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**PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE
AND TELECONFERENCE
JULY 27, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Eric Rains, Chairman
Jud Aley
Matthew Seebeck
Pamela Parkington

STAFF

James Travers, Director, TMP, Vanessa Valadares, Principal Engineer, DPW

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, JUNE 29, 2022.

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

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. Manousos reported and said this month marks the end of the fiscal year and there was a \$250,000 accrual for safety related repairs to Webster Lot and Haviland Deck and following those repairs were still favorable to budget. Mr. Manousos reported on the variance report and said the \$250,000 accrual was split 50% to each of the locations and depending on the cost of the work that gets done adjustments can be made if needed.

Mr. Manousos reported on the revenue and said the transient revenue continues to be down due to the railroad facilities, but the meter and violation revenue continues to be higher than budget and compared to pre-covid levels but noted that after 2019 all the pay stations were installed in the Wall Street area which added 225 spaces in addition to 18 on West Avenue. Mr. Rains asked if the violation revenue includes the violations at the beach. Mr. Legesse said "yes". Mr. Rains asked for a breakdown of where the violations were coming from. Mr. Manousos presented the parking violations for each of the locations and said a majority of the ticket issuance from last month came from the SONO area. Mr. Rains said going forward he would like the ticket issuance from the beach included. Mr. Manousos asked if the members of the Parking Authority would like to see the tickets issuance by location included in the monthly report. Mr. Aley said "yes". Mr. Travers said he would also like the number of spaces included on the report. Mr. Rains said he would also like to see it in a graph.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Covid vs pre-covid analysis and said they are at 87% of pre-covid levels when it comes to revenue.

Mr. Manousos reported on the system wide activity and said year to date are 93% of pre-covid levels and revenue is at 88% of pre-covid levels despite the temporary drop off due to the omicron variant in January. Mr. Travers said there has been a significant increase at Haviland Deck and that there is an increase in ridership numbers for Metro-North and the weekend numbers are strong, but the weekdays fluctuate and are seeing a trend to what a new normal may look like.

Mr. Manousos reported on the permit sales and said they are stable and that permit activity is 80% of pre-covid levels, permit revenue is at 75% of pre-covid levels, on-street revenue is up compared to last year and the Pay by Cell transactions are still very strong.

Mr. Manousos reported on enforcement and issuance and revenue from parking violations are higher than pre-covid levels. He also reported on the ticket issuance versus demand analysis and said the ratio from tickets to demands decreased in June.

4. ENGINEERING AND PROJECT REPORT

a) Haviland Deck

Mr. Legesse reported and said there was a leak at lower Haviland Deck that was coming from the upper deck and engaged the contractor that performed the membrane work two years ago and fortunately the work was still under warranty so they will perform the repair that the warranty covers, but there were also some damages found that will be covered under maintenance line item. He said the material has been ordered and is due to arrive late August or early September and are planning to have the work done by the end of September and there is a walkthrough scheduled with the vendor this Friday to determine what areas will need to be closed off for parkers.

b) South Norwalk Train Station Charging Stations

Mr. Legesse reported and said the cell phone charging stations for the lobby area at the South Norwalk Railroad Station on both the New Haven and New York bound sides have been installed and people have already begun using them and have received some positive feedback. He said the charging stations were purchased but the CTDOT so there was no cost to the Parking Authority other than for the electrician for the installation. Mr. Travers this is part of the effort to provide additional service to commuters.

c) Webster Lot

Mr. Travers reported and said last weekend the work was completed from the prior project but he has some concerns with the outcome not of the quality of work by the contractor but on the initial design and potential safety issues so they will be meeting with the designer and may need to make some amendments.

d) South Norwalk Train Station- Vanessa Valadares

Ms. Valadares reported and said the work is continuing at the South Norwalk Railroad Station and 100% of the northwest façade has been completed as well as the power washing of the southern helix and 90% of the southeast elevation has been power washed and should be completed soon. She said there is still one more expansion joint that needs to be installed and by the date the in the original contract that the work was supposed to be completed was August but will need to be extended but she does not yet have a completion date.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a) DKA Presentation- Tod Kallenbach

Mr. Kellenbach presented and said they have been working with the city and the Parking Authority under three different contracts and established marketing goals that promote Norwalk as a destination and saw an opportunity to leverage visit Norwalk to one platform that encompasses many neighborhoods and many assets. He said they have a digital and social platform and are working with the city on an app that would serve as a customer service tool to be able to contact city departments and will ultimately replace the current app. He said there are currently 1,166 consumers and 296 business that participate in the E-newsletter and from last August to June 2022 and are currently in the second phase the website has attracted 21,000 visits and 3, 400 visits just in June. He said there is also a tourism advertising campaign that was launched in October 2021 and the objective was to elevate brand awareness of visit Norwalk in a broader tri-state area.

Mr. Travers said the Parking Authority has funded an effort to look at promoting tourism and visits into the city with the intention of those visits translating into opportunities to those visitors to park in the Norwalk facilities and has evolved under Ms. Vonashek's leadership that extends beyond the initial effort of the Parking Authority to something that is a branded effort for the city to not only look at ways to gain additional visits, but to heighten the awareness and is a huge pleasure to be able to work with Mr. Kellenbach and wanted to share with the Parking Authority the opportunity to see the work that he has been doing and to see the work that the Parking Authority has been funding.

Ms. Parkington asked if just City of Norwalk events are being pulled because the First Taxing District holds concerts on the green and the Third Taxing District holds them at the beach. Mr. Kellenbach said they are covering every neighborhood and every organization that are within the city limits, but anyone can get in contact with him by emailing info@visitnorwalk.org if there is an event that they would like to post.

b) Discuss- Creation of 30 minute prepay feature

Mr. Travers said currently the meters turn on when the parking time begins so if a customer was to arrive early there is a challenge when they want to prepay so he would like the time to begin as early as 6:00AM and would like to work with the meter company to turn on a prepaid feature. The members of the Parking Authority agreed to create a prepaid feature.

c) Discuss and vote- Rotary Club parking discount at Maritime Garage

Mr. Travers read the request from the Rotary Club as follows:

“The Norwalk Rotary, a nonprofit organization, is currently considering a venue change for its semi-monthly luncheon meetings, whereby Norwalk Rotary Members will need to consider parking at the Maritime Garage for their luncheon meetings that will be held at Mamma Bella Restaurant, located on 19 N Water Street, on the first (1st) and third (3rd) Wednesday of the month between 12pm-1:30pm.”

“Since lunch and parking costs are all important factors that affect our member participation and the ability to meet, we are kindly asking that special consideration be granted by The Norwalk Parking Authority and Laz for The Norwalk Rotary to help mitigate the parking costs to our members and our organization, who seek to meet to serve the important needs of our community.”

The current cost from 12pm to 1:30pm on Wednesdays is \$4.00

Mr. Travers said this is a daytime request for discounted parking and it is time that there is an increased level of parking that is large contributed to the Maritime Aquarium, so he has some concerns with discounted parking. Mr. Rains asked if the events that they hold are in South Norwalk. Mr. Travers said in looking at their website the events are held citywide and not in specific area. Mr. Seebeck suggested having a conversation with the restaurant owner to potentially doing something for special events and allow the restaurant to work with the Parking Authority and LAZ to offer a group rate. Mr. Travers said staff is discussing several opportunities that can be presented to restaurants and are doing a pilot program at 50 Washington Street and if it proves to be effective will measure that to see if that could lead into additional parking promotions. Mr. Aley said there is currently a voucher system that are sold to the restaurants that they can give to their customers that would be ideal for this situation. Mr. Travers said they are an important part of a larger thing and typically work for repeat visits. Mr. Legesse added that the vouchers are not discounted, and the restaurant pays for them and offers them to their patrons. Mr. Rains suggested responding that the Parking Authority is open to a path forward on this request but do not currently have one and look to see if there is a way to initiate the token or voucher program with the restaurant. Mr. Manousos said prior to Covid there was a merchant validation program that the Parking Authority was trying to roll out. Mr. Travers said that staff will look at options to present to the Parking Authority at the next meeting.

d) Discuss and vote- Lobster Craft Lease

Mr. Travers read the recommendation from the corporate leasing agent regarding the Lobster Craft Lease:

“Per our conversation on Friday, I spoke with Mike regarding the LobsterCraft lease. There are two options we discussed, one of which would be a 6-month lease, with the option to go month-to-month after the 6-month period (with a 60-day notice before vacating).

The second option Mike and I discussed is a 2-year lease with the option to sublease. Mike has a partner that wishes to utilize the space and his option to sublease would be to his partner.

If the board is comfortable with the second option, I think it would be best for both parties. Your team would be able to lock-in a tenant for at least two years and it would also give Mike's partner the opportunity to lock in a lease under the same conditions. The Parking Authority and the board would have the final say with the sublease, giving us the opportunity to do our due diligence regarding the new tenant.”

Mr. Seebeck asked if any of the monetary terms differ from what was discussed at the May Parking Authority meeting. Mr. Travers said “no” and that the monetary terms are the same and is just for a different time period. Mr. Seebeck asked if there are any other termination rights that will be granted to Lobstercraft. Mr. Travers said “no”

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE OPTION TWO AS DESCRIBED.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

e) Discuss- August NPS meeting

**** MS. PARKINGTON MOVED TO CANCEL THE AUGUST PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. OLD BUSINESS

a) Discuss and vote- Simplify parking rules in Wall Street area

- CURRENT-2- hour max until 6PM then 3- hour max until 9PM
- PROPOSED- 3-hour max stay until 9PM.

Mr. Travers said staff has had several meetings with the Wall Street area and one of the items that came up and continues to come up is that the signage is confusing, and staff is proposing to simplify the signage to state three-hour max parking until 9:00AM. He said that Mr. Emery had visited the businesses that were non restaurant related and there is a signed petition that was in support of simplified signage. Mr. Aley requested that the data showing the average period of stay after the three-month period be presented to the Parking Authority.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED 3-HOUR MAX STAY UNTIL 9:00PM FOR A THREE-MONTH PERIOD.**

**** MS. PARKINGTON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. MOTION TO ADJOURN

**** MS. PARKINGTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd