

**Billings Parking Board
Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2022**

Board Member Present in person: Brandon Scala, Kallie Parsons, Larry Matthew, Sean Lynch, Tom Greenwood

Ad Hoc Board Member Present : Mehmet

Board Members Absent: Mark Kary, Todd Morgan

Guest:

City Staff Present: Tracy Scott, Jennifer Mockel, Kevin Iffland

Call to Order: Brandon called the meeting to order @ 2:01 pm.

Minutes:

The February 9, 2022, minutes were approved by Larry, Kallie seconded, and board approved.

Reports:

- **Monthly Reports (February)**

Tracy reported no significant operational changes in the garages from last month. We are up 41 monthly spaces in the garages compared to last year. The cash is \$1,400 increase from last month and \$7,100 compared to last year. Empire Garage is down due to equipment failure. Sean asked how much we are losing from Empire when the gates are not working. Brandon asked if we could go back to 2019 or 2018 to compare. Tracy will get the board those numbers.

- **Operating Report**

Tracy reported that the department is looking good overall, bringing in more revenue than anticipated. This is due to changing the charging hours in the garages to 24 hours, 6 days a week.

- **Credit Card Analyze Report/PBP Report**

Tracy reported that both the Credit Card and PayByPhone revenue has increased compared to January.

Downtown Alliance Report

Mehmet reported the Mug Crawl was successful. Saturday, March 12th is the St. Patrick's Day parade and Celtic Fair. Monday the BID will be going to City Council to ask for more funds for The Portland Loo (public restroom). Mehmet handed out pamphlets to the board members showing the Portland Loo. It will be opened for a certain length of time during the day. This is a pilot project, and the hope is to have more put up throughout the downtown.

Sean mentioned that since the city removed the porta potties, he has heard from businesses that they are having issues with transients destroying their bathrooms. The Montana Downtown Conference is getting set up for early April.

Public Comment (3 Minutes)

- No public comment.

Discussion Items:

- **City Master Plan for Parking presented by Kevin**

Kevin read the Downtown Billings Traffic study; however, there was not much information about parking. MDT has indicated that when they restructure Montana Ave, they are going to have only back in parking in the diagonal spaces. MDT's plan is the main driving force behind why the city is going with back in parking only on the new street conversions. There was a lot of discussion between the board members as to when the project was going to start and what locations. Kevin did mention that bike lanes will be added when the next street conversion happens.

Thom asked what the board members opinions were on the back in parking. Mehmet stated that its more convenient for parkers and once it is all consistent, cooperation will get better with time. Mehmet said that the added signs has helped with the citizens. There was talk about having an ad campaign about it, Kevin stated we could talk to the new Public Information Officer.

- **Empire Garage Gate Control Equipment**

Brandon stated that the new gate control equipment is ordered and will be the same as the other city garages.

- **Historic Montana Ave Association and Meters on Montana Ave**

Tracy wanted the board to be prepared that the HMAA is planning to go to City Council about installing meters. Sean suggested that each of the board members email each of the Council Members letting them know how they support the meters being installed. Tracy suggested that maybe setting something up to give ½ the meter revenue to the HMAA, like we do with the Green Meters and County Lot. The board members agreed with that idea. Brandon asked if there is a timeline as to when the change might happen, Kevin is thinking it might start in 2024.

Agenda/Action Items

Additional comments/discussion:

Tracy did contact Vancouver, WA, about the discount that they give to parkers. They didn't have any information available at the time. The tickets they place on the vehicles people pay right away but the ones mailed struggle getting payment. Tracy will come up with a plan on what discount we could propose.

Kevin talked about the Stillwater Garage and how it might become a city asset, he is talking with Joe Holden again. The county is talking about tearing down the old Sheriff Building and making it into a parking lot.

Mehmet asked about the underground parking in the Stillwater building. Kevin said there are about 50 spots.

Mehmet asked about the naming of the garages, Tracy did speak with the Public Information Officer about that. The bid from the painting company for the Park 2 Garage came in at \$11,000. Painting awnings, iron beams, vertical signs and redesigning signs over entries could be closer to \$25,000. Tracy is thinking to just paint the awnings first and then make the name change.

Mehmet said he will check with the Western Heritage Center to see about the history of the garages.

Larry asked if we are extending hours for on-street parking. Tracy said that it was tabled due to COVID. Tracy is not proposing any rate changes currently. She wants to see where we are with revenue from the new violation increase. The board discussed the process of unpaid violations, they also discussed having a cleanup month that if they pay, they get a reduction on their violation. Mehmet asked if there is a plan on putting meters on Minnesota Ave, Tracy said there used to be meters on Minnesota Ave, but they didn't bring in that much revenue. Once business starts to develop, we might reconsider adding them.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Discount on violations

Meeting Adjournment:

Brandon adjourned at 2:46. Sean motioned, and Larry seconded, board approved.

Next meeting April 13, 2022 @ 2:00 pm

