



Members of the public can call in and listen to a meeting. They will not be able to speak or see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide “live comments” will need to register in advance and use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the “raise your hand indicator” and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to view the meeting, but are not participating, can view a live stream on the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. This stream is delayed by approximately 20 seconds. Please find the information using the link above. The meeting recording and minutes will be posted on the City of Norwalk website within seven (7) days after the meeting.

Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via e-mail in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Jessica Vonashek at jvonashek@norwalkct.org to provide written comment prior to the meeting.

**PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE
AND TELECONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 17, 2021**

ATTENDANCE: Michael Harden, Chairman
Eric Rains, Vice Chairman
Jud Aley
Tom Vetter

STAFF

Jessica Vonashek, Chief of Economic and Community Development
James Emery, Assistant Parking Director, TMP

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.

**2. DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATED TO MINUTES FROM THE PARKING
AUTHORITY MEETING WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2021.**

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

**** MR. VETTER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Harden reported and said he had another discussion with Chris at Fedor that will be discussed in more detail later under Item 6.b of the agenda.

Mr. Harden said the Parking Authority is trying to convince all the small shop and restaurant owners on Washington Street not to use the parallel parking spaces on Washington Street for themselves or for their employees and leave them open for their customers. He said a lot of headway was made this week especially with working with Mr. Emery and Mr. Legesse and concluded with a few people that were taking advantage of the system.

Mr. Harden said that one more member is needed on the Parking Authority and asked the members to bring any recommendations forward.

4. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT

Mr. Manousos reported and said the operations are performing well and are well over budget on the revenue side, and under budget on the expense side. He said on the revenue side we are approximately back to 90% of pre-covid levels and are favorable on the expense side to pre-covid levels, but The Maritime Garage, Webster Lot and the railroad stations are the areas on the revenue side that are not growing as quickly as they were compared to pre-covid.

Mr. Manousos reported on the permit revenues and said they are down almost 18% compared to pre-Covid levels and is mainly due to drops at Webster Lot, The Yankee Doodle Garage and the railroad stations, but is off set with the Wall and Main Street locations where there was more activity.

Mr. Manousos said system wide the transient demands compared to pre-Covid are down almost 8% which translated into a revenue decline of 2.7%, and the commuter locations account for approximately \$196,00 of the decrease, overall, the non-commuter locations have healthy performance similar to what was reported last month, and on-street parking activity has surpassed pre-covid levels year to date by almost 7%.

Mr. Manousos said a lot of the locations are following seasonal trends for transient and revenue and are getting back to more of a predictable stable operation.

Mr. Rains noted that transient and on street parking is slightly above pre-covid levels, but commuter parking is still 50% less.

Mr. Manousos reported on the enforcement and said ticket issuance has been declining as compliance is increasing, and the courtesy card program days were reduced from 25 days in September to 7 days in October and the number of courtesy tickets issued was down to 300. Mr. Aley asked why the program days were reduced. Mr. Manousos said because they were increased in September because of the roll out of the pay stations so no citations were being issued and are now getting back to the program we originally started. Mr. Harden said that a robust customer curtesy card program is expensive and was done through Covid and we increased the program days, but as part of our recovery as a business the Parking Authority decided to bring back the curtesy card program back to the limits of the program as it was started. Mr. Aley asked if the plan moving forward is to maintain the program with a similarly number of days as was done in October. Mr. Harden said "yes". Mr. Manousos said the goal to any successful enforcement operation is reasonable and consistent enforcement.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Pay by Cell program and said it has been doing great and is back on track.

Mr. Manousos reported on the adjudication statistics and said the hearings have started back up. Mr. Emery said he has been working with Recreation and Parks on some recommended changes at Calf Pasture Beach because a lot of people that were attending the hearings were those that received citations at Calf Pasture Beach and in speaking with Recreation and Parks, they were not aware on how confusing it is for the parkers because they don't see the adjudication hearings. He said he thinks with the changes that will be put in place this adjudication number will decrease.

Mr. Harden asked how monthly permit are currently being sold. Mr. Manousos said it depends on the location, and the locations that are down which he reported on earlier for October 2021 compared to October , 2019, and Webster Lot is down 70 parkers, the Yankee Doodle Garage is down 93 parkers, the South Norwalk Railroad Station 305 parkers, and the East Norwalk Railroad Station is down 316 parkers, but is offset slightly due to the increase in the Wall and Main Street areas that are up 13% and 38%. Mr. Harden suggested selling ticket books so that permit parkers could use them daily rather than paying for

the month to recapture the commuters that are now part-time commuters and no longer want to pay for a monthly permit because there are a lot of commuters going in the city one or two days a week. Mr. Manousos said this is something the industry is struggling with for the people going back to work a few days a week and have been using the daily parking rate, and for those commuting three days or more should be purchasing a monthly pass which will be less expensive than paying by the day. He said that there would need to be another option for a rate that would need to be in between the two if the equipment can be programmed in such a way and suggested that staff look at options and report back. Mr. Rains asked why we would do this and would potentially be developing a program that would be a “discounted rate” when they are using it today paying the full rate and asked who that would be helping. Mr. Harden said he does not think they are but are being driven and picked up at the station to avoid purchasing the monthly permit because there are only 350 cars at the station at any given time, and if we can capture some of that revenue by offering some sort of portioned rate. Mr. Aley suggested offering the monthly permits at a reduced rate to see how many people would take advantage of it. Mr. Rains said there may be something that will solve some compelling scenarios that may make sense but to him it conceptually seems like some effort that is not going to lead to anything.

Mr. Legesse said after last month’s meeting we have been going through the Parkmobile transactions and have been receiving emails for the repeated parkers at the South Norwalk overflow lot and there were 849 daily parkers that were paying two to three days per month that were parking so we sent out a mass email and received 45 responses and signed up 12 people for monthly parking permits to start parking right away, and will also be reaching out to the waiting list people reminding them that it does not guarantee a parking space to encourage them to sign up for a monthly permit. Mr. Emery said he also engaged Mr. Morgan and are working on some advertising ideas on how parking trends are increasing and letting people know that there are monthly parking permits available and suggested reevaluating next month to see if the monthly permit sales have increased.

Ms. Vonashek said the DKA work that the Parking Authority is has signed up over 100 businesses since they came on board so there are now more than 240 businesses that are using the visit Norwalk website. In addition to that they have created pamphlets and flyers and have been coordinating with all the non-profits. She said that Community Development has also proposed that we bring on event and implementation coordinator that would help to coordinate events in the SONO and Wall Street area and could potentially pivot into the position we discussed during the walk bridge construction and the importance of bringing people into the area during that construction. Mr. Rains also suggested shifting focus to promote to something that would promote filling up the parking spaces and to also look at the visit Norwalk effort that is going on and identify how and where parking could be woven in a more obvious and deliberate way. Mr. Emery said he thinks that is a great idea and he will add it to the task list.

Mr. Legesse reported on the project status report and said except for the South Norwalk Railroad station garage, we have completed our annual water pipes draining and shutting off all of the water lines in preparation for winter and will also be done at the South Norwalk Railroad Station once the façade cleaning is completed. He also said the railings in the South Norwalk Railroad Station lobby were painted as well as the outside doors on the State Street side of the South Norwalk Railroad Station, the pigeons at the lower portion of Haviland Deck were removed at the Maritime Garage and the South Norwalk Railroad Station. He also reported on the site visits to the businesses and introduced the new option that is available for advertising at the South Norwalk Railroad Station, and they will be contacting Mr. Emery for details.

Mr. Aley suggested posting the project status report on Facebook so that people are aware. Mr. Rains suggested that the city website may be a better option.

5. ENGINEERING AND PROJECT REPORT

a. Webster Lot Green Infrastructure Project 2

Ms. Valadares reported and said the green infrastructure project at Webster Lot is supposed to begin tomorrow and LAZ has already closed the spaces and notified people, and in the spring, the entire area will be paved. Mr. Harden requested that something be done prior to the spring to temporarily outline the parking spaces.

Ms. Valadares said as of today at the South Norwalk Railroad Station have done approximately 75% of the northwest façade has been power washed, and once completed the contractor will remove the existing sealant and install the new one and will continue applying the calking over the next couple of weeks.

b. Private Lot Enforcement

Mr. Harden said he has spoken with Mr. Fedor who manages some of the private lots and wants to know if he can use the ticketing program that the Parking Authority has. Mr. Emery said that he also met with Mr. Fedor and took his ideas to the legal department and over preliminary discussions it does not seem like this would be something that would be at all feasible and the only option as a private entity is to have a vehicle towed. He said a formal letter would need to be written from Mr. Fedor to the legal department and they will respond with an official answer.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on the SONO Plaza sign refurbishment

Mr. Emery reported and said the SONO Plaza sign is in the works and are finalizing the details and will then just need to obtain a quote for the painting and is hoping to have the sign completed by the end of December.

b. Calf Pasture Beach Parking

Mr. Emery reported and said he presented the proposed changes at Calf Pasture Beach to the Recreation and Parks Commission and were extremely well received but did request a few changes that he will be making and will provide them with those changes along with a sample sign along with an estimate. He said it will then need a final approval from the Recreation and Parks Commission and following that he will work with LAZ to have the signs printed and go over the plan for implementation next season. He said he believes this will increase the revenue for both parties and a major decrease in the number of citations that are coming in for adjudication hearings. Mr. Rains suggested requesting someone from the Recreation and Parks department attend the hearing process, so they are aware of what is going on. Mr. Emery said he is not sure that is necessary but suggested providing them with a report or outline of the cases on a monthly basis.

Mr. Aley said he had brought up some parking issues on Wall Street last month and asked if Mr. Emery could meet with him to discuss it further.

Ms. Vonashek said we are officially back in budget season again and staff will be working with the Parking Authority to move the budget forward.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. ALEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd