

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone, Zoom, and/or the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at

[Agendas | Norwalk, CT - Official Website \(norwalkct.org\)](https://norwalkct.org)



Members of the public can use a telephone to call in, attend, listen and comment during the meeting. However, they will not be able to see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed.



Upon written request, not less than 24 hours prior to the meeting, a member of the public can request a physical location to attend this virtual meeting at City Hall. Such a member of the public will be provided access to a telephone so that they can attend the meeting in real time. The member of the public can call in, attend, listen and comment during the meeting. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID (see above). A set of instructions will be left with the telephone for the member of the public to use in order to access the meeting.



Members of the public who wish to “view the meeting live” and/or “provide live comments” can use the Zoom meeting platform by going to either <https://norwalkct-org.zoom.us/j/83880537065> or www.norwalkct.org/meetings and clicking on the “View/Participate Live on Zoom” link that is on the line with the meeting date and time. 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. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed.



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 email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Bryan Lutz at blutz@norwalkct.gov with the subject line “Public Comment” to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

**PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE
AND TELECONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 28, 2024**

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

STAFF Jessica Vonashek, Chief, Economic and Community Development
James Travers, Director, TMP
Bryan Lutz, Asst. Parking Director, TMP
Sabrina Godeski, Director, Business Development & Tourism

OTHERS: Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Tod Kallenbach, DKA

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 FRO THE PARKING AUTHORITY
MEETING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024, AND SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 7,
2024.**

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

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. SPECIAL ITEM

a. DKS Presentation

Mr. Kallenbach presented and said they have been contracted with the Parking Authority to provide marketing support and promotion of parking assets. He provided a recap of the activities and results from 2023, and said the assignments included a business brand that was initiated in 2021 and extended that to a new citywide brand which was completed in June of last year which included branding the “I love Norwalk” to all city departments and committees.

Mr. Kallenbach said the focus is on business support and promotion of parking assets, but overall their efforts are designed to create an overarching distinct identity for Norwalk as a great place to explore, shop, work, etc. and try to align some measures in how they are doing in terms of growth, and long-term how this will translate into city revenue increases that are generated by growth and employment.

Mr. Kallenbach presented the digital/social platforms and said they employ a three-level strategy for promotion which include defining the activities for tourists and visitors, where they can find them, and the specific events or experiences that are being offered that are tied to a calendar and are posted at least on a daily basis and measure how people engage with the posts and website. He reported on the 2023 digital media results and said the numbers are growing which include open and click rates on the newsletters and visits to the website. Mr. Rains said the activities that are offered in Norwalk are not common to the cities and towns that are inland and asked if there is a way to really know what people are responding to when they investigate through the website social media or are the just general inquiries. Mr. Kallenbach said the social media posts are done daily and can look at what they get in terms of how many people were exposed to the message and can also look at engagement. Mr. Rains said whichever activities are more immediate to the parking assets is where the Parking Authority would like to see an increase in traffic or usage and asked if there is a correlation between the activities that are seen and the impact on parking. Mr. Kallenbach said “yes” and that has been discussed in the past, so they are really trying to emphasize what they are promoting to the urban core areas specifically South Norwalk, the Wall Street district, and East Norwalk which is where the parking assets are located and is where a lot of the activity is as well. He said there are some major attractions in each of those areas and/or clusters of activities and one of the highest performing posts over the past 12 months was regarding the opening of the Merrit 7 train station as well as for the extension of bike lanes on the downtown streets.

Mr. Kallenbach said the tourism add campaign tactics that are being used are programmatic social and digital and include video ad’s that are running on Facebook, Instagram etc. and are using a technique called mobile geo-fencing and are offering display ads to people that are carrying their mobile phones into areas in that geography and attending attractions that are similar to what Norwalk has. He said another media outlet they are using is Hearst Connecticut are using sponsored content and is tied to Facebook to drive people to those articles. He said they are also using News 12 April through November when there are a lot more activities happening.

Mr. Kallenbach reported on the year end tourism campaign summary and said there were 12.9 million paid ad impressions, 1.4 million organic social impressions, 73,000 email impressions, and 58,000 website visits. He said whatever feedback they can get from the Parking Authority as

well as from the businesses is helpful in guiding what they do. Mr. Rains asked what sort of input they are looking for from the Parking Authority. Mr. Kallenbach said they are looking for things such as where the parking assets are located and if there are areas, they may need extra help. Mr. Rains suggested that he look at the reports that are presented at the meetings as the measure not only revenue but performance as well and is broken down by area, which may help to tell a story and noted that the South Norwalk Railroad Station is about to have a significant amount of work done, there is also an enormous project at the Yankee Doodle Garage that will be done, as well as the East Norwalk Railroad Station will not have train service for three weeks due to the Walk Bridge project. He also said there are also advertising opportunities at some of the assets. Mr. Aley said there is a lot of restaurant turnover and a fair number of empty storefronts and said if anything can be done to promote retail it would be great to see diversity and hopefully less empty storefronts through that diversity.

Mr. Lutz said they had discussed adding a widget link to “Visit Norwalk” on the different neighborhoods that will direct visitors of Visit Norwalk to ParkNorwalk.org so people can see where the parking assets are located. Mr. Kallenbach said that is already been done and is active.

4. ENGINEERING AND PROJECT REPORT

a. Update- TMP 2023-01- YDG Exterior Repairs ad Improvement

Mr. Lutz provided an update and said they are currently waiting for the contract to be executed with GL Capasso and after it is executed, he will have a better idea on when the work will begin. He also responded to some of the questions that Mr. Seebeck has at the last meeting and said that they do not have the permits in hand, but the permit department is aware of the timeline and will do their best to expedite the permits once the contract is fully executed. He that that any funds that are saved on this project can be used for the next phase of the Yankee Doodle façade improvements.

b. Update- TMP 2024-2 Parking Operator for the Norwalk Parking Authority

Mr. Lutz provided an update and said the project was advertised on February 6, 2024, and the electronic submissions are due on March 4, 2024, and the hard copy submission are due on March 21, 2024. He said once the proposals are received and open, they will begin the evaluation process and will schedule interviews/presentations beginning April 18, 2024.

5. FINANCIAL AND OPERATING REPORT

Mr. Legesse reported and said that parking revenue was \$25,000 under budget for the month but was offset by savings on the expense side which resulted in a positive and strong fund balance. He said the underperformance in revenue was due to transient revenue at Maritime Garage, Haviland Deck, and all on street parking due to a decline in leisure activity. He said from a budgetary standpoint parking revenue was under budget by 5.5% for month but 2.7% over budget year to date. Mr. Seebeck asked if this could be related to having had more snow events last year compared to prior years. Mr. Legesse said “yes” the cold weather and snow in January had an impact on revenue, but are also showing a major decline on Fridays and Saturdays especially at the Haviland Deck and Northwater Street area and he reached out to the Maritime Aquarium to see how their activity level was and they had approximately 5, 000 less attendees this January compared to last January.

Mr. Legesse said that total revenue was down 6.6% compared to last month and is down 1.9% compared to last January, and is following seasonal trends but are monitoring that closely and reaching out to the businesses to see how they are doing and some have confirmed that their activity is down. He said the year-to-date revenue is up 5.9% compared to last year.

Mr. Legesse said that transient revenue was down 14.6% for the month and was also down 10.2% compared to last January. He said that permit activity was up .03% compared to last month but is up 3% compared to last January. He said they are seeing an increase in demand at the South Norwalk Railroad Station and at the Yankee Doodle Garage. He said the permit revenue is down 2.3% compared to last month which was due to the Maritime Garage paying three months of their volunteer parkers in December. He said year- to -date permit activity is up 3.9% compared to last year.

Mr. Legesse reported on the variance report and said there was nothing to report on the revenue side but on the expense side snow removal was under budget and there was savings of \$14,000. There was also a \$14,000 variance for the service contract that comes from the permit system contract amount, and there was savings in maintenance but due to the cold weather there was some repair work that had gotten delayed so there was a variance of \$11,000. He said the utility expenses were higher at all of the facilities but mainly at the South Norwalk Train Station garage due to the cold weather.

Mr. Legesse said the systemwide transient activity year to date is 2.3% below last year, but revenue is 5.9% above last year. He said that 92% of the transactions were paid via credit card and 8% in cash which is a big improvement in trying to reduce cash usage.

Mr. Legesse reported on the permit sales and said compared to last month, January permits are up 0.3% but revenue is down 2.3%, which is due to the extra collection from the Maritime Aquarium. He said compared to last year, January permits are up 3.0% and permit revenue is up 2.9%. He said compared to last year, permit activity is up 3.9% and revenue is up 5.2%. He said the year-to-date permit revenue is 0.1% under budget and 2,799 permits were sold systemwide and there are 3,066 spaces available for permits and 4,333 total spaces systemwide, including non-metered spaces.

Mr. Legesse reported on the on-street parking and said year-to-date through January, transient activity was down 11.9% and revenue was down 7.1% compared to last year and is following seasonal trends. He said the revenue is down 10.1% compared to last month and down 8% compared to month and 8% compared to last January. He said in SONO the average Pay-by-Cell transaction was \$2.20 with an average stay of 1.5 hours, and in the Wall Street district, the average Pay-by-Cell transaction was \$1.09 with an average stay of 2.18 hours due to the \$1.00 minimum. Mr. Fullam said that he has received some complaints regarding having to buy a minimum of two hours of parking. Mr. Legesse said they also get those complaints but try to educate people that when they use a credit card there is a fee so there needs to be a minimum requirement not to operate at a loss for those transactions. Mr. Aley noted that coins can be used if people would like to pay by the hour. Mr. Legesse said a majority of the transactions are in the SONO area. Mr. Rains said there were 5,000 more transactions in SONO which he finds not to be a big difference and suggested that the parking rates may need to be revisited and as he understands it one of the reasons that there is such a variance in various parts of the city is usage so if usage is becoming comparable to a more expensive parking rate area that says to him that it is approaching the time to reevaluate the rates. Mr. Legesse agreed, especially in the Wall Street area. Mr. Aley said it has been seven years since the rates have been adjusted in the SONO area and there has been a lot of inflation since then. Mr. Aley said when the rates were raised last time a consultant was hired to look at the rates in surrounding towns and Norwalk was low at that time so felt justified in increasing the rates and suggested

looking at the rates of the surrounding towns again. Mr. Legesse said that he will work with Mr. Lutz on the study.

Mr. Legesse reported on the parking enforcement and said on a year-to-date basis the ticket issuance was up 12.3% and citation revenue was down 10.7%. He said ticket issuance for the month was down by 7.6% and citation revenue was down by 3.3%. He said the citation revenue represents 20.7% of the total revenue systemwide. Mr. Legesse reported on the citation revenue from the beach and for the month of January there was \$496 worth of tickets issued. Mr. Rains asked if there is a way to know the cost associated with receiving \$496. Mr. Legesse said he will break it down and present it at the next meeting or email to him. Mr. Rains requested that it just be emailed to him.

Mr. Legesse reported on the citation revenue breakdown and said that 29% was due to late fees and 71% was due to fines. He said they have also been tracking the payment method for citations and said that 77% of payments were made through the website and 4% were made over the telephone and 19% were made in person or via the mail.

Mr. Legesse reported on the ticket versus demand analysis and said there was a decline in the number of tickets issued but the percentage had a slight increase due to the demand for the month being lower than prior months.

Mr. Legesse reported on the Pay by Cell activity and said there was a seasonal decline for the month but are seeing a strong utilization of Pay by Cell transactions and year to date is 12.6% in usage and 15.87% in revenue and in the fiscal year has outperformed the Park Mobile payment from prior years, and for the month of January the Yankee Doodle Garage has shown a high usage with Park Mobile which he attributes to the restaurant that is near the garage promoting her business, and the revenue has also increased since the opening of the business.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discuss & Vote- Webster Lot and N. Main Street walkthrough

Mr. Lutz said on a continued effort to improve the facilities there is a passageway at the Webster Lot and there is an opportunity to add value to Webster Lot and ultimately future development. He said the pathway has many obstructions causing pedestrians to think it is just an alleyway when it is actually a passageway between two buildings to the Webster Lot and North Main Street. He said staff would like to get the Parking Authority's input and direction and if agreed he will begin to engage firms to get proposals from concept and construction documents to bring to the Parking Authority at a later date. The members of the Parking Authority agreed to move forward.

b. Discuss & Vote- IMI Conference Trip

Mr. Lutz said the IPMI (International Parking & Mobility Institute) conference will be held in Columbus, Ohio from June 9th through June 12th and he plans on attending and fully participating in the seminars that are being held. He said staff would also like to invite members of the Parking Authority if they would like to attend, which would greatly increase their exposure to the parking and mobility industry. Mr. Travers said there were some budget savings in snow removal and doesn't anticipate having much more snow so can still stay within budget and offer this opportunity to any of the board members who would like to attend.

- c. Update- Water leak at the SNRR terminal.

Mr. Lutz said they are dealing with a very challenging leak at the South Norwalk Railroad Station and during any rain event there has been a steady leak of water going into the station along the inside wall of the tenant space. He said they are currently compiling proposals to see what actions need to be taken to resolve the issue, and staff will present the recommendations to the Parking Authority once the reviews have been completed.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Update- Handicap compliance on multi-space meters

Mr. Lutz said the handicapped compliance programming is complete on the multi-space meters and are working on getting the enforcement rules programmed.

- b. Update- East Norwalk Train Station Closure March 11- April 1, 2024

Mr. Lutz said, as discussed earlier, the East Norwalk Train Station will be closed from March 11th through April 1, 2024, and has started communicating to the permit holders and feels that weekly communication blasts to the permit holders is important. Mr. Travers said as a request from the mayor Mr. Lutz is working with the Norwalk Transit District to provide free shuttle services that would be paid for by the Walk Bridge Project and would provide a shuttle connection from the East Norwalk Railroad Station to the South Norwalk Railroad Station.

- c. Update- Credit Card Fees

Mr. Lutz said he is currently working with a few vendors to see what they offer and is waiting on the LAZ team to finalize it so that it can be presented to the Parking Authority.

Mr. Alely asked the status of the citywide free 15-minute parking. Mr. Lutz said they are finalizing the plans for the signage. Mr. Traves said there have been some challenges with two of the vendors for the signs and have moved to another one. Mr. Alely asked if the Parking Authority will be able to view the signs. Mr. Travers said they already have and are standard parking signs. Mr. Lutz said he will be sure that any updates that are made are communicated effectively with the Parking Authority.

8. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. FULLAM MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd