



PARKING AUTHORITY
January 22, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Richard Brescia, Chairman
Mike Harden, Vice Chairman
Jud Aley
Tom Vetter

ABSENT:

Eric Rains

STAFF:

Jessica Casey, Chief of Community and Economic Development
Kathryn Hebert, Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking

OTHERS:

Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Rita Azrelyant, Consultant
Diane Lauricella

CALL TO ORDER

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Diane Lauricella

Ms. Lauricella stated that she realizes it is important to optimize revenues however, her experience this past summer at Calf Pasture Beach was that she found the signage very

confusing. She also said she would like to see revenue's reduced and said that the token program seems confusing and complicated for the business's and requested that the moratorium continue in the Wall Street area until such time the POKO site is underway and that the Parking Authority is putting the horse before the cart because there is not foot traffic in the area. Lastly, she suggested that the Parking Authority consider free parking at the East Norwalk and South Norwalk Railroad Stations on weekends or at least on Sunday as the surrounding towns do along the Metro-North line. She also said that she finds the signage at the South Norwalk Railroad Station very confusing and is not clear and in her opinion needs some review.

NEW BUSINESS

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2019.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2019 AS SUBMITTED.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2020.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 13, 2020 AS SUBMITTED.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. APPROVE THE PARKING AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Mr. Brescia said that this is a starting point and guideline for the Strategic Plan but as events occur the Parking Authority may update the plan. Mr. Harden said if the plan is going to stay an active document if it should be voted on. Mr. Brescia said the Parking Authority is approving what has been discussed to date and will need a formal approval and it will have more impact as a formal Strategic Plan. Mr. Aley said that additional things were discussed that are not currently in the plan. Mr. Brescia said that the plan can be amended as needed.

**** MR. ALEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE STRATIGIC PLAN DATED DECEMBER 5, 2019, BUT IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE ON AN AS NEEDED BASIS.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 OPERATING BUDGET AND RATE CHANGES TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020 6:00PM.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE SCHEDULING THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020 AT 6:00PM AT THE YANKEE DOODLE GARAGE.**

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

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON INVESTMENT OF THE \$8,500 COLLECTED DURING THE WALL STREET PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GRACE PERIOD.

Mr. Brescia said that at the last meeting Mr. Vetter had suggested that the Parking Authority assign the \$8,500 that was collected during the grace period in the Wall Street area to a good will fashion in the Wall Street area. He said that he has spoken with Ms. Casey about it regarding her thoughts on how that can be applied in an economic development way to the area. Ms. Casey said ‘yes’ and she has set \$50,000 aside for street scape improvements for the Wall Street/West Avenue area that was announced by the Mayor as the small business and Main Street program. She said they will go through a public process to begin to understand what the neighborhood wants including the Wall Street Neighborhood Association and her staff has been collecting contact information for the outreach that Ms. Church will be assisting with. Ms. Casey said one of the suggestions so far is the need for additional street trees which Mr. Aley had also suggested at the last meeting and if Parking Authority was to think of something the \$8,500 was to go towards that would help to make improvements to the neighborhood planting trees may be worth considering. Mr. Harden suggested giving the \$8,500 to Ms. Casey’s office because they have the mechanism of allocating the funds. Mr. Brescia said he thinks that’s a good idea but he wants to be sure that these funds are strictly used for the Wall Street area and asked if it can be invested in this fiscal year. Ms. Casey said “yes” and would go through the RFP process and the contract should be awarded prior to the end of this fiscal year.

Mr. Harden suggested that the \$8,500 be used towards the validation program and offer the coins at an even bigger reduced rate. Mr. Vetter asked if the \$8,500 for street trees make a big difference in the area as opposed to the validation program. Ms. Casey said they have proposed the \$50,000 be used for benches, planters etc. and received a lot of positive feedback when they moved the already existing planters into the Wall Street area. In addition to that she

also put money in the budget for garbage receptacles. Mr. Brescia said one of the issues he has with putting the money towards the validation program is that the program deals with the restaurants primarily suggested the money be put into something that is more visible and tangible in the Wall Street area and would help the neighborhood more by beautifying the area which would also encourage more walkability. Mr. Vetter agreed and said the funds would only go towards to people that are in the validation program and it won't last long and then the price of the tokens will go back up and doesn't think that is a good idea.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE GIVING THE \$8,500 TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HAVE MS. CASEY REPORT WHERE THE MONEY WILL GO AS PART OF THE OVERALL PLAN IN THE WALL STREET AREA BASED ON THE FEEDBACK FROM THE OUTREACH IN THE COMMUNITY.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

A. Chairman Report

Mr. Brescia said there would be no chairman's report this evening and that he would like to discuss the fiscal year 2020-21 operating budget. He said he thinks it's great that there are no increases and are coming in \$124,000 less than this fiscal year but asked why that is. Ms. Hebert said because the debt service and city support services decreased. Mr. Brescia said there is a decrease in monthly permit sales of \$32,000. Mr. Manousos said the main difference was the activity during the mall construction and the revenue was seemingly increased during construction at the Webster Lot and the Maritime Garage. Mr. Brescia asked if balancing that loss with the plans to try and increase the permit sales in the Wall Street area. Ms. Hebert said it takes into account the increase in sales and activity from permit sales as well as transient activity for the Wall Street area. Mr. Manousos said the other big reason for the decrease was the increase in sales tax and the impact to the budget was \$176,000.

Mr. Brescia asked about the added personnel costs. Ms. Hebert said there is a decrease in personnel costs on the city side but to cover the services related to that decrease that was based on a previous agreement will be shifted over to LAZ but at a substantially lesser cost.

Mr. Brescia asked why the budget for signage was reduced by 28% because we have an aggressive wayfinding program in the next year. Ms. Hebert said there is a request in the capital budget of \$120,000 to do a study and a plan. Mr. Brescia asked if there is a need for more money in the signage budget for next fiscal year for what we will want to do in the next fiscal year for a quicker impact. Ms. Hebert said "yes" if that is something the Parking Authority would like to pursue. Mr. Harden said in the last

couple of months he has been taking a lot of photographs in an effort to try and put together some of the wayfinding found in the surrounding cities which he will present next month. He said if there is an opportunity now to have money in the budget for signage he thinks that would be a good idea.

Mr. Harden suggested an emergency contingency fund be included in the budget and that during a storm everyone in his neighborhood wants to put their cars in the Maritime garage but that can't be done until the Mayor declares an emergency and as soon as the city is done he lift the emergency and everyone has to move their car, but some people aren't ready to get their cars back because they are still cleaning up. Mr. Manousos said there is already a contingency fund in the budget. Hs. Hebert said the line item has \$50,000 that we budget every year and can increase the contingency fund if the Parking Authority would like to. Mr. Brescia suggested increasing the contingency fund so the funds are available and can then be allocated when the purpose arises. Ms. Hebert suggested rather than adding the money into the contingency fund to add back the money into the signage account related to wayfinding. Mr. Brescia said he would like to provide flexibility for the Parking Authority to make a judgement as we go through the year. Mr. Vetter suggested increasing the signage and marketing accounts to what they were last year and increase the contingency by a smaller amount. Mr. Brescia suggested adding \$50,000 to signage account, \$50,000 for marketing and \$20,000 into the contingency fund.

**** MR. HARDEN MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. HARDEN MOVED TO APPROVE INCREASING THE SIGNAGE ACCOUNT BY 50,000, INCREASING THE MARKETING ACCOUNT BY \$50,000 AND INCREASING THE CONTINGENCY FUND BY \$20,000.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Casey said that Mr. Brescia had requested that she put together a list of some of the items that could fall under parking programs. She said this is where Norwalk Now was previously funded from and the contract is now coming to an end and a new RFP will be put out. She said the program has been very successful and has over 150 businesses that are signed up and at the same time are thinking about economic development and tourism as a package. She said as the first piece she suggested \$125,000 is allocated to marketing and promotion for economic development and tourism; \$25,000 parklet program to be able to help the business owners to build out what the parklet would look like and can have a sign stating it was sponsored by the Parking Authority. In addition to that the Recreation and Parks Superintendent of Recreation will be working with Ms. Church on a concert series at Veterans Park and economic development funds can used towards that to help sponsor bands and can also be sponsored by the Parking Authority. She said the third piece she suggests

\$25,000 for public art where people apply and there will be a board that which art gets approved and the funds can be used to commission the art work that would then be installed which will leave a \$25,000 contingency. Mr. Harden said he agrees with the Parking Authority giving money for parking programs but he does not think the Parking Authority should be a sponsor. Ms. Hebert suggested using discounts for Park Mobile which has been done in the past which can be used as part of economic development in a different way. Ms. Hebert suggested expanding the Art in Parking Programs to include areas in and around parking facilities and on street parking.

B. Financial Report

Mr. Manousos reported and said parking revenue is down slightly 6.1% for the month due to the loss of construction worker parking at the Maritime Garage and Webster Lot but are over budget by 2.7% year to date and compared to last year are up even more due to the increase in transient revenue and construction worker parking. He said the expenses are 6.4% over budget for the month and 3.7% under budget year to date due to the purchase of an enforcement vehicle and additional signage. Transient revenue is 3.7% under budget for the month and 7.1% over budget year to date.

Mr. Manousos said that and that 81% of revenue collected system wide is through credit cards and the Pay By Cell activity continues to be strong and the average transaction is \$4.13 and the transactions are up over 40% and revenue is up over 25% compared to last year. He said that the Pay by Cell transactions represent 14% of the demands and the revenue represent 7.4%.

Mr. Manousos said that 81% of revenues were collected via credit card. The average Pay by Cell transaction was \$4.13 and the number of transactions is down 2.3% compared to last year. The number of transactions compared to last year are up almost 42% and revenue is up 27.5% compared to last year and almost 14% of total transactions are paid through Pay by Cell and just over 7% of revenue system wide. Due to the beach and Oyster Shell Park the ticket issuance is up over 23% and revenue is up over 33.5% but taking out the parking violation issuance at the beach and Oyster Shell Park ticket issuance is down over 12% which equates to almost 1100 tickets.

C. Operations Report

Mr. Manousos reported on the enforcement and said ticket issuance year to date is up over 20% compared to last year which include Calf Pasture Beach and Oyster Shell Park but if that is backed out issuance is down over 9%.

Mr. Manousos reported on the courtesy card program and said there were 16 program days for customer courtesy program in December. There were 760 courtesy cards issued for the month of December. There was \$380 in free 20 minute metered time for the month and 91 tickets were issued after the courtesy time had expired for the month. The value of tickets for the courtesy cards had they been issued for the month was almost \$ 17,000 and \$115,000 year to date which represents over 5,000 courtesy tickets.

Mr. Manousos reported on an analysis in the Wall Street area since the beginning of January and to date they are issuing 20 courtesy cards a day and people are paying to park and there have been over 4800 transactions at the paystations and the average transactions was .67 cents and the average duration of stay was just over 1.34 hours. He said the average transaction in SONO is .68 cents for a cash transaction but the average credit card transaction is \$2.15. Mr. Harden asked if the signage around the pay stations were different if the numbers would change. Mr. Manousos “no” and the trend is less signage so that people would read and follow the instructions on the display screen.

Mr. Aley suggested the sidewalk signs at the Yankee Doodle Garage say .25 per hour.

D. Other Business

Mr. Aley said he thinks the lots at the SONO train station should be free on Sundays and it would be bring in additional people into the area who may not have otherwise come. Ms. Hebert suggested tying it to an event at the railroad station such as the farmers market.

Mr. Harden reported on the pilot validation program and said it does work but there are some adjustments that need to be made to make is easier to use which are currently being worked on.

E. Next Parking Authority meeting: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 6:00PM.; Yankee Doodle Garage, Norwalk CT.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd