



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
SEPTEMBER 22, 2021**

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

ABSENT: Tom Vetter

STAFF Jessica Vonashek, Chief of Economic and Community Development
James Travers, Director, TMP
Garrett Bolella, Asst. Director, TMP
James Emery, Assistant Parking Director, TMP

OTHERS: Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Brian Bidollo, Executive Director, Redevelopment Agency

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, AUGUST 28, 2021.

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

**** MR. RAINS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Harden reported and said in his effort to talk to the private lot managers and those that are doing the enforcement he and Mr. Travers had a meeting with one of the people that holds a lot of the contracts in town for the private lots to align our methods to lead towards a universal way of parking in Norwalk.

4. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT

Mr. Manousos reported and said the demands year to date compared to pre-Covid-19 are down just over 6% on the revenue side, and the expenses are favorable to pre-Covid-19 levels by 6%. He said the fund balance and operating surplus compared to pre Covid-19 is down just over \$20,000 or 7%.

Mr. Manousos reported on the permit activity and said the activity is down almost 22% compared to pre Covid-19 and is mainly due to the commuter facilities. He reported on the transient activity and said it is down less than 1% and compared to pre-Covid- 19. Mr. Harden asked if there is an estimated time frame for commuter ridership. Mr. Travers said ridership is still is the low forties.

Mr. Travers said there is still a waitlist for the South Norwalk Railroad Station and asked even if people are not taking the permit if they still paying. Mr. Manousos said “no” and there are fewer permits that are being paid. Mr. Travers asked then shouldn’t those permits for the people who are not using them be offered to the next person who is on the waitlist and if so, are we reaching out to those that are on the waitlist to fill the facility back up to capacity. Mr. Legesse said “yes” and that there are currently about 500 people on the waitlist, and we are reaching out to those on the waitlist, but a majority have asked to be removed from the waitlist, and there are approximately 174 that wish to remain on the waitlist but are not yet ready to start parking. Mr. Rains asked what happens when someone on the waitlist declines the permit. Mr. Legesse said they would move to the bottom of the waitlist.

Mr. Manousos reported on the tickets issued versus demand and said it had a slight uptick which was anticipated until things stabilize but are down from June. Mr. Alely asked if the ticket issuance from the beach is still be included. Mr. Manousos said it is still included but will be removed beginning next month. Mr. Harden asked that the ticket issuance be reported on a separate line rather than being removed from the report. Mr. Alely asked if the revenue from the parking violations goes to the Parking Authority. Mr. Manousos said the parking fees go to the city and the revenues from the parking violations comes to the Parking Authority.

Mr. Manousos said the customer courtesy program is moving forward as planned and there have been no changes to the program. He said the Pay by Cell program has rebounded and is doing well.

Mr. Legesse presented the project status report and said for August we have completed replacing the rugs on the westbound side of the South Norwalk Railroad Station, installed five pay stations on Washington Street and removed the old meter poles, tree trimming was done at the South Norwalk Railroad Station overflow lot, a repair was done in the men’s bathroom on the westbound side of the South Norwalk Railroad Station as well as completing the installation of the stair threads. He said that staff had visited Pellegrini Jewelry Store on Washington Street because he had some concerns with the pay stations.

5. ENGINEERING AND PROJECT REPORT

- Webster lot Green Infrastructure Project 2

Mr. Travers said that the contractor for the project has stated that by the end of this calendar year the green infrastructure will be installed in the lower part of the lot and will install the temporary asphalt, and the repaving will be done in April when the asphalt plants reopen and should be completed by May. Mr. Rains asked if the adjacent business owners are aware of the project. Mr. Travers said “yes” they are just not aware of the date it will begin and once the schedule has been finalized will notify the businesses.

- South Norwalk Railroad Station Improvement Project

Mr. Travers said we are expecting DOT approval to begin the improvement project at the South Norwalk Railroad Station and the work is scheduled to begin on Monday.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- i. Discuss and Vote- James Emery to present analysis on credit card transactions on single space and multi-space units and recommendations.

Mr. Emery presented a credit card minimum analysis and said in 2019 a decision was made to remove the credit card minimum and with that there has been an uptick in the total percentages of credit card transactions that are happening at a net loss which is approximately a \$15,000 loss on credit card transactions that are .75 cents or less. He said he is recommending reinstating a credit card minimum with a minimum of \$1.00 on both the single space and multi space meters which is the average across the country for cities and municipalities. Mr. Harden said there were two votes from his predecessor a few years ago which one was to remove the credit card minimums and the other was whether to allow the absorption of the tax in the .50 cents or add it to the top of the .50 cents and the vote was that it be absorbed and he believes that is where the loss of revenue is from and asked if a vote can be taken to reverse that and have it added to the .50 cents. Mr. Travers said this analysis is not so much due to the tax and Mr. Emery specifically looked at those transactions since 2019 that are under \$1.00 that are creating a loss. Mr. Aley asked if another sign will be installed stating there is a minimum charge of \$1.00. Mr. Travers said it could go on the display at the paystations. Mr. Emery said he has never seen that displayed anywhere in the country that shows any credit card minimum but that it could be displayed on the screen of the parking meters.

Mr. Aley said he does not think this is the right time to institute a credit card minimum because the businesses are still struggling from Covid-19. Mr. Harden said he disagrees and that the cost has gone up on everything this year and we have just been presented with a scenario where the Parking Authority is losing money. Mr. Aley said in Darien and Westport they offer free parking, and he does not think this is the area to make up the \$15,000 loss and suggested scaling back the courtesy card program if the budget is struggling. Mr. Travers clarified that we are not looking to gain the \$15,000 but are trying to not lose the \$15,000 and are not proposing a rate increase but are simply proposing that we don't allow transactions to take place that would create a net loss for the Parking Authority. Mr. Aley said he still does not think this is the right time and would be happy to revisit it in a year. Mr. Harden said it is the responsibility of the Parking Authority to create and maintain managed parking which is better for the businesses in this area to have a good managed parking program and if the program is showing a loss then we have to act on this. Mr. Emery said the \$15,000 is a fairly conservative number and he does not expect that to go down in the future. Mr. Rains said he thinks these sorts of things need to be rectified and the reality is just because it will cost someone more does not mean the Parking Authority can absorb the cost.

Mr. Harden asked what the minimum would need to rid the Parking Authority of the revenue loss. Mr. Emery said he would not recommend going any lower than \$1.00 minimum. Mr. Rains also suggested to use the revenue from the advertisement boards at the Maritime Garage and spend it on additional information about how parking works.

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE RAISING THE MINIMUM TO \$1.00 FOR THE USE OF CREDIT CARDS.**

**** MR. HARDEN SECONDED THE MOTION**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH (2) TWO IN FAVOR AND (1) ONE OPPOSED- MR ALEY**

ii. Discussion on the Webster Lot Entrance Sign

Mr. Emery provided an update and said the entrance sign at the Webster Lot is outdated and needs to be refurbished and will include the present businesses in the area. Mr. Harden asked where the funds would come from to pay for it. Mr. Travers said from the Parking Authority's maintenance account.

iii. Request for Qualifications (RFQ)- Webster Street Lot
<https://www.norwalkredevelopmentagency.org/for-vendors>

Mr. Bidolli provided an update on the RFQ and is the first step to advancing some of the planning work that was done initially in 2004 and in 2016. He said the RFQ will be issued to obtain a developer to initiate the discussion with a preferred developer or group of developers where we would first test the qualifications and from there will have the latitude to develop an RFP for a specific project. He said in addition to releasing the RFQ we have also made the adjacent property owners aware. Mr. Rains asked if part of the project will be to evaluate what the potential is for the buildings in the area. Mr. Bidolli said "yes", and the data analysis has begun on the front end. Ms. Vonashek asked when the RFQ closes. Mr. Bidolli said on November 5, 2021.

Mr. Bidolli left the meeting at 6:30PM.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discuss and Vote- Yankee Doodle Garage Façade enhancement. Change of vendor.

Mr. Travers said when we initially discussed the enhancements at the Yankee Doodle Garage the consultant that had engaged us with Desmond and the Parking Authority had approved spending up to \$20,000 for the design of the façade, but at the time had not gotten back a proposal from THA and their pricing has come slightly under \$20,000 and have engaged THA and now need to change the approval to reflect the change so that a purchase order can be generated.

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE ENGAGING THA FOR THE YANKEE DOODLE GARAGE FAÇADE ENHANCEMENT FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$20,000.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Update on the SONO Train Station advertisement campaign.

Mr. Emery said we have been reaching out to local businesses because there are a lot of empty advertising spaces in the SONO Garage to engage them for a low-cost advertisement campaign which could possibly lead to a new revenue stream in the future. Mr. Travers said the businesses are guaranteed to advertise for three months. Mr. Emery presented the flyers that have been

distributed to the businesses for the advertising campaign. Mr. Rains requested that there is a flyer for “made” in SONO.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. RAINS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd