PARKING AUTHORITY MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING
MAY 24, 2006

ATTENDANCE: Urban Mulvehill, Chairman; Stephen Bentkover, John Federici, Burton Shatz (7:50 p.m.)

STAFF: Kathryn Hebert, DPW Administrative Services Manager; Hal Alvord, Department of Public Works Director

OTHERS: Nancy Largay, Robert Koch, The Hour; Brian Lockhart, The Advocate

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mulvehill called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

APPROVALS/AUTHORIZATIONS

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2006.

Mr. Bentkover had several questions regarding information that Ms. Hebert was requested to supply at this meeting.

The following changes were noted:

Page 3, paragraph 7, line 1 : please change “True AP Fleet” to “Fleet Accounts Payable”.

Page 4, paragraph 7, line 1: please change “donated a van and how they operated on a revenue sharing basis.” to “donated a van to Norwalk READS and the Authority should explore the possibility of running the van from City Hall to the train station.”

Page 5, paragraph 5, line 2: please change “there was limited parking.” to “there was pressure from non-residential parking such as in areas near the train station.”

Page 5, paragraph 5, line 3: please change “there is a lack of parking” to “there is a lack of off street parking”

Page 6, paragraph 4, line 2: please change “City of Boson” to “City of Boston”.

** MR. MULVEHILL MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3A. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY, URBAN MULVEHILL, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER, FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-2, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WEBSTER PARKING LOT MODIFICATION PROJECT, PHASE II. FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

3B. AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO ISSUE ORDERS ON CONTRACT TO THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-2, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WEBSTER PARKING LOT MODIFICATION, PHASE II, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

THIS PROJECT HAS A BUDGET CAP OF $181,570. THE BIDS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE OPENED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2006.

Mr. Alvord reviewed the project and the bid offering for the Authority members. Mr. Mulvehill had some questions about the installation of the bituminous sidewalks. Mr. Alvord explained that these would be somewhat temporary.

Mr. Bentkover had some questions regarding the phrase “Lowest Responsible Bidder”. Mr. Alvord reviewed the DPW’s policy on determining contractors and how the Department determines if a contractor is “irresponsible”. When asked if a timeline had been projected for the project, Mr. Alvord replied that timeline and project completion dates are set after the contractor is chosen. He also stated that the contractor must complete the job on time and within the budget. Mr. Mulvehill wished to know who would be responsible for painting the directional arrows in the lot. Mr. Alvord stated that would be done in house.

Mr. Shatz arrived at 7:50 p.m.

** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO APPROVE:

3A. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY, URBAN MULVEHILL, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER, FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-2, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WEBSTER PARKING LOT MODIFICATION PROJECT, PHASE II. FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

3B. AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO ISSUE ORDERS ON CONTRACT TO THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-2, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WEBSTER PARKING LOT MODIFICATION, PHASE II, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

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** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

At this point, Ms. Largay requested permission to address the Authority. Mr. Mulvehill informed her that the public normally did not have input at the meetings, but that he would allow her to state her concerns to the Authority. She stated that she had written a letter to The Hour regarding a recent incident on Martin Luther King Drive when her vehicle was almost hit by those turning into the Webster Street Lot.

Mr. Federici produced a copy of the Letters to the Editors page from The Hour on May 24, 2006 for the other Authority members to read.

Ms. Largay stated that since the Webster Street Lot had begun charging, she felt there was an increase in traffic at that area. She also stated, while she has no connection to any of the business near the Webster Street Lot, that as a business person, that she wasn't the pizza person, she feels that when there are complaints about an issue, the owner or managers of the business need to re-evaluate the situation and look for a solution. She also stated that she felt the parking issue was costing the City more money than it was worth and reiterated that the City should re-evaluate the situation.

Mr. Mulvehill commented that before LAZ was involved in the parking situation at Webster, the City was spending between 1 to 2 million a year of taxpayer's money regarding that lot. Since the start of LAZ handling the lot, there have been significant reductions in the amount the City has spent on that lot. Secondly, Mr. Mulvehill pointed out that during the SONO Arts Festival, no parking fees had been charged for the use of the lot and still the traffic backed up. Finally, Mr. Mulvehill explained that the Authority had requested the Norwalk Police Department and the Mayor to station officers outside of the lot on Martin Luther King Drive to direct traffic during peak times.

Ms. Largay reiterated her earlier points about evaluating the problem and finding a solution.
Mr. Alvord pointed out that this actually is not a parking issue, but a traffic flow problem. He informed Ms. Largay that the Norwalk Police did come one week-end night and their presence had a significant impact on the traffic flow.

Mr. Mulvehill thanked Ms. Largay for her comments and invited her to stay for the remainder of the meeting.

4A. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY, URBAN MULVEHILL, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER, FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-1, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE YANKEE DOODLE GARAGE, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

4B. AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO ISSUE ORDERS ON CONTRACT TO THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-1, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE YANKEE DOODLE GARAGE, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

THIS PROJECT HAS A BUDGET CAP OF $150,000. THE BIDS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE OPENED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2006.

Mr. Mulvehill inquired as to the meaning of the abbreviation “CY” on the spec sheets. Mr. Alvord stated that it was “Cubic Yards”.

Mr. Bentkover had several questions regarding the details of the bids and some of the items specified within. Mr. Alvord explained them all to Mr. Bentkover’s satisfaction. Mr. Shatz asked about the Lowest Responsible Bidder and Mr. Alvord reviewed the Department’s policies with him.

** MR. MULVEHILL MOVED TO APPROVE

4A. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY, URBAN MULVEHILL, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER, FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-1, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE YANKEE DOODLE GARAGE, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

4B. AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO ISSUE ORDERS ON CONTRACT TO THE LOWEST RESPONSIBLE BIDDER FOR PROJECT NO. PKG 2006-1, PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE YANKEE DOODLE GARAGE, FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED TBD.

THIS PROJECT HAS A BUDGET CAP OF $150,000. THE BIDS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE OPENED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2006.

** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Mulvehill commented that in the event that he as Chairman was not available to sign the contracts, Mr. Bentkover as Vice Chair would have the authority to do so. Ms. Hebert explained that in that event, she would simply contact the Law Department about the situation, which would be adjusted accordingly.

DISCUSSION

5. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Hebert presented her report. Mr. Bentkover asked about the Fleet True Accounts Payable terminology. Ms. Hebert replied that the term in question was an accounting term and that she would email the members of the Authority with the precise definition. Mr. Bentkover also was curious to know why there was such a detailed discussion at the previous meeting about this. Mr. Alvord stated that to the best of his recollection, the Authority wished to know what drove the Account Payable spikes. He stated that this will be checked into for the exact reasoning and the answer will be provided to the Authority members.

Mr. Bentkover then asked if Ms. Hebert had the figures for the exact number of cars at the East Norwalk Railroad Station. Ms. Hebert replied that the railroad parking was at about 90-95% capacity. Mr. Bentkover asked for the exact number of parking spaces. Mr. Del Monaco stated that there are 236 parking spaces at the East Norwalk Train Station.

Mr. Shatz asked about the specs for the sidewalk in the Webster Street parking lot. He wished to know what kind of sidewalk materials would be used. Mr. Alvord reviewed this with him and stated that the City only accepts one particular type of mix. When the paving material is being processed at the plant, the City has an inspector on site to insure it is the correct mix.

Ms. Hebert stated that while the overall actual revenue collections through April 2006 are lower than the approved budget, they are higher than the actual collections from the last fiscal year and consistent on a monthly basis. She also stated that were it not for debt service, the Parking Authority budget would be in the black.

Mr. Shatz wished to know why FEMA was listed in the budget. Mr. Alvord explained that Governor Rell has been able to convince the President to declare Connecticut a storm emergency for one of the snowfalls in February. Therefore the City is eligible for re-imbursement by the State for certain aspect of the snow removal.

6. MONTHLY OPERATION REPORT

Mr. Del Monaco presented his report. He also commented that Gasoline was currently up for sale and this had resulted in fewer problems during the past few weekends. Mr. Mulvehill asked about the police presence. Mr. Alvord stated that he had met with the Mayor two weeks ago. He suggested that there might be value in having the Traffic Authority met with the Mayor for a discussion about traffic control. A discussion followed regarding possible solutions for the traffic congestion on Martin Luther King Drive at the Webster Parking Lot entrance.

** MR. MULVEHILL MOVED TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE MAYOR AND POLICE CHIEF REGARDING THE TRAFFIC FLOW PROBLEMS AT THE WEBSTER PARKING LOT ENTRANCE ON MARTIN LUTHER KING BLVD AND REQUESTING THE PRESENSE OF A POLICE OFFICER.
** THE MOTION FAILED FOR LACK OF A SECOND.

Mr. Federici stated that he would prefer a face to face meeting. A discussion followed and Ms. Hebert stated that she would set up a meeting for two members of the Parking Authority with the Mayor and the Chief of Police.

The discussion returned to Mr. Del Monaco's report. Mr. Mulvehill stated that he had seen that the ticket equipment had broken down twice over a period of three days. Mr. Del Monaco informed him that the machines are now on line and that when something happens to one of them, the machine signals for assistance.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bentkover stated that the downtown area was generating less income than the other areas. He stated that there was concerns being expressed from merchants about customers complaining about the parking situation. A discussion about various methods of providing validation tokens ensued. Mr. Mulvehill suggested that the merchants purchase tokens, which they could provide to their patrons. He went on to explain that the merchants could give the patrons two tokens the first time, one for reimbursement for the money they have already paid for parking and the second towards their next visit. This was thought to be a possible solution by the member of the Authority.

OTHER

8. ACTION ON ANY ITEM DISCUSSED HEREIN.

There was no additional action required on any item.

9. NEXT PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING:

The next scheduled meeting of the Parking Authority is on Wednesday, June 21, 2006/7:30 p.m., Public Works Conference Room

Mr. Mulvehill stated that he would like to have Liberty Square added as an agenda item for the upcoming meeting. Mr. Alvord stated that he and Ms. Hebert had approached one of the merchants at Liberty Square for an informal discussion about the parking problems that might occur when Recreation and Parks begin to charge for out of town vehicles at Veteran's Park. The merchant involved expressed interest buying the parcel from the City. Mr. Alvord and Ms. Hebert will continue to discuss the possibilities with this merchant about various options.

Mr. Mulvehill also requested that the next agenda include an item about Handicapped Parking. Mr. Alvord informed him that the handicapped spaces at the Webster Street Lot were being reworked. He also commented that the trash containers behind the Crown Theater will be moved back against the building for various reasons.

Mr. Alvord also reported that the City's Handbill ordinance has been updated and stated that he had sent out a few letters to those who had violated the ordinance.

The bid package for lights for the Ann Street underpass will be out soon, Mr. Alvord stated. He also informed the Committee that the new restaurant was open and working out well. They will be applying for their sidewalk restaurant license to the Maritime Condo Association soon.

ADJOURNMENT

** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services