

WINCHESTER PARKING AUTHORITY
February 27, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Helm, Kim Burke, Jeffery Rives, Mike Miller & Howard Manheimer

OTHERS PRESENT: Samantha Anderson, Teresa Couch, Katherine Herrmann, Jennifer Bell, Douglas Hewett & Vic Bradshaw

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Helm called the meeting to order at 7:29 a.m. at which time it was determined a quorum was present.

II. REVIEW OF JANUARY 2014 MEETING MINUTES

The minutes were submitted by Chairman Helm and, without objection, were unanimously approved.

III. REVENUE REPORT FOR JANUARY 2014

Rives reported that the grand revenue total for January 2014 was \$105,544, an increase of \$15,011 or 17% in comparison to January 2013. Total hourly revenue for January 2014 was \$15,431, an increase of \$3,000 or 24% in comparison to January 2013. Rent revenue for January 2014 was \$70,605, an increase of \$11,126 or 19% in comparison to January 2013. Total meter and fine revenue for January 2014 was \$18,955, an increase of \$2,338 or 14% in comparison to January 2013. There was no miscellaneous revenue to report for January 2014. Validation coupon revenue for January 2014 was \$553, a decrease of \$505 in comparison to January 2013. Total hourly parking tickets for January 2014 was reported at 8,393 showing a decrease of 3,427 tickets in comparison to the previous month. At the end of January 2014, there were 969 spaces or 69% of total utilization of spaces being rented at all four parking garages with a total of 432 spaces available for rent. Of the 432 spaces available for rent, 323 spaces were located on the roof and 109 spaces were located undercover. At the end of January 2014, the total revenue reported for FY 2014 thus far was \$611,152 or 9% in comparison to the previous year.

Rives noted that the Authority had a very good revenue month with the January 2014 report except that the fine revenues reported was very low. Miller added that validation ticket sales were down significantly as well. Rives stated that the hourly parking tickets collected for January 2014 appeared to be low, however, this was due to First Night Winchester bringing many people downtown for the New Year's Eve celebration in December 2013. Helm questioned why monthly rent revenues reflected a significant increase to which Anderson replied that several invoiced quarterly rent payments were received in January 2014.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR JANUARY 2014

Anderson reported the following:

- WPA had a nice article printed in the Winchester Star featuring the increased usage numbers in the garages. Included in the article, WPA had reached a milestone of \$1,000,000 in revenues within a calendar year period.
- Attended development team meeting on February 7, 2014 to discuss Discovery Museum request.
- Attended SABF NIMS meeting on February 12, 2014 and received the signed lease agreement for Braddock Autopark and the parking lots at that time. SABF informed Anderson that they intend to keep the same rates for parking in Braddock Autopark that WPA is implementing at the other three garages, which is the rate of \$15 for Friday and \$15 for Saturday of the festival. Anderson informed the Authority that WPA reserved tickets for the festival will be going on sale April 1, 2014 and that she is currently working with Amy Simmons (Marketing Coordinator) to design and produce the reserved tickets.
- Free parking in the garages was implemented during the recent snowstorm that occurred from 12 noon on Thursday February 13, 2014 thru 12 noon on Sunday February 16, 2014. Paperwork has been submitted to the VA Department of Emergency Management for our usage numbers for all four garages during that time period in order to record revenue losses due to the storm and possibly receive reimbursement. Based upon the timeline of February 13 thru February 15, 2014 the report shows that 1,019 citizens utilized the garages during the free parking period which resulted in approximately \$20,000 in revenue losses during the recent winter storm.
- Currently, testing the credit card on file payment option software. When it is determined that the payment process is working properly, WPA will offer this payment option to its customers.
- Completed painting of red arrows with words "walking mall" at all of the garages.
- Downtown maps are now installed in all of the bulletin boards inside the garages. Anderson made a special note of thanks to Amy Simmons and Annie Williams (GIS Department) for their assistance in this project.
- Replaced dehumidifiers in both of the elevator rooms at the GW Autopark. Also, installed a new motor in the heating and air conditioning unit in the GW main office.
- Repairs have been made to the WPA snowblower. Shoes for the snow plow have been purchased for the WPA maintenance truck to safely plow snow on the roofs of the garages and to help prevent damages to the roof surfaces.
- Replaced a damaged pipe protector at Court Square Autopark.

- Upcoming maintenance items are as follows:
 - Braddock Autopark : repair stairs as needed, paint dry stand pipe per F&R request and repair the light on the second floor which will include new cabling and installation
 - Loudoun Autopark: repainting of the fire lines red, replacement of elevator flooring, repainting of the lines, arrows, stairwells and handrails, and painting all doors in regal red. Roof painting will be excluded from this list as those repairs will be completed during the renovation work process.
 - Court Square Autopark: landscaping is scheduled to be installed in March 2014.
 - Scheduled for March 13, 2014 all camera equipment will be rerouted to the GW Autopark main office. This will give staff the capability of reviewing all 100 camera feeds from all the garages in one central location, the GW main office.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Global Parking Discussion Update

Burke presented to the Authority a report of the list of items that the committee has discussed up to this point, which included marketing items that have been completed and implemented. Key items that Burke brought to the attention of the Authority from the report are as follows:

- Committee is still working on developing a discount program that merchants can offer to monthly parkers in the garages. Pam Lam from the Discovery Museum and who is serving on the committee that the museum offers a similar program to its customers and stated that the program works very well for them. Lam is willing to assist the committee in the promotion of its discount program when it is developed.
- The committee recognized an ongoing problem of residents and employees of the downtown area utilizing all the available free on street parking on Saturday's which in turn limits on street parking that would otherwise be available for shoppers and visitors. The committee recommended that parking enforcement hours be extended to include Saturday. This will also assist in encouraging customers to utilize the parking garages more often since metered parking would no longer be available for free during Saturday therefore increasing the Authority's revenues.
- Committee has suggested that WPA use the Park Mobile program as a payment option for customers who use metered parking. This program will work with mechanical meters, but it is encouraged that the Authority purchase more digital meters if it chooses to use the Park Mobile program system. The

Park Mobile program and software is managed thru the hand held device that the parking enforcement officer currently uses to issue parking violations.

- Committee has suggested that metered parking be extended further north on N. Cameron Street due to recent commercial growth in that area as a way for the Authority to increase its overall revenues. This would also be beneficial in the turnover of parking availability.
- Committee has recommended that the Authority use capacity operations to manage the garages but recognizes that this would ultimately be a decision made solely by the Authority.
- Committee has recommended that the Authority incentivize monthly parking at Loudoun Autopark by offering an overall lower monthly rental rate for that garage, especially if capacity operation of the garages is implemented.
- Recommendation was made to offer a type of debit card program whereas customers can purchase prepaid parking that can be used at any of the four garages.
- Katherine Herrmann (City Attorney's Office) has assured the committee that it is legally sound for WPA to use sponsorships of garages and volunteer groups to assist in parking for special events.

Helm asked the Authority if any of the aforementioned items needed immediate attention at this time. Anderson stated that she would like the Authority to address the issue of special events at this time.

Helm, Burke and Rives presented questions as to how special event parking could be managed in the garages. The questions raised were how to price the parking, how would monthly parkers be affected and would said parkers have their spaces available to them during the events, and how other localities operate during special events which may include the use of sponsorships. Anderson stated that other localities usually just open their gates during special events and offer free parking to the public. Helm noted that the Authority could either have staff monitor use of the ground floor only during events which would ensure that levels reserved for monthly parking would not be used or affected in any way, or let the automated machines and gate system do the job and remain under normal operations. Helm stressed that it is important that the Authority develop a plan to address the increase in parking demands inside the garages that occur during special events.

Miller inquired if the use of validation coupons during special events could be helpful in some way with assisting in the overall parking demands created during special events. Helm added that validations could be sold in bulk to individuals or to businesses that would like to participate as a sponsorship. Helm stated that automation as a whole functions well and advised that it would not be in the Authority's best interest to tamper with its operations.

Miller addressed the issue of Saturday meter enforcement by stating that it would be interesting to see how the downtown merchants would feel if this was put into effect.

Miller added that any decisions on this matter would have to be brought to the attention of City council for their approval. Helm recommended that the committee develop a survey to present to the public and merchants alike listing the various ideas and recommendations the committee has offered in order to get their feedback on the issues at hand before the Authority makes any final decisions. Miller added that residents of downtown should be included in this as well. Helm expressed the importance of reaching out to as many demographics as possible since the Authority serves a vast diversity of parking needs. Helm noted that before any significant changes are made in the overall operations of WPA, the Authority would need to be prepared to explain why said changes were instituted. The Authority asked Jennifer Bell, the Downtown Manager, for her assistance in this matter to which she agreed. Bell stated that currently there are many ways OTDB could assist with the survey via newsletters, Facebook, etc. however, it will be difficult to reach many individual residents. Helm suggested that the post office may be able to assist with contacting residents with Burke adding that the Business Association may be able assist as well. Bell noted that both suggestions are possibilities to consider however costs may be associated with using the post office. Bell stated that she would be willing to examine ways in attempting to extend public outreach to include as many individual downtown residents as possible.

2. Garage Renovation Update

Anderson informed the Authority that Ned Cleland of Blue Ridge Design with the assistance of Perry Eisenach Director of Utilities will have the construction documents completed by March 1, 2014. A preconstruction meeting will be held in April 2014. Each garage that is scheduled for renovations will take approximately one month to complete. Construction is scheduled to begin on June 1, 2014 with Court Square Autopark to be the first garage addressed in the renovation project. The 4th and 5th levels of Court Square Autopark will have to be closed during this time with plans to relocate the monthly parkers affected on those levels to other areas within the garage. During renovations to the Loudoun Autopark roof which will have to be closed off, those displaced monthly parkers will be allowed to use the ground floor of that garage for their parking during that time. Renovation work for Braddock Autopark is scheduled to begin on August 1, 2014. In order for the work to be completed in a timely manner and to ensure the safety of its customers and their vehicles, it has been recommended that Braddock Autopark be closed for use to the public and to monthly parkers until the work is completed. Anderson noted that Braddock Autopark customers are to be diverted to Loudoun Autopark at this time. Anderson asked for the Authority's approval on this matter, adding that the Authority may want to consider offering a discount to the monthly parkers at Braddock Autopark for their inconvenience during this time.

Helm stated that if closing Braddock Autopark is what has to be done then it will need to be done and questioned if August would be the best month for this. Anderson replied that she consulted with Bell about upcoming events scheduled for downtown and after review believed August would be the best time to perform the renovations and garage closure. Helm added that it would be imperative that Braddock Autopark be reopened by September 1, 2014 because it is consistently the busiest garage with the highest parking demand. Helm also noted that if the Authority is considering changing over to capacity operations, the reopening of

Braddock Autopark after renovations would be the time to have a new parking pattern. Manheimer asked if the Authority could offer displaced Braddock Autopark monthly parkers a type of universal pass they could use at other garage locations. Anderson explained that the access cards can be programmed for use at any or all of the garage locations with GW Autopark able to accommodate some of the overflow of displaced parkers, however, Court Square Autopark does not have any viable additional space for such an overflow.

The Authority decided to close Braddock Autopark on August 1, 2014 in order to begin renovation work with the expectation of a stringent schedule of reopening the garage on September 1, 2014. The Authority decided to allow displaced monthly parkers from Braddock Autopark the choice of where they would like to park for the month of August 2014 and a discount of \$17.50 which is 1/2 off the monthly roof rental rate of \$35 if they choose to park on the roof at Loudoun Autopark during this time period. Helm suggested to Anderson that she begin to inform parkers that will be affected by the garage closure notice of the situation and of the discount option.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Polly's Cab Request

Anderson explained to the Authority a verbal request that has been made by Polly's Cab. Polly's Cab leases four spaces on Piccadilly Street from the Authority in order to have a place to park their taxi cabs. Polly's Cab is insisting that the Authority allow them to park their taxi cabs inside the GW Autopark at a reduced rate at no cost during inclement weather events. Polly's Cabs believes since they lease four spaces along Piccadilly Street and are expected to move the cabs during snowstorms due to being on a snow emergency route, the Authority should accommodate this inconvenience. Polly's Cab would also like to have these spaces plowed in a timely manner by the Authority as well. Anderson explained to Polly's Cab that a formal request would have to be submitted by them to the Authority for their review. Anderson stated that she told Polly's Cab that until a formal request had been submitted and presented to the Authority for their review and subsequent decision, they would be expected to pay the daily fee for use of the garage.

Helm stated that even though Polly's Cab leases the four spaces on Piccadilly Street, the Authority does not offer this for any other accounts. The Authority's consensus was that during inclement weather, the garages are available to everyone for the daily fee and no exceptions would be made for Polly's Cab.

2. Garage Management Study Discussion

Anderson submitted to the Authority the garage management study analysis on capacity per their request during the previous meeting. Anderson highlighted the following:

- Frederick, Maryland operates 5 automated facilities on a 24/7 basis and allows 15% daily parkers and 85% monthly parkers per each garage. Reserved spaces are signed however they are not monitored and it has 160 spaces reserved for 24/7 access for condos. Their feedback on advantages

and disadvantages of capacity operations was it allowed the maximum use of the entire garage and was very efficient with no favoritism, everyone who parked inside the garages were equals. Space numbers were considered inefficient and difficult to enforce. The disadvantage was that traffic flow problems do occur when the garage is full and the "Lot Full" sign is active. During peak periods they have "ambassadors" who assist customers at those times. When asked how they managed malfunctioning equipment or broken gate arms, their response was each monthly parker still needed to swipe their cards on the lanes during these times and the loop detector should still count each vehicle in order to keep the capacity count accurate.

- Anderson spoke with Portsmouth, Virginia by phone. The management of their garages is mixed with one garage that uses a float system whereas monthly rentals park anywhere they choose on the upper levels only. Monthly parkers are not allowed to use the ground level however many abuses occur on a regular basis therefore resulting in the development of enforcement measures. At other garages, a reserved system is operated Monday – Friday from 8 am to 6 pm with free parking allowed after 6 pm, on weekends, and during special events. Portsmouth has not converted to full capacity operations because of historic tradition; however management believes that it should be operated in that manner. Their feedback on advantages to capacity operations was it allows for maximization of the garages and is very efficient. The disadvantage they cited was that visitors have decided not to park in the garage if they cannot find a space on the ground floor or a convenient space on a lower level.
- The garages at Shirlington, Virginia are independently owned and operated from one another. Each garage is for a specific segment such as one garage has a nesting area reserved for residential parking while another garage offers free retail customer parking. Reserved spaces are stenciled for specific individual tenants that is in effect during normal office hours at no charge. Shirlington does not have any paid parking. Management expressed that they would like to see a paid parking system in the future.

At 8:15 am, Miller exited the meeting.

Anderson informed the Authority that she had sent an email to Shirlington requesting information on what type of enforcement measures are used with their parking operations and has yet to receive a response. Helm noted that Shirlington's parking operations seems to function well and they must have a type of procedure in place to address enforcement issues.

Helm asked the Authority if it should share the garage management study with the parking committee. Burke replied that the committee will receive copies of the study to review at their next meeting.

3. Rate Increase Discussion

Anderson suggested to the Authority that future rate increases should be deferred until construction for the garage renovations project at Braddock, Court Square, and Loudoun Autopark is completed.

Burke reminded the Authority that if it was to implement capacity operations for the garages, the current roof rates would increase to match the current undercover rates. Rives added that a form of nested parking could be initiated at that time as an option for businesses. Helm recommended that nested parking should only be allowed on the roof of the garages to which Anderson added that nesting does require the installation of additional gated systems within the garages. Manheimer stated that it would be logical to convert to capacity operations if the Authority chooses that option and raise the monthly parking rates unilaterally.

Helm expressed that it was undesirable to raise the monthly parking rates when it appears that overall operations and revenues are doing very well. Helm suggested to the Authority that it delay the \$5 rate increase at this time and add to the agenda rate increase discussions on a month to month basis. Manheimer questioned if the Authority should determine what type of parking operations it will use before engaging any further into rate increase discussions. Helm stated that he did not personally feel that a capacity operation was marketable and that the Authority will need to increase its rates regardless of how it decides to manage its garages. Burke suggested that areas of the garages could be sanctioned off for large businesses in an effort to make capacity operations more enticing without providing enforcement of those specific areas. Helm noted that the Authority could offer alternatives for parking by having one of the three garages operate with capacity and the others to remain with assigned space numbers. Anderson reminded the Authority that the parking committee suggested that capacity operations be implemented at all the garages simultaneously for consistency purposes. Anderson suggested to the Authority that it could implement capacity operations starting with Braddock Autopark first, then convert the other three remaining garages similar to what was conducted with automation. Anderson offered to survey current large user groups in the garages for their feedback on capacity operations. Burke added that she and Anderson could visit the large user groups in an effort to explain how capacity operates and how it will affect parking management and overall use of the garages. Helm agreed this was an excellent idea and that the Authority does need to reach out to the public for their feedback on this matter. Helm added that the Authority must determine if numbered spaces are manageable any longer since automated operations was implemented in the garages.

4. Braddock Autopark Restrooms Request

Helm explained to the Authority that a request has been made to reopen the public restrooms inside of Braddock Autopark. Helm reminded the Authority that it closed the restrooms due to abuses in its use and WPA not having enough staff or resources to manage it adequately. Helm added that if the restrooms must be reopened for public events or by demand, then the full responsibility for management of the restrooms should rest on those who are making the request. Helm asked that Anderson investigate into any legality with leasing a portion of the garage to another entity.

5. Discovery Museum Matrix

Helm asked that the Authority review its formal response letter to Council in regards to its position on the Discovery Museum request. The City has requested a response from the Authority concerning a matrix designed to address the Discovery Museum parking request for Cork Street Lot and Indian Alley. Helm noted that the matrix did not address special events and how heavily used the parking lots are at those times. Helm stated that due to the situation at this time, the letter should be sufficient enough to be used as the Authority's response to the matrix until the Planning Commission has finalized its submissions on this matter.

Helm recommended that the Authority delay a response to the matrix, and to the Braddock Autopark restroom request.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m. The next meeting of the Winchester Parking Authority is scheduled for Thursday March 27, 2014 at 7:30 a.m. in Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Couch
Secretary

Minutes Approved: Teresa Couch