PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 25, 2019

ATTENDANCE: Richard Brescia, Chairman
Tom Vetter
Jud Aley
Eric Rains

ABSENT: Michael Harden

STAFF: Jessica Casey, Chief of Community and Economic Development
Kathryn Hebert, Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking
Vanessa Valadares, Senior Engineer, DPW
Dilene Byrd, Secretary

OTHERS: Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Rita Azrelyant, Consultant
George Tsiranides, Common Council
Peter Fullam

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brescia called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Fullam asked if a final decision has been made for the possible change in the hours of operation for on street parking in the morning hours for the Wall Street and SONO areas. Mr. Brescia said that was discussed at the July Parking Authority meeting and that he can only comment on an item that is on the agenda and that this topic is not on the agenda. Mr. Fullam asked how he will know when the item will be voted on. Mr. Brescia said it would be on the Parking Authority agenda and they are posted online. Mr. Aley said the agenda for July was very vague and the public would not have known that was going to be discussed.

The business owners from Wall Street Wine and Liquor asked why the free parking has been taken away and that they are losing business. Mr. Brescia said a public meeting was held in March and that the public was notified and the Parking Authority explained that they would be installing meters and angled parking in the Wall Street area and it was advertised in The Norwalk Hour. Mr. Brescia said that item is not on the agenda for discussion tonight and that he would be happy to meet with him separately and suggested that he contact Ms. Hebert to schedule a meeting.

PRESENTATION NORWALK NOW

Ms. Casey said that the new Norwalk Now 2.0 got launched less than a month ago and is now by neighborhood and there are already 112 businesses signed up. There are over 8,000 followers on Instagram, over 3,500 followers on Facebook and 1,250 on Twitter and is building a great audience. She said in 2019 alone Max Exposure will be helping to host and or be involved in 14 events and it is a positive path forward.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2019.**

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.**
**** MR. ALEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH (3) IN FAVOR AND (1) ABSTENSION-MR VETTER.**

2. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OR THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORWALK PARKING AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT WITH WALKER CONSULTANTS REGARDING THE PARKING CAPACITY AND STRATEGIC PARKING PLAN, TO EXTEND THE AGREEMENT THROUGH DECEMBER 15, 2019.

Ms. Hebert said that staff had reviewed the draft report that Walker Consultants had submitted which was shared with the Parking Authority and there were many of grammatical errors and typos, and their recommendations were not clear in the executive summary. She said that the contract had ended in August and this authorization is to extend the contract to the end of the year so the report can be finalized and presented at a pubic information meeting prior to being approved by the Parking Authority. She said that there is no additional money being requested and the scope of work has not changed.

Ms. Casey said the next steps are to work with Walker Consultants to finalize the report and schedule a public meeting and a meeting with department heads and that would be the conclusion of their work. She said the attention to the detail in the report needed more work as well as an executive summary, and there was also an issue with the framing of the report and they had looked at private and public parking together and the Parking Authority manages the public parking asset, but not the private parking asset and they needed to help Walker Consultants understand the opportunity that is there for the Parking Authority to be able to partner with private parking to move that forward and that delineation was not clear in the original report.

Mr. Aley asked if there is any reason that Walker Consultants may not be able to finish their work by December 15, 2019, and if there is a penalty that will be assessed if that it is not completed. Ms. Casey said "yes" and staff had worked with the Legal Department and made to time lines clear to Walker Consultants, and they would also like to conclude the report so that they can move onto other things and worked with them to revise the invoicing so that they will be able to complete the report with fruition before their final invoice is paid.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**
**** MR. RAINS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3A. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OR THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORWALK PARKING AUTHORITY, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH GIACORP CONTRACTING, INC. , IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $192,969.60 FOR PROJECT NO. TMP2019-1-VEHICULAR GUARDRAILS INSTALLATION AT THE YANKEE DOODLE PARKING GARAGE.

Ms. Valadares said as part of the capital request for this fiscal year the guardrails will be installed between the ramps at the Yankee Doodle Garage and the bid for the work was put out of the summer. She said the lowest bidder withdrew so staff is proposing to use the second bidder which is Giacorp Contracting in the amount of $192,969.60. She said they have done some projects for the Historical Commission and that she had contacted Mr. Westmoreland and he verified that they had done good work and they had also submitted a good list of references.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**
**** MR. RAINS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3B. AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY AND PARKING TO ISSUE ORDERS WITH GIACORP CONTRACTING INC., FOR PROJECT NO. TMP2019-1 VEHICULAR GUARDRAILS INSTALLATION AT THE YANKEE DOODLE PARKING GARAGE IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED OF $20,000

ACCOUNT NO. 09194095-5777-CO303
09204095-5777-C0303

Ms. Valadares said that staff is requesting $20,000 for contingency.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**
**** MR. RAINS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

A. CHAIRMAN REPORT

Mr. Brescia delivered his report as follows:

Mr. Brescia discussed the power point presentation at last month's meeting regarding the possible change in hours of on street parking in the Wall and SONO area. He said there were a lot of missed steps and it consumed a lot of time for both staff and the Parking Authority and created a lot of emotion, and the Parking Authority has a lot on its agenda to attend to. He said this situation has to been taken as a learning opportunity to build from. In the past, whenever Mr. Manousos was putting together an analysis Mr. Brescia normally asked for a best and worst case scenario, but he did not do that this time and it was obvious that the presentation had a worst case scenario and he, too, had a problem with it. He said that Mr. Aley had gotten upset by the numbers and the way that they were being presented and he withdrew his proposal for the 9:00AM starting time. Mr. Brescia said at the last meeting Mr. Manousos suggested that the proposal not be withdrawn due to the proposed cost and Mr. Brescia said that he agreed. Mr. Brescia said that he had met with Mr. Aley and shared the conversations with the members of the Parking Authority and going forward when there is a presentation it will be included as part of the agenda for discussion. The Parking Authority members with then get an advanced look at it. Mr.

Brescia said that Mr. Manousos had offered to redo the numbers on a best case scenario and he asked him to hold off because the numbers" best case or worst case scenario" didn't make any difference and the real issue was "why" it was being done. His problem with it was that there was an assumption that was made for a fact that coffee shops were closing in SONO because of the paid parking but there was no evidence to support. He said that Mr. Aley had contacted him by phone the day before the meeting and asked him how he felt about the proposed change and that he had told Mr. Aley that he was recommending a citywide change in parking right after the budget was done, and in the middle of the changes on Wall Street and he could not support a citywide change based on the information. He said that he also received a call from Mr. Harden regarding the numbers that were presented. He said that a lot of staff and Parking Authority members' time had been put into this and the key question of "why" this was being done was still not answered. When the change in the hours of operations were changed in SONO previously there was tremendous input from the business's, the Common Council and customers that coincided with a study that the Parking Authority was already doing regarding the fact that they thought too many tickets were being issued, and that change costed the Parking Authority approximately $200,000 in revenue. He said that Mr. Aley had worked hard on something that he thought should be done but the question of "why" it was being done has still not been answered. As a result he has requested that Mr. Rains and Mr. Vetter do a study on how things are handled in the future when a recommendation is made after the budget is set and what standards should be met.

Mr. Brescia said that he and Ms. Casey had met with Mr. Oz and he had numerous concerns and requested a relief on the parking costs for this year and that he had told him that could not be done, but we could look into other long term options and that he would discuss some of his points with the members of the Parking Authority. He said that Mr. Oz had also requested that the Parking Authority provide him with some reserved parking spaces somewhere in the Webster Lot. Mr. Brescia requested that when they put the final Strategic Plan together that they focus to Webster Lot.

Mr. Brescia said that the Parking Authority members have all had a chance to make changes to the Strategic Plan and he would like to move forward with a vote at the next meeting. He distributed copies of the edited version of the corrected executive summary of the Walker report.

Ms. Casey provided an overview of the Walker report and said that staff has asked Walker Consultants to explain the current utilization conditions and what their recommendation and observation is to address that. She said that when they had first started with Walker Consultants they were asked to look at parking because there are both public and privately owned lots and asked them to comment on both of those pieces. She said that they had commented fairly positively on Washington Street and commented that they saw turnover and that it was being managed and room for a little enforcement improvement but in general that it appeared to be working. She said that they had commented to improve shared parking by thinking more creatively about the partnerships and how to tell people that parking is available and where it is available. The common theme through the report was wayfinding and signage. Mr. Rains said the zoning requirements for the amount of parking spaces for private developers is decreasing and private lots are being built smaller so it doesn't seem to him that Walker Consultants should spend a lot of time on the private lots unless they are older lots and doesn't want them to suggest things that are just not feasible. Mr. Brescia said when the update is given on the Strategic Plan it will include a lot of the things that the Parking Authority put together for the Strategic Plan are in the Walker report. Ms. Casey said that with the zoning change the potential developable space has increased by 60% in the Wall Street and West Avenue area, and there are 40% more residential units that are now allowed under zoning with that change and it is important that Walker Consultants doesn't just look at the initial observation, but it is extremely important to look at what the area will look like in the future and what parking demand will be required at that point.

Ms. Casey said that Walker Consultants have identified that Wheels 2 U is a creative way to offer transportation and is should be thought of more extensively. She said that Walker had also commented on the challenges with parking for the libraries as well as looking more into the residential and permit parking and they have identified that certain areas have an issue with finding parking. She said the overall takeaway and what staff has asked them to do is to prioritize their suggestions in short, mid and long term goals. Mr. Rains said there will be a point in time when the Parking Authority will have to be at the table with Zoning to say if there were a garage in one of the busiest lots what it will mean to the surrounding land owner assets. Ms. Hebert said that the Parking Authority does have the leverage to create opportunities in those partnerships and from that point of view is an economic driver. Ms. Casey said that the Parking Authority also has the ability to bond.

Mr. Brescia said that he does not see anything in the Walker report that is contradictory to what the Parking Authority is doing and if anything it is complimentary.

Mr. Aley suggested as the city grows and parking gets more difficult that two additional commissioners are added to the Parking Authority and implementing formal subcommittees. Mr. Brescia said the governance the Parking Authority states there will be five members.

Ms. Casey said that staff met with the Norwalk Public Schools regarding the bell change and acknowledged Ms. Hebert's responsibilities are not only to parking but also to the citywide mobility and transportation piece.

B. CAPITAL PROJECT REPORT

Ms. Valadares reported and said the miscellaneous repairs are 99% completed and the drainage at the Yankee Doodle Garage will be finalized tomorrow. The handicapped ramp at the entrance at Burnell Blvd. to the Yankee Doodle Garage is pending. The grant application for the drainage at Webster Lot has been submitted but have not yet heard back. She said there was a change to the scope of work with Streetline for the sensors at Webster Lot because they do not yet know when it will be paved so the sensors will go into the new spaces in the Wall Street area, and they are planning to have the project complete by the end of October and that a total of 250 sensors will be installed. Ms. Hebert said in addition to getting the data on a real time basis the information will eventually be pushed to a wayfinding app.

Ms. Hebert said that they had put in an application for the students from Carnegie Mellon University to look at wayfinding mobility options and were selected as one of the cities for them to do a study and they will provide a report.

C. WALL STREET PROJECT

Ms. Hebert said that she is proud of the team for their work on the Wall Street installation and that it was a collaborative effort. Ms. Valadares said that the new parking layout for the Wall Street area was completed on September 16th and was installed on River, Wall and Main Streets. The paystations have been installed in the area and new signage is in place to reflect those changes. Mr. Brescia asked how long until enforcement will begin. Ms. Hebert said November 1, 2019 and that there are currently ambassadors in the area helping people with the change. Mr. Tsiranides asked if there have been any accidents or instances with the back in angled parking. Ms. Hebert said “no”. Mr. Vetter said that there have been requests for 15 minutes free parking spaces to be installed.

D. ECOMOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There was no discussion.

E. FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Legesse reported and said the revenue finished strong for both July and August and is up 7.4% over budget for the month and 5.6% over budget year to date. Transient revenue is 8.8% over budget for the month and 11.2% year to date and is still up 4.6% compared to July and is up 5.8% compared to August of last year.

Mr. Legesse said the expenses are down 9.4% for the month and down 6.9% year to date and transient activity is up 3.1% compared to July. He said that permit activity is up 0.3% compared to July and is down 5.2% compared to August of last year and that 80% of total revenue that was collected was through credit card payments.

F. OPERATIONS REPORT

Mr. Legesse reported and said that the Pay by Cell activity is still showing a strong increase and through August the activity was up 55.2% and revenue was up 46.6% compared to the same period last year, and enforcement is up year to date due to the ticket issuance at the beach. He reported on the Courtesy Card program and said that year to date they had chosen 37 days and that 1,448 courtesy cards have been issued and of that 143 people received overstayed the 20 minute grace period and received tickets and the total value of the courtesy cards that were given was $32,625.

G. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Brescia said that Ms. Casey had pointed out that when he had an email discussion with Mr. Aley regarding the change in operations that it violated an open meeting procedure so he has spoken with the Darin Callahan of the Corporations Counsel's office and he had agreed. He said that he will be inviting Mr. Callahan to attend the next meeting a give a brief discussion on what the implications are when communicating with each other.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd