



CITY OF NORWALK
PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
December 20, 2017

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Rilling
Richard Brescia, Chairman
Jud Aley
Tom Vetter
Eric Rains

ABSENT: Mike Harden, Vice Chairman

STAFF: Kathryn Hebert, Administrative Services Manager
Vanessa Valadares, Senior Civil Engineer
Dilene Byrd, Secretary

OTHERS: Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Tim Sheehan, Director, Redevelopment Agency

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brescia called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public commented.

COLLABORATIVE SPEAKER: MAYOR HARRY RILLING

Mayor Harry Rilling spoke to the Parking Authority about all the great initiatives that the Parking Authority is doing and the positive impact to the public. He thanked everyone for all their time and effort.

NEW BUSINESS

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2017.

Mr. Brescia said on page 1, to include the email that he had received from Councilman John Kydes as follows:

As you know from prior conversations, changing the way parking is structured in South Norwalk is my top priority. South Norwalk is the focal point of our city and I believe we need to do everything we can to increase traffic in that area. I appreciate all you do but I believe we need to think outside the box and make a dramatic change on how parking is handled in South Norwalk even if it's temporary until we rejuvenate the area.

Mr. Brescia said on page 1, under the collaborative speaker to change "he also" to "Mr. Brescia"

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

A. Chairman Report

Mr. Brescia said there was a good exchange regarding the SONO garage and that it should be the basis of discussion at the budget meeting to explore the cost impacts and what the opportunities are. He spoke about the upcoming budget process and would like members to review the budget material and be prepared to discuss at the special budget meeting, but that any questions to contact him and/or Ms. Hebert prior to the budget meeting.

Mr. Brescia spoke about the customer courtesy card and said that a number of employees from the restaurants are the recipients of the courtesy cards and some are repeat recipients. He said that this information is helpful as the Parking Authority continues to deal with capacity issues and finding available and reasonable parking for employees in the area.

B. Norwalk Now

Ms. Hebert provided an update and said that Norwalk Now is doing very well and ahead of schedule and that a meeting was held last week with the several stakeholders to inform them of the status and involve them in the organization. To date there were 18 participants and seven that are pending, and she expects the numbers in January to increase substantially after the holidays. She said that the City Limits music event will take place January 24th through January 28th and will be coupled with a “City Grub” type of event with restaurants serving a pre-fixed menu. Mr. Rains said that there seems to be a lot of similarities between the Norwalk Now program is accomplishing and what the Chamber of Commerce would or should be doing. Ms. Hebert said that she and Ms. Kavanaugh have met with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce. Norwalk Now is more of an individual collaborative marketing program, and the Chamber doesn’t individually market any business but there may be some opportunities for both organizations to benefit. The Chamber of Commerce is more of a business resource and advocate.

C. Parking Capacity and Strategic Plan

Ms. Hebert provided an update and said that Walker is on schedule, working with the other citywide project consultants regarding shared information. She said that they are planning to have a draft and presentation to steering committing and Parking Authority first quarter of 2018. Mr. Sheehan asked if there was any validity in the complaints that were received regarding the website. Ms. Hebert said that the website was rolled out 3 weeks ago and digital platforms, such as Norwalk Tomorrow communication platform, are typically a ‘work in progress.’ All suggestions will be evaluated and changes made as necessary

D. Parking Wayfinding Challenges Walk Bridge and Mall Project

Mr. Rains said that Mayor Rilling stated at a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce that he had a meeting with the Governor regarding the impacts of the Walk Bridge on the business’s requesting that the topic receive a lot more attention and that the Governor was favorable of that. He said that was very good to hear because he personally does not think that the magnitude of what could potentially occur in South Norwalk is understood by everyone, and he would like the information to be out there.

Mr. Rains said that the design committee had a meeting last week and that Mr. Beinfield had provided some sketches of the ascetics of the bridge and those sketches initiated a very good dialogue with the DOT and their consultants. Mr. Sheehan said that there is a traffic mitigation plan throughout the entire construction process and suggested that the Parking Authority understand what the mitigation is that has been approved relative to the project, and determine how the Parking Authority could enhance or make it operate smoother. Ms. Valadares spoke about the communication regarding the Walk Bridge and said that the program manager will have a physical office opening at the beginning of the year on Marshall Street for customer service related to the project. There was further discussion ensued and Mr. Rains suggested that our role as the Parking Authority could be to offer regular opportunities to deliver information to people in the area. Mr. Brescia stated that the Parking Authority also needs to explore what role and what responsibilities if any we have. Ms. Hebert said that she and Mr. Rains participate with the Walk Bridge Business Mitigation Committee. Mr. Rains volunteered to liaison between the Walk Bridge committee(s) and the Parking Authority.

E. South Norwalk Railroad Station Weekend Activity

Ms. Hebert discussed the results of the community caparison for railroad station weekend rates and said that what they had found is that the communities that are offering free weekends are open lots and not garages. She said that the information in the packet is for the Parking Authority to review for the upcoming budget.

F. Financial, Transient Activity and Operating Reports

Mr. Manousos presented and said overall for the month of November and year to date revenues have been favorable to budget, but that compared to last year the year to date revenues are down which is mainly due to the South Norwalk Railroad Station facility, violations and on street meter operation. The South Norwalk Railroad Station decrease is due to additional capacity available in Westport and Stamford; violations are decreased due to the courtesy card program activity and on street meter activity is decreased, however, there is an increase in pay by cell activity on street.

Mr. Manousos said that expenses overall system wide have been favorable to budget year to date. He reported on transient activity and said that it is flat year to date compared to last year.

Mr. Manousos reported on the operations and said that 78% of the revenues that are received are through credit cards. He said that the revenue for permit sales has been consistent and that the activity from the Pay by Cell has been a lot higher year to date compared to last year, and there have been a 36% more transaction which is approximately a 17% increase in revenue. Mr. Brescia stated that some of the complaints that are received are due to the ticketing and pricing that are driving down activity in the SONO area particularly on-street, and this year through November there is 186,000 activity units and last year at this time was 185,000, so in fact there are more people parking this year than last year. Mr. Sheehan asked if there is an average on the time people are staying. Mr. Manousos “yes” he will provide that information for next month’s meeting. Mr. Brescia said that he will be recommending on a monthly basis that the Parking Authority provide a report to Mayor Rilling and each member of the Common Council that will provide this type of information.

G. On Street Customer Courtesy Program

Mr. Manousos said that the program is going very well and that there are close to 3,000 customer courtesy cards given out with a value of over \$64,000 through the end of November. He said that this has had a very positive impact on the community and towards changing the perception of the parking authority.

H. Capital Project Report

Ms. Valadares reported on the status of the capital projects and said that the capital requests for next year have been finalized. She said that the proposed fence for the dumpster area at Webster Lot is on track to be completed by December 28th. She said that the bid proposal for the new conference room is being developed and is expected to be advertised this winter. She said that the order has been placed for the revenue control equipment for the Maritime Garage and the South Norwalk Railroad Station.

I. Operating and Capital Budget fiscal year 2019

Ms. Hebert distributed.

J. Other Business

There was no discussion.

**K. Next Parking Authority Meeting: Wednesday, January 24, 2018, Maritime Garage,
Parking Authority Offices, 11 North Water Street, 6:00PM.**

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:35PM