



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 Casey at jcasey@norwalkct.org to provide written comment prior to the meeting.

**PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE
AND TELECONFERENCE
October 28 , 2020**

ATTENDANCE:

Michael Harden, Chairman
Jud Aley
Tom Vetter

ABSENT:

Eric Rains, Vice Chairman

STAFF:

Development

Jessica Casey, Chief of Economic and Community
Vanessa Valadares, DPW Principal Engineer

OTHERS:

Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
George Tsirinides, Common Council

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment this evening.

CALL TO ORDER

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

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

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

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) IN FAVOR AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION-
MR. VETTER.**

OLD BUSINESS

1. DISCUSS AND ACTION- SONO SEAPORT CAPTAIN PARKING SPACE, MARITIME GARAGE

Mr. Harden said this was discussed at last month's meeting and it was suggested that we offer the Seaport Association a parking space at the Maritime Garage. He said he presented that to the Seaport Association and that are in favor of it.

Mr. Vetter suggested doing it for a year so that it can be monitored.

**** MR. HARDEN MOVED TO APPROVE GRANTING THE NORWALK SEAPORT
ASSOCIATION ONE PARKING PASS TO THE MARITIME GARAGE FOR THEIR
BOAT CAPTAIN FOR THE 2021 SEASON.**

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

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. DISCUSS AND ACTION-TRAIN STATION SURFACE LOTS, SUNDAY PARKING

Mr. Aley said that Norwalk is the only municipality along the Metro North line that charges for parking at the railroad station on Sundays with the exception of Stamford, Bridgeport and New Haven but those stations are all Amtrak stops. He said he thinks it is a mistake for Norwalk to charge for parking on Sundays and by making it free it will bring more people into Norwalk.

Mr. Manousos presented the projections and said the projections will depend on pre-Covid-19 activity or if the current level of activity will continue. He said based on the last three months of 2020 the monthly revenue was approximately \$2,182. Mr. Aley said he had looked at the numbers prior to Covid-19 and he thought the revenue was approximately \$1,400 per month. Mr. Manousos said his numbers may be overstated but are still relatively insignificant to the revenue that is generated.

Mr. Vetter said he agrees that it is a good idea but suggested doing it on an annual basis so that it can be monitored.

Ms. Casey said she is in agreement with the free parking on Sundays and if gives a good message of parking and will get people into South Norwalk and East Avenue, and based on the analysis that Mr. Manousos had done she thinks it is a reasonable number and can be monitored on a month to month basis to see how it is going. She said at this time we want to do anything to help people and she encourages the Parking Authority to approve it.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE RAILROAD STATIONS SURFACE PARKING LOTS BE FREE ON SUNDAYS FOR THE NEXT YEAR.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

A. Chairman Report

There was no report given.

B. Webster Street Lot

Mr. Harden said the members of the Parking Authority has received a letter from Mr. Oz back in March regarding the rates at Webster Lot pertaining to 50 Washington Street and the Parking Authority has a solution that he would like to present to Mr. Oz.

Mr. Harden read the solution as follows:

For existing parking spaces including non-reserved spaces (346) and reserved spaces (40) the recommendation is to meet the tenants of 50 Washington Street in the middle. In doing so we can reduce the current fee of \$70 to \$65 for non-reserved spaces and \$90 to \$85 for reserved spaces. This represents a loss in revenue of \$23,000 and a savings for 50 Washington Street of almost 7%, and the annual increase of 2% will be applied to the base rate. For the new parking space request when he gets new tenants the recommendation is to have Mr. Oz or a representative thereof present the final lease to the Parking Authority, and at that time the Parking Authority will discuss the possibility of locking into a rate that can stay consistent for the lifetime of the lease for those spaces

including the option years. If redevelopment of the lot is to occur all the agreements for allocated parking will be dissolved. This will allow the Parking Authority to manage parking effectively overtime instead of allowing a block of parking for a 20 year period.

Mr. Harden said when Mr. Oz presented to him his biggest problem was that when he did a lease to a larger company in his building he would take the cost of the parking fees at that time and roll them into the lease but as the Parking Authority raised the rates he would not be able to pass the cost onto his lessees. He said as 50 Washington Street is one of the buildings that does not have parking he has to be a partner with the Parking Authority so this is the attempt of the Parking Authority to become his partner to get more people in his building and bring more people to Norwalk.

Mr. Vetter asked if there is a limited number of parking spaces that would be available to him. Mr. Harden said “yes” and one of the reasons we wanted to come before the Parking Authority is because we wanted to determine if the number of spaces requested are available.

Mr. Harden read a comment that Mr. Rains had submitted as follows:

This sounds good to me except for the fixed rate of increase and that maybe we should build in an annual increase commence rent with inflation. Mr. Harden said in which he agrees with.

Mr. Tsiranides asked how many parking spaces does Mr. Oz currently have allocated to 50 Washington Street. Ms. Casey said 386 and that 40 of them are reserved and 346 are floating spaces that are not reserved but permitted for the lot.

Mr. Tsiranides said prior to Covid-19 he met with Mr. Oz and he did complain that his tenants were having a hard time finding parking especially during the mall construction. He said he is a little concerned with this agreement because the second largest property owner is also in that lot and will probably be making a similar request because he had a lot of the same complaints regarding the parking. Mr. Harden said it will not change anything in terms of the tenants parking but lends more control to the Parking Authority and gives the opportunity to negotiate.

C. West Washington Street temporary parking installation

Mr. Aley said the plan was presented to the Traffic Authority twice in which they turned down and he has since then met with Mr. Yeosock and presented some of his ideas to the plan that may alleviate their concerns. He said that Mr. Yeosock will be making the changes and once he receives them he would like to schedule a meeting with Ms. Casey and Mayor Rilling which he would like to do prior to the November Traffic Authority meeting.

D. Marketing Program

Ms. Casey provided an update and said there is currently a transition in place and the new vendor should be on within the next couple of weeks and we are excited to have them start before the holiday season. She said we have successfully been operating a transition bridge over the last couple of months to ensure we are still supporting the businesses and the work that we have been doing. She said the Legal Department is in the process of preparing the contract and it should be completed by next week.

E. Ticketing to Transient Ratio Report

Mr. Manousos presented and said the ticket issuance has been down compared to previous years as well as the demands but the ratio of the number of tickets issued compared to the demands in the system. He said as suspected the ratio of percentage of tickets issued to demands over the last three months is lower than it has been in previous years.

Mr. Aley said when he looks at the number he sees that ticket issuance is down from previous years quite substantially and given the Covid-19 virus we want to keep the ratio down to 1.3% to 1.4% and asked if the reduction is due to the amount of courtesy cards that have been given out. Mr. Manousos said that is part of it but it is also due to the demands being lower.

Mr. Aley said this has been helpful as we move forward to see what the ticketing ratio is and if we see it is increasing beyond the targeted number to have more courtesy cards issued, and if it drops below that number that less courtesy cards should be issued. Mr. Manousos suggested that it not to be driven by the number as much as the policies.

F. Financial and Operating Report

Mr. Casey said the numbers are looking more positive and revenues are off approximately 9% compared to the projections and expenses are favorable by 16% compared to the projections so what is being lost in revenues is being made up on the expense side. She said the fund balance is also favorable to the plan by 50%.

Mr. Manousos said the Covid-19 reopening plan year to date losing approx. \$240,000 but what actually came in was approximately \$121,000. Ms. Casey asked in the way operations are currently running if he projects that the expenses will continue to be at that level or if there will be a close in that gap. Mr. Manousos said currently he thinks we are okay but he does see the positive variance on the expense side continuing for a while and will monitor and adjust accordingly.

Mr. Manousos reported and said revenue compared to budget is down 44% and the expenses are favorable due to the savings plan and deferral of certain expenses. He said the transient activity and the demands are down and the permit activity has been stable.

Mr. Manousos said that activity has been down at all locations due to Covid-19 but it still following seasonal trends. He said that the demands at Haviland Deck has not seen as much of an impact due to the residential base.

Mr. Manousos said the Pay by Cell is still strong.

Mr. Harden asked if there is any new information on whether or not the North Water Street lot will begin to be utilized by the Walk Bridge project. Ms. Valadares said as of now she does not have any dates so she is not expecting anything soon but there will be some work done in the river this winter, but as of now they have not requested any parking spaces in the lot so she is not expecting any major impact this winter. Mr. Harden asked if there is a lead time that would have to let us know by. Ms. Valadares said she does not think a certain time has been established but they are aware that they would have to give notice and we will know once they finalize their construction schedule.

Mr. Manousos said that the rail stations have been down significantly and the transient activity has been down 90%, and the permit parkers are also down significantly. He said that we used to carry 760 monthly parkers and are now down to just over 500.

Mr. Manousos said that activity at the Main Street lot has been down 11% and revenue is down over 24% but are still seeing the average transitions and average stays have stayed relatively stable.

Mr. Manousos said that on street parking has been down over 22% and revenues are down 34% but the average stays have been stable.

Mr. Manousos reported on the customer courtesy program and said the program days have now been expanded and in three months are 60% of where courtesy cards were issued all of last year, and that almost 5,000 courtesy cards have been issued this fiscal year and the value of the courtesy cards if the tickets had been issued was \$107,000.

G. Capital Budget Report

Ms. Valadares said there were not many changes since last month but have finalized the repair to the outdoor lighting at the Yankee Doodle Garage and are waiting for the vendor to come back to reprogram them. She also said that Desmond is also working on the design for the calking at the South Norwalk Railroad Station.

Ms. Valadares said there were some comments regarding the Webster Lot green infrastructure project improvements that the contractor has already received which have

addressed. We were hoping to have the design completed by the end of this year but will probably not be completed until the end of next year.

Mr. Harden said he feels very strongly about not only maintenance but also preventative maintenance. Ms. Valadares said that Desmond had done a study that was updated two years ago and that is what we follow.

Ms. Valadares said that she will report any changes from the Walk Bridge project that will affect any of the lots. She said she does see them taking the temporary lot on East Avenue although they have not given any dates as of yet but they will be starting the advanced utility project next year and will need the lot for staging.

H. Other Business

Ms. Casey said the Director of TMP job posting went up internally last Friday and will go publically later this week, and the job description has been drafted for the Assistant Parking Director position and will post next week.

Mr. Harden provided an update on the bollards and said that there has been a suggestion made that we find a couple possible examples of replacements for the covers of the bollards and get the public's opinion. Ms. Valadares clarified that the bollards that are currently in place are used so the cars don't get damaged and a granite or some type of stone bollard are normally used to block an entrance but in this case they are being used to protect the cars and that is why there is a plastic sleeve. Mr. Aley requested that Ms. Valadares send him cut sheet for the current sleeves.

I. Motion to adjourn

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
****MR. ALEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd