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PARKING AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE MAY 24, 2023

ATTENDANCE:

Eric Rains, Chairman
Matthew Seebeck, Vice Chairman
Jud Aley
Peter Fullam

STAFF

James Travers, Director, TMP
Vanessa Valadares, Chief of Operations and Public Works

OTHERS:

Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Eric Feldblum, CTDOT

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Seebeck 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 MARCH 22, 2023.

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

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT

Mr. Manousos reported and said for the month of April the fund balance was favorable to budget and that the parking revenue was 2.7% under budget for the month, but 7.0% over budget year to date, and the expenses were down 2.3% for the month and 4.7% year to date.

Mr. Manousos reported on the variance report and said there was not much to highlight and there were only two items to report on for the parking revenue side. He said there was some increased collection effort, and 30% more notices were sent out and the average ticket collected was 59% higher than what was budgeted and 1/3 of the collection was from late fees. Mr. Seebeck asked if the amount on the variance report is what the Parking Authority actually receives Mr. Manousos said “no” and that is the gross collection. He said the other item on the revenue side of the variance report was due to the back rent that was received from Lobster Craft. He said on the expense side was down due to the deferred expenses through Covid, the redeployment of the customer service vehicle, and there were no expenses related to snow removal.

Mr. Travers said the \$450,000 in the fund balance and there are savings more than what was budgeted and suggested to transfer that into the capital reserve and replacement given the extent of concrete work that is needed at the Yankee Doodle Garage.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Covid impact analysis and said the revenues and expenses are still a little below pre-Covid levels. Mr. Rains asked if we are at a point where we no longer need to compare to pre-Covid levels. Mr. Manousos said he was going to suggest that at the end of this fiscal year and return to comparing the last few fiscal years. Mr. Manousos said the overall systemwide transient activity is 2.5% below pre-Covid levels and revenue is 9% below pre-Covid levels but is still following seasonal trends.

Mr. Manousos reported on the permit sales and said they are up 1% compared to last month and revenues are up .05%, and permit sales and expenses are both up 5.8% compared to last year.

Mr. Manousos reported on the on-street parking and said that transient parking is up 1.4% compared to last year and revenue was up 6.9%. Mr. Travers said that he has requested that the team work with the

marketing group to create posters to advertise permits. Mr. Manousos said at the last meeting Mr. Fullam requested the on-street comparison for the SONO and Wall Street area and said the SONO district represented 58% of the on-street transactions compared to 29% of the Wall Street district and will track that going forward.

Mr. Manousos reported on the parking enforcement and said ticket issuance was down 13.7% and citation revenue was down 8.5% compared to the same period last year.

Mr. Manousos reported on the ticket issuance versus analysis and said they were down compared to last month. Mr. Rains asked what percentage of related to activity are receiving tickets. Mr. Manousos said that 2.5% of tickets are issued for every 100 transient transactions that take place in the system. Mr. Aley said the percentage is running higher than in past years, which concerns him. Mr. Travers said the food delivery drivers have increased the amount of usage and are not paying to park and are receiving tickets so to compare the ticket issuance from a few years ago is not necessarily a fair comparison. Mr. Rains suggested setting a threshold of 5% or greater for the report since the percentages are so low.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Pay by Cell activity and said it was up 20.1% year to date and the revenue was up 29.1% compared to the same period last year.

4. ENGINEERING AND PROJECT REPORT

a) Update- Haviland construction projects

Mr. Travers provided an update and said that they have received the three quotes and are in the process of reviewing them for the Haviland Deck options for the improvements that include enhancements to the walkway to Washington Street as well as to the staircase.

b) Update- Yankee Doodle Garage Façade enhancement

Mr. Travers provided an update and said that THA has been tasked with developing the construction plans while simultaneously entered into an agreement with consultant who has been doing the conditions assessment because he wanted to have the assessment done prior to the façade improvements and will have to do some level of repairs and will be putting the bids out to see what the actual costs will be, and will also modify the bid to include the removing the concrete ribs.

Mr. Fullam asked if any of the improvements include lights. Mr. Travers said they are looking for enhancements to the lighting on the first level highlights the entrance, exits, and stairwells and THA (the aesthetic contractor) has sent some sample lights that will be installed.

Mr. Rains joined the meeting at 6:10PM.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Discuss and Approve- Extension of LAZ contract through October 15, 2024

**** MR. SEEBECK MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXTENSION OF LAZ CONTRACT THROUGH OCTOBER 15, 2024.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- b) Discussion- NPA managed facility impacts with Walk Bridge Construction

Ms. Valadares said that she has invited Eric Feldblum who is the project engineer from the CTDOT and have put a presentation together and will provide an overview of the right of ways that the State of Connecticut has been taken in regard to the Walk Bridge program as well as the right of ways that reflect on the Parking Authority.

Mr. Feldblum presented and provided an overview of the project and said construction began in 2018, and is projected to end in 2029, and some of the work has already been completed. He said the next project will start in August that will be starting is the Fort Point bridge replacement, Osborne replacement, the East Norwalk Train Station and a small portion of East Avenue to lower the road for the widening of the bridge. He said the Walk Bridge project consists of many packages and that package A is currently under construction and had the groundbreaking ceremony last week which included a lot of in-water work. He said the East Avenue project has been in the works for over 20 years and the first project that will be put out to bid is the beautification around the cemetery and will be installing sidewalks and fixing the roadway around the cemetery area and are hoping to start construction next spring.

Mr. Feldblum provided an overview of right of way acquisitions and said that during the construction of the Walk Bridge they will not be impeding on any traffic or parking, but in some cases the contractor will need some of the parking so in those cases there was an agreement with the City of Norwalk for when the contractor needs to take spaces for any reason the city would first be notified within 48 hours and will pay the city per parking space for the length of time that is needed, so there is no lost revenue and the only time that it would be a long period of time is will be when the crane is built and when the crane gets disassembled. Mr. Travers said with the deconstruction of the IMAX theatre the project has taken approximately 1/3 of the parking spaces and were told it wasn't a factor and asked if the contractor is supposed to be paying for the spaces. Mr. Feldblum said "no" the CTDOT already paid the city \$46,600 for the construction easement that includes the use of the parking spaces. Mr. Travers asked once the project is complete if the parking spaces will return to the city. Mr. Feldblum said "yes" and if they are needed again, they would be pay per parking space for the time frame they are needed and per the contract they have to give advance notice for any paid parking spaces that need to be closed and will reimburse the city for those parking spaces.

Mr. Feldblum provided an overview of the construction staging behind Liberty Square and said the construction staging and fencing will not impede the businesses and access to Goldstein Place and Liberty Square is maintained. He said the property that is being blocked was never part of the Liberty Square property and they made sure the fence line stayed within the right of way, but unfortunately a lot of the businesses in Liberty Square were using the property and were asked to move everything. He said to make it safer they will be installing a temporary traffic signal across the street so people can exit out of Liberty Square. Ms. Valadares said there were negotiations between the CTDOT and the city and the CTDOT made a lot of accommodations for Liberty

Square and some of the parking issues that they are hearing about that although the CTDOT has owned the property for many years but never enforced as a courtesy because the businesses were using it but now with the construction eminent, they have to limit the access.

Ms. Valadares said that all of the easements had to be approved by the Common Council and there is a third party that does the appraisal for the properties and the city looks at every aspect on who will be effected by those easements and that is why on the North Water Street lot it was decided only to give the CTDOT a temporary construction easement while the IMAX is being demolished, and following that get what will be the market rate per space as is done with everything else because it is hard to get a true value of the spaces to be fair to both parties and that money goes to the Parking Authority.

Mr. Rains said that it seems that the city has received money for parking spaces that were taken out of commission and for the Parking Authority that is lost revenue and requested that Mr. Travers follow up on how the flow of reimbursements are going to work because one of the Parking Authority's primary concerns is lost revenue. He said the Parking Authority should be involved in those discussions with the Common Council if and when they are occurring to help them understand when they see a line item for the cost of the acquisitions that the money is not for the city and that it is money for the Parking Authority. He also said the program has come together well and it is good to see all of the work that has been put into it because this is a massive project and there are so many good things that are going to come out of it not only for the city as a whole but also for South and East Norwalk. He said if LAZ is going to be notified when the parking spaces go offline, we will be adding some tracking or accounting onto LAZ's responsibility which means that some reporting should be added to the monthly meetings so the Parking Authority can understand what is happening. Ms. Valadares said she is happy to work with LAZ and try to establish the best system for the Parking Authority to implement and she will also work with Mr. Travers to come up with a plan and there will be a meeting with all the construction that will be happening so a protocol can be established and then request that the construction team follow it. Ms. Valadares said there is already a system in place for when there is construction in the right of way and there is total communication between DPW permits and LAZ.

Mr. Rains said so far there have not been concentrations of people working around the city and even the demolition seems to be contained and he doesn't see contractors driving the streets looking for parking but asked if that does happen if it can be projected out so the Parking Authority can make some arrangements to make use of some of the other Parking Authority facilities for when it does happen. Mr. Feldblum said the contractor is responsible for finding parking for their own employees and cannot just park on the street or garages and take up available parking unless arrangements are made with the city in advance. Mr. Travers said that he wants to be sure the parking spaces in Maritime Garage remain accessible for patrons of the Maritime Aquarium and would like to work with him to acquire spaces at additional locations to be sure those spaces remain open.

Mr. Rains asked if all the permits are in place to complete the Walk Bridge project. Mr. Feldblum said "yes"

c) Discuss and Approve- Desmond Associates Condition Assessment for YDG

Mr. Travers said that Desmond Associates will present the conditions assessment to review the expenses.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- a) Discussion- 15-minute free option

Mr. Legesse said the installation began yesterday but there was a glitch in the programming and the vendor is working to repair it. Mr. Travers said there will be a press conference held for the free 15-minute parking option.

- b) Update- Status of delivery

This was discussed under item 6b of the agenda.

- c) Update- Coffee shop lease

Mr. Travers said that there is a leak that will need to be repaired but the negotiations have been finalized. Mr. Aley asked if Lobster Craft is current in their lease payments. Mr. Travers said “yes” but they still have to pay the security deposit and owe the lease payment for June.

Mr. Travers said there are new vending machines that have been moved into one location and staff is engaging Metro North on a new ticket station into the station. Mr. Legesse said they have received positive feedback regarding the machines.

Mr. Seebeck said the Governor is recommending a reduction in train service on the New Haven Line and should further explore how to respond. Mr. Travers said he was not aware of that announcement and requested that Mr. Seebeck send it to him, and he will share it with the administration.

Mr. Seebeck asked what the city’s intension is regarding acquiring the parking lot next to the library and what that would mean for the Parking Authority. Mr. Travers said it was just switching from one lease to another and it is a non-paid lot today and will be in the future and has no impact to the Parking Authority.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

**** MR. FULLAM SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:55PM

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd