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**PARKING AUTHORITY
SPECIAL MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE
AND TELECONFERENCE
JUNE 30, 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

Vanessa Valadares, DPW Principal Engineer

OTHERS: Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking

CALL TO ORDER

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

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Grotheer- 16 West Rocks Road

Mr. Grotheer said he and his family had reservations and had gone to the Maritime Aquarium on a Sunday at 3:00PM and the aquarium had overbooked as the State had reopened from the Covid-19 restrictions which was totally on them, but when we went back to the Maritime Garage the lack of interaction and sympathy from Parking Authority staff was abysmal. He said the garage was almost filled to capacity and it took him two hours to exit the garage and during that time there was no Parking Authority staff or police officers to let anyone know what the situation was and was an immense black eye on the city. He said once he finally got to the gate the Parking Authority was collecting the fee for the tolls in which he was only parked for one hour and waited two hours to exit and he is not against paying for parking but having someone demand money from me after waiting two hours to exit was a bad way to end an already bad visit. He said that it was a very frustrating experience and we need to do better as a city and he hopes the Parking Authority will make better efforts so that this does not happen again and suggested working with the police department to come up with a contingency plan.

2. DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATED TO MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 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 that the August Parking Authority meeting is usually cancelled but this year will be held because there is still a lot to discuss regarding the budget and the pandemic but will be held in person as well as via zoom.

4. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT

Mr. Manousos reported and said with the exception of the South Norwalk Railroad Station, the East Norwalk Railroad Station and the Webster Street Lot all of the locations are trending up and are near, at or above pre-Covid levels and is a positive sign as we continue to move in the right direction. He said the revenue is just under 30% under budget for the month and was 35% under budget last month. He said the expenses are still under control and the transient revenue is still under budget and that has been the hardest hit due to the rail stations, but the total revenue for the month is up over 15% compared to last month.

Mr. Manousos reported on the highlights of each of the locations and said that there was an additional \$7,500 in revenue for the month at the Yankee Doodle Garage that was due to the shooting of a movie. Mr. Harden requested that information be included in a foot note.

Ms. Vonashek said that Metro North had increased service on June 21, 2021, and will increase service again on August 29, 2021, so there will be an increase in transient parking.

Mr. Harden asked if the Library is still closed and what their plan. Ms. Vonashek there have been some changes at the Library and Sherrill Harris is the new Director and she will coordinate a meeting with her to discuss their plans. Mr. Legesse said currently the gates are up so it is a free to enter and free to leave. Mr. Harden requested that a count be done on how and if the lot is being used to determine if the system should be turned back on. Mr. Rains said if the lot is the responsibly of the Parking Authority then it should be turned back on immediately.

Mr. Manousos said that on street parking is returning to pre-Covid levels and there has been a lot more activity especially on the Pay by Cell side.

Mr. Manousos reported on the enforcement and said as compliance in increasing there is a decrease in ticket issuance.

Mr. Manousos reported on the adjudications and said there were 180 hearings that were scheduled and Mr. Legesse and staff had called all of the violators that had a hearing scheduled and offered them to just pay the original fine to avoid having to attend a hearing and approximately 20 people had accepted, five of them were dismissed for various reasons and 129 people still requested a hearing. Mr. Harden asked if there is a date for when the hearings will begin again. Mr. Travers said he received an email this week from the Legal Department with some dates of availability and he will work with Mr. Legesse to schedule the hearings, and all the hearings should be completed by August.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Customer Courtesy Card program and said it is back to the normal operation and that there were 13 program days in May, 1013 courtesy tickets were issued, \$506.50 was given in metered time, 204 tickets were still issued after the courtesy time had expired and the value of the courtesy cards was \$20,225 for the month and \$441,000 year to date.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Pay by Cell activity and said that it has been trending up since February and the average transaction is up by 3.7%.

Mr. Rains said that not only is Norwalk coming back but is surpassing the numbers pre-Covid. Ms. Vonashek said it is partly due to the surge of people being home for so long and for the first time Norwalk has a tourism department and have a contract in place to promote what the city is doing and how it is getting done. Mr. Rains suggested a report be provided to the Common Council to make them aware of the upward trends. Ms. Vonashek agreed and said that staff will work to put a summary together that highlights upward trends and present a draft to the Parking Authority.

5. ENGINEERING AND PROJECT REPORT

Ms. Valadares reported and said that the contract for the improvements at the South Norwalk Railroad Stations that was approved last month is being prepared and once Mr. Harden signs the contract the work will begin but the work on the track side will not begin until permission is granted by Metro- North.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. ACTION TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT BETWEEN DKA AND THE NORWALK PARKING AUTHORITY FOR ONE YEAR, BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021, FOR NO MORE THAN \$100,000.**

Mr. Rains said that the strides that have been made so far with our initial effort have been terrific and they are building momentum on all of the platforms that they had taken over from a prior group. He said he thinks this is something that is very valuable for the city as well as the Parking Authority for the public outreach component and continues to fit with that mission and recommends continuing with it. Mr. Harden said he agrees.

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

7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Update on phone charging stations**

Mr. Travers reported and said he has had a conversation with the CONNDOT regarding the charging stations and they have been ordered and they will be contacting him as soon as they arrive. Mr. Harden asked for confirmation on where the charging stations will be placed. Mr. Travers said that one will be placed on each side at the South Norwalk Railroad Station.

- b. Update on promotional program for parking options**

Mr. Travers said staff has been working with the marketing folks and they will be putting together a packet and it will be presented at the next Parking Authority meeting. Mr. Rains asked if the packet will include information on the token program etc. Mr. Travers said "yes" and they had worked with LAZ on all the programs that were affected before as well as clarification on the regular options that people have to pay.

c. Update on Wall Street Neighborhood Bollard (Back in angled parking)

Mr. Travers said that he and Ms. Valadares walked on Wall Street area and decided to have five of the bollards removed and that three were on River Street and two on Wall Street and will continue to monitor the area to be sure there are no issues with people encroaching into the sidewalk area and if there are no issues will look to remove additional bollards.

d. Update from LAZ on bids for painting lights and fence at Haviland Deck

Mr. Manousos said that we have received three bids for painting Haviland Deck and that a local company was the low bidder at just over \$30,000 and they have done work for the Parking Authority in the past at the Maritime Garage. He said if the Parking Authority would like to move forward with the project it will need to be determined if the funds will be paid through the operating or capital budget.

e. Update on PARK Norwalk branding

Mr. Travers provided an update and said that the advertisement would be placed in the South Norwalk Railroad Stations in the 30 existing frames and would incorporate a dine/shop/play SONO with the hopes that this will lead into a paid advertisement and the advertising frames that are there today largely say “advertise here” there will still be an advertise option but in the interim will look at highlighting some of the businesses in SONO on how long it would take to walk from the train station to that establishment.

f. Maintenance Update

Mr. Legesse provided an update and said the maintenance team has looked at the bathrooms at the train stations and have ordered the changing stations as well as the paper towel dispensers. He said they will also be painting the bathrooms as well as the stairwell on the New York side to brighten up the hallway, and they have already began to repair the stairs on State Street but some of the work will need to be done by a contractor and are in the process of obtaining pricing.

Mr. Legesse said the main entrance area of the Maritime Garage and the Yankee Doodle Garage has been power washed and have painted the islands and will have more updates provided at the July meeting for ongoing maintenance.

Mr. Manousos said with the loss of the parking spaces on Washington Street and the demands are outpacing the supply especially on Thursday through Saturday nights and staff would like to look

at a public valet service out of the North Water Street lot as a paid service so the program would sustain itself. Mr. Harden suggested also offering the service at the Weber Street Parking Lot.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO ADJOURN**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd