 50 transient parking spaces and they keep the revenue, and the Parking Authority has a requirement that the revenue has to match that of the Parking Authority and the Parking Authority does all of the enforcement and keeps the revenue generated from that enforcement. Mr. Rains said he does not want there to be a skew between total parking revenue and violations citywide.

Mr. Manousos said there are fewer transactions systemwide, but the revenue has been higher and the higher price transactions are offsetting the reduction in on-street meter activity, which has lower transactions.

Mr. Manousos reported on the permit sales and said they are seeing a steady improvement as more people are returning to work. He said that on street activity and revenue are down compared to last year to date

and are seeing slower night and weekend activity, but the revenue impact is not as large as the reduction in activity due to the shift in payment behavior and are seeing a lot fewer coin transactions in 2022-23 and a shift to credit cards or Pay by Cell. Mr. Rains asked if this information is shared with the Economic Development department. Mr. Travers said “yes” and has had conversations with Ms. Godeski regarding the transient activity but will review it with her to be sure she sees the value in the data that is being provided.

Mr. Fullam joined the meeting at 6:20PM.

Mr. Manousos reported on parking enforcement and said that issuance has been up compared to last year but is down compared to the previous year, and citation revenue counts for almost 22% of system revenue and 29% of collections comes from late fees and was approximately \$32,000 in November. Mr. Manousos shared the system revenue and citation revenue breakdown and asked if he should report on that going forward. Mr. Rains said “yes” Mr. Seebeck said when looking at the system revenue chart if Mr. Manousos could reiterate what the difference is between transient revenue and meter revenue. Mr. Manousos said that meter revenue refers to all on street transactions and transient revenue is all revenue generated from the parking lots and the garages.

Mr. Manousos reported on the ticket versus demand ratio and said there was a slight increase in November but is following seasonal trends.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Pay by Cell activity and said it is still going strong year over year and is seeing higher average transactions values.

Mr. Rains said that there was some work done at the Liberty Square parking lot and asked if that is still in good shape. Mr. Legesse said “yes”, and some cleaning and line striping was done over the summer, and with the closure of the state’s parking lot in the back there has been increased usage of transient parking in the front and are able to maintain the control that only tenants of the building and employees are getting a permit. Mr. Rains asked within the agreement for the Walk Bridge project if there is consideration for that. Mr. Travers said the return of Goldstein Place as is would be a requirement for them at the end of the project, and staff is also seeing what a new parking lot configuration may look like which would create some added parking spaces to support the businesses.

2. DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATED TO MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2023.

**** MR. SEEBECK MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MR. FULLAM SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. ENGINEERING AND PROJECT REPORT

- a. Update- Haviland Deck asphalt work

Mr. Lutz presented photos of the asphalt repair at Haviland Deck and said that some of the challenges the contractor had was that there were multiple layers of asphalt that they had to

remove, and it was removed effectively and it looks great, and the LAZ team striped the lot and more will be done along the side when there is an opportunity.

b. Update- YDG exterior repairs & Improvements

Mr. Lutz provided an update and said the bid opening will be held on January 10, 2024, for the Yankee Doodle Garage exterior repairs and improvements. He said he is hoping to get the recommendations to the Parking Authority for approval before February so that the project can begin in the spring. Mr. Rains asked if other city departments will be involved or if it will be just between the contractor and the Parking Authority. Mr. Travers said staff will work with the engineering team to do the review so Ms. Valadares and her team will be playing a part in the recommendations.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discuss and Vote- Handicap feature on multi-space meters.

Mr. Lutz said the handicapped feature would be added to the screen on the multi space meters to allow the handicapped users to pay the parking rate giving them the allowable time that handicapped users will have. He said the data is then transferred to the enforcement software, and it is the recommendation of staff to add this feature and the cost is \$350 per upgrade and there are two sections that will need to be upgraded so the total cost would be \$700. Mr. Travers provided a background and said that Connecticut State Law states that a person that displays a handicapped placard cannot receive a citation for beyond the posted time limit and cannot be held accountable for the same amount of time on a given street, but the system was not set up to support a handicapped placard individual paying for greater time than the time limits. He said to be able to manage that the enforcement officer would receive notification that an individual is using the handicapped feature and would ensure there is a handicapped placard present on the vehicle and if it were not the individual would get timed as normal and a citation would be issued. Mr. Rains said it seems this needs to be done to be compliant. Mr. Travers said “yes” because today they are not.

**** MR. SEEBECK MOVED TO AUTHORIZE TMP STAFF TO SPEND \$700 TO UPDATE THE SOFTWARE TO BE COMPLIANT WITH HANDICAPPED PARKING STATE LAW FOR MULTI-SPACE METERS.**

**** MR. FULLAM SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Discuss and Vote- FY 25 Operating Budget

Mr. Lutz presented the fiscal year 2025 operating budget and said staff is projecting a 4.8% increase in systemwide revenue and is mainly driven by the projected increases in permit and transient usage at the South Norwalk Train Station assets and is based on trends from this fiscal year, and another contributor to the increase is from the rental units. He said the expenses are consistent with what they are seeing now except for a few outliers such as the repair to the overhead doors at the South Norwalk Railroad Station with a high-speed exit due to the increase in activity that is being seen, as well as finishing some of the projects that were delayed due to the

pandemic. He said the operating expenses are the additional project load in response to the conditional appraisals that were received.

Mr. Seebeck said the numbers on the financial statement do not tie into the budget detail and said the 2.4% increase in violations seems like a product of where the Parking Authority has grown because of monthlies and transient. Mr. Seebeck asked if consulting costs are being picked up in 2025 for any assumed contracts, contract negotiations, etc. Mr. Lutz said “yes”, and they are anticipating that for the upcoming projects due to the conditional appraisals. Mr. Lutz said with the increased activity that is being seen in South Norwalk and the violations that Mr. Manousos reviewed in the operating report it is the Parking Authority’s due diligence to try and educate those customers on the options available for parking in the area and try to alleviate the violation number to and try and drive the monthly and transient revenue.

Mr. Rains asked what the process is if the Parking Authority needs to revisit the budget after it is approved. Mr. Travers said the Common Council had a judiciary responsibility to be sure the Parking Authority is putting forth a budget that is sustainable and if there were a change in the budget staff would submit the change to them.

Mr. Seebeck said the fees are 18% over this year but are only projecting a 4% increase next year and asked if fees are expected to come down to actual. Mr. Legesse said that this year there was a big increase in credit card transaction fees for people transitioning to credit card especially with the installation of the single space meters that are credit card, but for fiscal year 2025 they are not projecting a big transition to credit cards. Mr. Seebeck said he would feel more comfortable to at least meeting this year’s growth on the expense side and forecast it flat. Mr. Travers agreed and said that the Parking Authority should not anticipate that the credit card usage will decline when we are only seeing an increase in credit card usage and should anticipate the rate ending today is going to be the rate that will be seen next year and should at least go flat, and will also look at doing an RFQ or RFP for a service providers to look at what the new rate should be forecasted.

**** MR. SEEBECK MOVED TO APPROVE TMP SUBMITTING THE FY 2025
OPERATING BUDGET TO CITY FINANCE.
** MR. FULLAM SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Update- 15-minute free option

Mr. Lutz provided an update and said the signs were installed today and he will present photos at next month’s meeting. Mr. Fullam said transient parking is critically important for any area that has merchants, especially this time of year and it is great for the merchants. He also said that enforcement is critical, but he thinks over a period of time they will achieve what they are trying to achieve which is to create turnover. Mr. Rains asked if the 15-minute free option is just available in the Wall Street area or if it is citywide. Mr. Travers said that Wall Street will be used as the pilot area to be sure it is right before more signage is procured and roll it out citywide.

Mr. Travers said the reverse angled parking has been removed and returned to parallel parking and is working well for the Wall Street area. Mr. Legesse said they have received a tremendous number of compliments in the office, especially from the business owners.

7. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. FULLAM MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. SEEBECK SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd