

PARKING AUTHORITY
November 20, 2019

ATTENDANCE: Richard Brescia, Chairman
Mike Harden, Vice Chairman
Eric Rains
Jud Aley (arrived at 6:30PM)

STAFF: Jessica Casey, Chief of Community and Economic Development
Kathryn Hebert, Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking
Michael Yeosock, Asst. Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking

OTHERS: Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Rita Azrelyant, Consultant
Peter Fullam
Mike Maguire

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brescia called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Fullam stated that everyone likes free parking and that is what we have had for a long time and the two hour limit has to be enforced to get the people that are parking on the street for over two hours into the garages. He said he still hears a lot of issues with the reverse angled parking, and even though there is free parking until January 2020, the public is not aware of that and are very confused with the signs that say two ways to pay.

Mr. Maguire read an email from Buckley Ryan into the record as follows:

I will be unable to make the meeting tonight as I only received an email today at 3:38PM, and can't get out of my current obligation. Sadly, as we were asked to sign in with emails on Monday, you would've thought there would have been an invite or reminder, but neither occurred. Time and time again, we heard about turnover when nobody in the room had been asked and no one would have agreed to this, had they been asked. It seems incredibility money motivated from the start and appears to be even more so now, brilliantly, they gave us a few 15 minute spots but as I think of it, will make them more money when someone stays there 16 minutes and gets a ticket. I invited the committee on Monday to stop in to see my 3 lunch customers at 1:00PM Tuesday. Not surprisingly, no one showed. Lunch used to be a busy time.

On top of that, they want to keep making my customers pay right through the dinner hour. I'm one of the VERY FEW businesses open in the evening. There is no need to charge my customers to eat, to put money in their pockets, when no one else needs the spots or the turnover. Keep the garage but please leave the street alone.

Mr. Maguire read an email from Mr. DiScala as follows:

My residential tenants located at the Trolley Barn and Head of the Harbor are in full agreement that metered on street parking should NOT be enforced until the area sees an upswing in retail, office and residential presence. We all love the improvements being done by the city but charging customers to park in an area trying so hard to make its comeback it going against the grain.

Mr. Maguire stated that this a bad idea and that there is a time for this once Wall Street is in a revitalized state and that is the goal for everyone who attended the meeting on Monday evening because we are the ones that are working hard towards the goal and who have invested in the area. He said the purpose for metered and on street parking is not to make Parking Authority's money but is to protect the merchants on the street from people clogging up parking spaces but we do not have that problem yet but hope to one day have that problem. He said he did not know the fees were going to be voted on tonight and that it was not stated on the website and encouraged the Parking Authority to delay the paid parking until the area gets back on its feet.

NEW BUSINESS

**1. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING
HELD ON WENDESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2019.**

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 23, 2019
AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MR. HARDEN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL PARKING AUTHORITY
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2019.**

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2019
AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MR. HARDEN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. APPROVE THE 2020 PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING SCHEDULE.

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2020 PARKING AUTHORITY
MEETING SCHEUDLE.**

****MR. HARDEN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OR THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NORWALK PARKING AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH FUSS AND O'NEILL TO PERFORM DATA COLLECTION AND INFILTRATION TESTING, CONCEPT AND FINAL DESIGN IN RELATION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND FLOODING IN THE WEBSTER PARKING LOT RELATED TO THE NORWALK HARBOR PROJECT FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$66,000.
ACCOUNT NO. 09 18/19/20/4095 5777 C0303

Ms. Hebert said that they have received a \$250,000 grant related to the green infrastructure improvement project at the Webster Lot and this is to be able to begin the process. Mr. Rains asked if the study includes all of the points that need to be addressed as part of the Norwalk River project. Mr. Yeosock said "no" it only addresses approximately 30% of the Webster Lot and it also addresses the possibility of adding porous pavement. Mr. Rains asked what about things such as construction observation. Mr. Yeosock said some of that is included and the remainder will be done by city staff.

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

5. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE FY21 PARKING AUTHORITY CAPITAL BUDGET REQUEST.

Ms. Hebert said that there are three line items that are being requested for the FY 21 Capital Budget and the first one is the infrastructure improvements for the parking garages related to concrete repairs and drainage; a residential parking permit study which was also recommend in the POCD as well as the East Norwalk TOD; wayfinding signage plan and study to provide better signage to get to the facilities for a total capital budget request of \$1.162 million dollars. Mr. Rains asked if the repairs were completed at the Yankee Doodle Garage that were approved last year. Ms. Hebert said "yes" and for a total cost of approximately \$3 million dollars over the past couple of years. She said that there was also substantial work done at Haviland Deck. Mr. Harden said there is a lot of signage and asked who currently makes the signs for wayfinding. Ms. Hebert said that staff establishes the verbiage and there is an outside vendor that makes the signs and some of the signs are regulatory and the content is governed by those regulations. Mr. Brescia suggested the staff recommendations come back to the Parking Authority for approval. Mr. Rains asked if the study will also look at mobile signage. Ms. Hebert said that she will be suggesting they look at both physical signage as well as a mobile application. Mr. Brescia said that the Parking Authority would like to have input on the RFP.

**** MR. RAINS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY21 PARKING AUTHORITY
CAPTIAL BUDGET REQUEST.**

**** MR. HARDEN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE PARKING PLAN ON ISAACS STREET.

Ms. Casey provided a history regarding Isaacs Street and said that in 2015 it was turned from a two way street to a one way street and there were parking spaces available along the curb on the east side. In June of 2019 the Traffic Authority voted to return the street to a two way street if access to the Leonard Street Lot was ever restricted. In late summer barriers on the west side of Isaac Street were pushed back to allow the nose in angled parking. On November 12th a private party placed concrete barriers between Isaac Street and the Leonard Street lot and city teams worked with LAZ to return Isaac Street to a two way street to eliminate the nose in angled parking due to space constraints and safety. Today there are eight parking spaces that are active along the east side of Isaccs Street. She said staff is trying to look at three different alternatives to be able to allow parking on Isaccs Street but also allow two way traffic that is required to get in and out and believe the parking that was there before is the safest way to move forward. Mr. Rains asked if this return to the old configuration eliminate the possibility for a private citizen to do anything that will disrupt the operation of parking. Ms. Casey said this is the only area in Norwalk that has this configuration and it's the city's position to be responsive and if the private property owners were to make different decisions we could work with them to figure out what the access would look like but that is to be seen.

7. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON IMPLEMENTING A SHORT TERM PARKING AND COMMERCIAL DELIVERY PROGRAM IN THE WALL STREET DISTRICT.

Ms. Casey presented and said one of the things that they have heard over the past several weeks is the need to curbside management specifically drop off and pick up zones, loading and unloading and the need for free 15 minute parking spaces to help some of the business's in the area to continue to be successful. The team has looked at an opportunity to implement flex parking in the Wall Street area. She discussed the criteria for flex parking and said it requires the minimum of two space need because that is required for a loading and unloading zone and the team is proposing between the hours of 8:00AM until noon a loading and unloading zone and at noon until the next day they would be changed to the 15 minute free parking. Mr. Harden suggested referring to LAZ regarding the enforcement because that seems like it may be an issue and looked into what the impact on the budget would be for enforcement. Mr. Brescia suggested that the Parking Authority look at the map of the area and determine where the site specific locations should be. Ms. Casey suggested that the areas all be the same so that there is consistency. Mr. Brescia suggested that the map of the area be provided to the Parking Authority so there can be a discussion on where the 15 or 30 minute free parking should be located and have a vote in at the December Parking Authority meeting. Mr. Rains also suggested as the process is laid out that there be a discussion with whoever may be interested.

Mr. Harden said he would like to hear more about the implementation of whatever it is that the Parking Authority decides on and what it will look like because that is one of the lessons they had learned with the back in angled parking and it should be included in the report.

8. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON IMPLEMENTING A 6 MONTH PILOT TO CHANGE THE HOURS OF OPERATION IN THE WALL STREET DISTRICT FROM STARTING AT 8AM TO STARTING AT 9AM.

Mr. Rains asked what the plan is to change the existing signage for the six month period. Mr. Manousos said that decals can be placed over the existing signs.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SIX MONTH PILOT CHANGE OF HOURS OF OPERATION IN THE WALL STREET DISTRICT FROM 8:00AM TO 9:00AM.**

**** MR. HARDEN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

9. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE WALL STREET DISTRICT PARKING PROGRAM COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR DECEMBER 2019.

Mr. Harden said that he now does not think people should have to register their car at the pay station during the free two hour parking in the Wall Street area because people are going to pay because they are afraid of getting a ticket. He said his initial thought was to take down or cover the signs until a plan was decided but it was decided to leave the signs up and have people register to get them used to the idea of paid parking but he does not agree with that. Mr. Aley agreed and also suggested the signs either be removed or covered until a plan is decided on.

**** MR. HARDEN MOVED TO APPROVE AMENDING THE WALL STREET DISTRICT PARKING PROGRAM COMMUNICATION PLAN TO REMOVE THE LANGUAGE “REGISTERING YOUR CAR, BY LICENSE PLATE, AT THE PAY STATION”. AND “THOSE WHO DO NOT REGISTER WILL RECEIVE A REMINDER, FOR AWARENESS ONLY”. AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ESTABLISH A PLAN TO COVER OR REMOVE THE SIGNS THROUGH THE MONTH OF DECEMBER IN THE MOST EFFICIENT AND FASTEST WAY.**

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

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

A. Chairman Report

Mr. Brescia reported and said he thought that the meetings that we have had with the public and the business owners were valuable. It gave them a chance to express their concerns but there was one misconception that he kept hearing which was that the Parking Authority had not spoken to anyone in the area regarding the parking and they had not. On the other hand, we had provided an opportunity for them to speak to the Parking Authority. In the month of February, we had a meeting with local business people to discuss what was going to be done and solicited input and there was another meeting held in April so we were not operating in a

vacuum and had made an effort to reach out. He said it wasn't that we weren't trying to reach out to the community for their input but some mistakes were made on how it was introduced to the Wall Street area. He said a plan needs to be developed on how we will move forward in January and over the next several weeks review what is going to be done. He said the time will be used as an education process for both the people and the Parking Authority.

B. Capital Project Report

There was no report.

C. Operating Budget

Ms. Hebert said that the staff recommended operating budget will be submitted to the Parking Authority at the December meeting and the workshops can be scheduled in January. Mr. Brescia suggested that it be sent to the Parking Authority prior to the December meeting.

D. Economic Development

Ms. Casey reported and provided an update on the capital budget requests from the other departments and said that last fiscal year was the first time that the Business Development and Tourism budget was established and Economic Community Development budget and there was \$100,000 placeholder and they were able to merge the funds and be able to do the small business and Main Street program. She said it includes a storefront improvement program; streetscape improvements for Wall Street; the purchase of garbage cans for both the Wall Street and SONO area and to bring someone in to do project management specifically to implement special initiatives in the South Norwalk area including public Wi-Fi and policies for food trucks and pop ups. She said that Planning & Zoning is going through a zoning study and phase I has already been completed and zoning has not been rewritten in over 35 years. She said they have also been meeting internally regarding the South Norwalk Railroad Station and the development that will be happening in and around it. Mr. Brescia requested the areas that she will be looking for help from the Parking Authority point of view for budgeting purposes.

E. Financial Report

Mr. Manousos reported and said parking revenue is favorable compared to budget and is up over 7% compared to last year due to increased transient activity mainly due to the mall construction and beach citation collections. He said the expenses are favorable to budget and are up over 7% compared to last year due to some projects that were done and additional staff for the ambassador program. He said the transient activity year to date is up 4% and over 78% of revenues were collected via credit card. The average Pay by Cell transaction was \$3.76 and the number of transactions is down 9% compared to last month.

F. Operations Report

Mr. Manousos said that ticket issuance and revenue is up compared to last year. He said there were 21 program days for customer courtesy program in October and 1150 courtesy cards were issued for \$575 in metered time and there were no tickets issued

after the courtesy time had expired and the value of tickets for the courtesy cards had they been issued is \$ 28,750

G. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

H. Next Parking Authority meeting: Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 5:00PM.; Yankee Doodle Garage, Norwalk CT.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd