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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via e-mail in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Brian Lutz blutz@norwalkct.gov to provide written comment prior to the meeting.

**PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL VIDEOCONFERENCE AND
TELECONFERENCE
MARCH 26, 2026**

ATTENDANCE: Eric Rains, Chair
Matthew Seebeck, Vice Chair
Peter Fullam
Jessica Larch
Jud Aley

STAFF Bryan Lutz, Director of Parking

OTHERS: Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Rains called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Lutz called the roll, and those listed in the attendance were present.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: February 25, 2026

**** MS. LARCH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation this evening.

V. REPORTS

A. Engineering and Project Report

1. Update: NPA2024-02 Aesthetic Enhancements at Yankee Doodle Garage

Mr. Lutz shared photos and provided an update, and said that the contractor has remobilized this week following the winter shutdown and has begun power washing the remaining surfaces in preparation for the final phase of painting. This marks the start of the spring push to complete this project. These improvements have already made a noticeable difference in visibility and overall comfort within the facility, reinforcing the safety focus approach that was essential to the project from the beginning.

Mr. Rains asked whether the cornice would be done under a separate contract that has not yet been awarded. Mr. Lutz said, “Yes,” and that he and Mr. Travers will be meeting with the designer next week to sync on the next phase, which will go out to bid and include the metal work at the top and at the bottom, where the entrance is by River Street and Burnell Blvd. Mr. Rains asked if it would also include some version of lighting. Mr. Lutz said “Yes” and is looking to include reinstalling the decorative lights and lighting the other sides of the façade.

Mr. Fullam said parking spaces need to be quarantined off while the power washing is being done, and asked when it will be completed because the parking garage is getting

full. Mr. Lutz said he hopes to be done by the end of this week or next week, and then they will begin painting.

A. Financial and Operating Report-LAZ

Mr. Legesse reported that in February, the snow had a major impact on revenue and that the month underperformed, with the main underperformers being on-street parking, the Haviland deck, the Webster Lot, and the North Water Street lot. The Maritime Garage and the Yankee Doodle Garage overperformed. On the expense side, snow has also affected the facilities, so the combination of reduced revenue and increased expenses has resulted in an unfavorable fund balance for both the month and year-to-date.

Mr. Rains asked how the shortfall in expenses would be addressed and whether the loss would be made from another area or from cash reserves. Mr. Legesse said they will cut back on some expenses that can be deferred to next year to make up for the loss from the snow. Mr. Rains said that more work will be created for the future by deferring maintenance, and that there may be a different strategy. Mr. Legesse said they will look into this closely, but these expenses would not affect the facilities' condition and could be deferred without risking the facilities. He will discuss it with Mr. Lutz.

Mr. Legesse reported and provided an overview of the variance report, which showed variances in parking violations and meter revenue. There was also a variance on the expense side for group health insurance, building repairs and maintenance, snow removal, utility expenses, equipment expenses, and parking programs.

Mr. Legesse reported on the actual versus budget figures for all locations. He reported on permit revenue, noting that it finished under budget for the month due to delayed payments from some group accounts at Webster Lot and the Maritime Garage, but once those payments are received, it will be over budget for March. He provided an update on transient revenue, showing performance for each location. He said they are seeing a strong trend in credit card use in mobile payments compared to the prior year. He said there has been a decline in citations, with most citations being for safety, and a decline in expired-meter violations, indicating that compliance is increasing across all facilities.

Mr. Legesse reported on free 15-minute parking usage and noted a 10% decline, but noted that all activity was for on-street parking, so it is understandable given the parking bans due to snow.

Mr. Legesse reported on the customer service survey and said that, in February, 56 surveys were completed by customers. Of those, 13 customers were dissatisfied, and they are focusing on them to achieve a positive impact and change their minds. Overall, a majority of the customers are happy with the cleanliness of the facilities. The next survey

that gets rolled out will collect customers' contact information so a follow-up can be conducted.

Mr. Aley asked where the survey data is coming from. Mr. Legesse said there are QR codes posted throughout the facilities, on the paystations, and at customer interaction points. Mr. Lutz said this QR code is posted throughout the facilities on stations and on stickers on the paystations and meters, which are different from the on-street, transactional scan-to-pay QR codes.

Mr. Legesse reported on the Mystery Shop results, noting that seven surveys were conducted, three on the enforcement officers and the rest on the parking facilities. He said he is happy to report that they all received over 90%. He said this was targeted mainly for enforcement officers to validate the training they receive. There will be two audits: one will assess their efficiency, operational knowledge, and customer service skills, and the second will focus on how they resolve conflicts. He shared the positive observational narrative that was provided.

Mr. Lutz provided an overview of the Mystery Shop, a company that comes in unknown to staff, observes operations, grades them, and reports how they scored the entire interaction. As the data comes in, it really helps to tell the story of what the enforcement officers are doing.

Mr. Legesse reported on the maintenance and said the overhead gate replacement at the South Norwalk Train Station has been completed. The lighting upgrade at the Maritime Garage has also been completed, and we will be doing a final walk-through with the vendor. The lighting upgrade at the Yankee Doodle Garage is in progress, with approximately 40 light fixtures remaining to install. It looks like it will be completed by the end of March. Snow relocation is very expensive, so it was done in-house by staff, who moved snow from the Haviland Deck, Maritime Garage, and the South Norwalk Railroad garages to open parking spaces for customers.

Mr. Lutz said this was a very challenging winter, and the team did very well removing snow to clear the street meters.

**A. DISCUSS AND VOTE: NPA2026-1 NORWALK CITYWIDE
WAYFINDING PROPOSAL-FOUND DESIGN LLC (D.B.A. MERJE)**

Mr. Lutz said in January, and an RFP was issued for a comprehensive citywide wayfinding program. The goal was to identify a qualified design team capable of creating a unified modern system that improves navigation, strengthens district identity, and supports both residents and visitors as they move throughout Norwalk. This phase of the project focuses on design and planning and includes a set of bid documents that can be separated so that the parking-related

components can be bid independently. Two submissions were received in response to the RFP. One proposal significantly exceeded the budget, coming in at \$775,000, while the proposal from Found Design LLC, which is doing business as MERJE, aligned closely with both the project scope and the financial parameters established for this initiative. They also brought a strong national portfolio of municipal wayfinding projects and demonstrated a clear understanding of Norwalk's mobility patterns and character. Following the evaluation process, which included interviews, portfolio review, and scoring, the selection committee unanimously agreed that MERJE's proposal should advance to the Parking Authority board for consideration. Their presence demonstrated a clear ability to deliver a cohesive, maintainable, city-wide system that aligns with Park Norwalk's operational needs. While this is a city initiative, the RFP was explicit that the parking-related wayfinding components would be separated. This structure ensures that Park Norwalk can take an aggressive, timely action to implement the parking wayfinding plan without being constrained by the broader city-wide timeline. In late February, MERJE presented its approach to the select committee, and stakeholder feedback was invited following that session. MERJE overwhelmingly secured the select committee members' approval to move forward. He is seeking a vote to move forward with their proposal in the amount of \$114,750, and there are funds available in the capital budget for wayfinding initiatives.

Ms. Larch pointed out that the cost proposal is only for design and not for anything beyond that, and she was on the selection committee and believes they are very capable of doing the work they are being asked to do.

Mr. Seebeck said he has unknowingly experienced MERJE's wayfinding in North Carolina and Georgia and was impressed by it, so he is excited to work with them.

**** MR. SEEBECK MOVED TO AUTHORIZE CITY STAFF TO ENGAGE FOUND DESIGN LLC, DOING BUSINESS AS MERJE, FOR THE CITYWIDE WAYFINDING PROPOSAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$114,750.**

**** MS. LARCH SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. UPDATE: RESIDENTIAL PARKING PROGRAM

Mr. Lutz provided an update on the progress of the residential parking program and said the initial comment period, which followed the successful community listening sessions, closed on March 13th. This window gave residents additional time to submit written feedback for consideration as they move forward into drafting the program's standards and guidelines. The LAZ team is now developing the draft documents incorporating both the in-person input and the written comments received. Once completed, the draft will be submitted for the mandated first

30-day public comment period, which is the next formal step in this process. This plan has two 30-day public comment periods.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. LARCH MOVED TO ADJOURN**

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd