



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
MARCH 24, 2021**

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

STAFF:

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment this evening.

**2. DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATED TO MINUTES FROM THE PARKING
AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2021.**

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

**3. DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATED TO MINUTES FROM THE PARKING
AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021.**

Under the attendance remove Mr. Aley from being absent.

- ** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.**
- ** MR. RAINS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Harden said there has been an issue with 15 minute parking specifically on Washington Street and that 15 minute parking spaces were installed during the pandemic but will be permanent, and asked how it can be made more permanent to make it clear that the space is a 15 minute parking space and the rules that are attached to that. Mr. Rains said it seems to be an enforcement issue and asked if there are sensors on Washington Street. Mr. Harden said it is not really an enforcement issue and Ms. Vonashek has three people that have contacted her with

issues with the spaces. He said this item will be added to the agenda next month for further discussion.

Mr. Harden said there seems to be a need for cell phone charging stations at both of the railroad stations and this item will also be on next month's agenda for discussion.

Mr. Harden said the other thing that will be on the agenda for next month as an action item for the removal of the bollards on Wall Street which is something the Parking Authority has been discussing and would like to pursue. Mr. Travers said the bollards are not installed in many cities and these are spaced out in a way that they are not blocking cars from going through and by removing them would create less clutter on the street and will make the area more attractive. Mr. Harden said there will need to be a discussion with DPW engineering because they are the ones that had demanded them.

5. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT

Mr. Manousos reported and said that overall the finances are still in a recovery mode and the revenues are down by almost 50%, and on the expense side is down 24% compared to last year. He said that demands are also down almost 50% compared to last year.

Mr. Manousos said that 77% of revenue has been through credit cards and the average transaction with Pay by Cell is \$2.56 and pre Covid-19 the average transaction was \$3.44. He said the number of transactions are down almost 40% compared to last year, and the revenue is down approximately 58% compared to last year.

Mr. Manousos said the Pay by Cell use varies by location and the average rate across the system on a consolidated basis is approximately 24% of transactions and accounts for 35% of the revenue.

Mr. Manousos reported on the highlights of the locations and said that permit activity is still down but is still following season trends.

Mr. Manousos said the activity is down at the South Norwalk Railroad Station 92.2% compared to last year and the revenue is down 65.7% compared to last year. Mr. Harden asked Mr. Travers if he had an update from Metro-North regarding the ridership. Mr. Travers said they are still operating at 15% and at a maximum of 20% and he will have another update next month. Mr. Manousos said the East Norwalk Railroad Station is trending the same as the South Norwalk Railroad Station.

Mr. Aley said there was a huge increase at the Yankee Doodle Garage last July and August and asked what that was attributed to. Mr. Manousos that was from catch up payments that were received from Mc Mahon Ford.

Mr. Manousos said that ticket issuance is down 62.6% and citation revenue was down 42% compared to the same time last year.

Mr. Manousos reported on the ticket issuance versus demand analysis. Mr. Aley requested that a column be added for the average on the ratio to future reports. Mr. Manousos said he will reach out to see if this report is done at any other municipalities to see if they track that and if they don't to see if they can so we can get some benchmarks.

Mr. Manousos reported on the Customer Courtesy Program and said the program is moving back to the normal program as businesses begin to open back up.

Mr. Manousos said it was asked at the last meeting if the lighting changes yielded some cost savings and from 2018-2020 the costs were down approximately 16%.

Mr. Manousos said that Mr. Legesse is working with the vendor regarding real time communications on the hand held's as requested at the last meeting. Mr. Legesse said as requested last month we are working with the vendor for the \$5.00 discount if a citation is paid within 24 hours, and we have tested the real time communication and will report at the next meeting on how many same day payments were received.

Mr. Manousos said we are also working on ways to make it more convenient for people to pay their parking tickets and said we will be putting a QR code on the front of the tickets so if someone does receive a citation they can scan it with their phone and go right to the payment portal. He said they are also working on programming the system where if a citation is paid within 24 hours there will be a \$5.00 discount.

Mr. Manousos said the on street rates on the website were not included and have contacted the Snyder Group to have the website updated to include those.

Mr. Legesse said that for the off street facilities the enforcement officer uses the LPR system but on the street they have to type in the vehicle information so we are working with the vendor so the enforcement officer can scan the vehicle with the hand held they currently have which will also help to eliminate any errors. He said it will be rolled out as soon as it is finalized.

Mr. Harden asked about the status of installing the garden boxes on the roof top of the Maritime Garage as was previously discussed. Mr. Manousos said nothing has yet been done due to the pandemic but if the Parking Authority feels there is now a need and or desire for that we will begin to research it. Mr. Harden said he thinks that is something that should be further discussed.

Mr. Manousos discussed the Park Mobile rate structure and said the rates and bands can be changed at any time. He said the current minimum rate is \$1.00 and it was requested at the last meeting that the time be reduced to 15 and 30 minute increments but it is dictated by the rate structure.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO ADD IN A 30 MINUTE OPTION ON THE PARK MOBILE APP.**

**** MR. VETTER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. CAPITAL REPORT

Ms. Valadares reported and said at the next meeting she will be requesting that the Parking Authority take action on the bid openings, and on Friday the caulking project at the South Norwalk Railroad Station will be advertised and all of the documents are in place. She said there will be a walk through on April 8, 2021, and the bid opening will be held the day before the next meeting. She said once this is approved by the Parking Authority it will also need to be approved by the DPW Committee and the Common Council because the Purchasing Department and the Legal Department have requested that it be approved by all three boards. Mr. Rains asked why it would need to go to all three boards for approval. Ms. Valadares said the legal department writes the contracts and they have requested the approvals.

Ms. Valadares said the second project will be at the Webster Lot and she is hoping to have the project advertised next week.

Ms. Valadares said all the capital improvements will be done that were planned for this fiscal year, and reminded the Parking Authority that no capital funds were requested this fiscal year but there is enough funding for the cost of those two projects and the paving that will need to be done at Webster Lot after the draining project is complete as part on the match on the grant that was received for the project.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion and action on FY22 Operating Budget

Mr. Harden said the requested operating budget for fiscal year 2021/22 will be \$5,978,406 with the hope if things begin to rebound that the fund balance can begin to get replenished, and will have to work hard over the next year on how to stop the downslide of the budget.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2021/22 OPERATING BUDGET.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Travers said he had taken a tour of the facilities with Mr. Legesse and he had made some general observations and said in his experience the 15 minute parking spaces are very confusing for the end user and it is often better to charge for parking and recommended having the meters

programmed to 30 minute parking spaces. He also suggested installing feather flags for pick up and drop off locations to support the restaurants.

Mr. Travers suggested adding charging stations to the railroad stations because when people return to the stations we have to give them something better than they had before the pandemic. He said the model we had identified as a potential charging station would not only provide phone charging opportunities but would also have a digital display that we could work with the Snyder Group to promote the local area.

Mr. Travers suggested rebranding the customer facing portion of the Parking Authority as “Park Norwalk” which sends a cleaner message. He also suggested rebranding the parking meter logo.

Mr. Travers suggested installing a flashing blue light with a digital display when there is a snow emergency and remove all the no parking snow emergency signage. He said by having the no parking snow emergency signage is an unwelcoming message particularly in the Webster Lot. He said both New Haven and Hartford saw incredible success with doing that and only highlighting it when the Mayor declares a snow emergency.

Mr. Harden said these items will be added to the agenda as a discussion item for next month and requested that Mr. Travers reach out to the Snyder Group to present a different visual look of the branding as well as the snow emergency signage.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discussion and action to remove parking signage and parking meters along the west (south) side of Washington Street in support of outdoor dining.

Mr. Legesse said the signs that are currently on Washington Street were installed by DPW so it would need their approval to remove them. Mr. Travers said he will add it to the next Traffic Authority agenda for approval.

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE REMOVING THE SIGNAGE**

**** ALEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- b. Discussion and action to acquire three quotes to paint the lights, fence, and kiosk at the Haviland Parking Deck gloss black

Mr. Travers said the blue fencing is faded as well as the lights and kiosk and suggested painting them black which would modernize the facility and set the tone for when people

come back. He said that LAZ is in the process of obtaining three quotes and will bring it back to the Parking Authority next month to discuss.

- c. Discussion and action concerning contracting with Bob Abriola about curating art in the SONO Station and the Yankee Doodle Garage

Mr. Travers suggested having the locking frames and having them installed up the stairwells at the South Norwalk Railroad Station and the Yankee Doodle Garage and fill the frames with art from the kids in our schools from kindergarten up the Norwalk Community College, and having Mr. Abriola in charge of curating the art. Mr. Harden suggested tying the art into the conference room that was built at the Yankee Doodle Garage. Mr. Aley suggested over time to have the art installed in all of the garages.

Mr. Harden asked how many bike racks the Bike/Walk Commission had and if there is an opportunity to design the bike racks. Mr. Aley said the Bike/Walk Commission has already purchased five bike racks and are they are the standard bike racks. Mr. Harden asked how many they are requesting to be installed on Parking Authority property. Mr. Aley said that Ms. Valadares had suggested on the already approved bike share locations. Mr. Rains said he is working on a project for the furnishings at the park at 50 Washington Street and that there is a location that they have identified where some bike racks can be installed. Mr. Harden suggested that Mr. Rains reach out to the Bike/Walk Commission.

Mr. Harden said when the .50 cents per hour on Wall Street was turned on it was voted in as a temporary experiment and there now need to be a decision made on either leaving it .50 cents per hour and will be added to the agenda for next month as an action item.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd