

**Parking Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
January 14, 2014**

**Board Members Present:** Don Olsen, Chairperson; Leticia Moore; Bob Carr; Joni Harman; Edward Arnold

**Board Members Absent:** Will Gilbert

**City Staff Present:** Pat Weber; Bruce McCandless; Saree Couture; Megan Hodson

**Guests:** Mike Craighill; Brian Thompson; Greg Krueger; Lisa Harmon

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Olsen called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Minutes:**

December 4, 2013, December 10, 2013, and December 18, 2013, minutes approved as presented.

**Reports:**

- Financial Report/Budget

Pat Weber advised, overall, the Parking fund for the first six months of FY14 is doing well and running close to where the budget is. The cash balance as of December is \$923,285; however, minus the debt services, the working capital would be about \$669,000.

Don asked Pat why the parking meter income was down. Pat advised Parking raised meter rates the previous year, and when rates are raised it is hard to find a trend. Parking will have to wait a few years to see a trend with the new rates.

- Garage Summary

Saree advised Parking is reworking the wait list at all of the garages. Park Two had no changes; however, Administration will be running a mini internal audit. The goal is to be able to enforce Park Two with the other two garages. Saree explained there may be an impact when the Empire garage is complete on the other garages. Parking would like to partner with Lisa and get word out to businesses about available parking in the garages.

Saree said changing Park Three's hours has been positive, and staff is happy with the change.

- FY 15 Budget

Saree advised the FY15 budget is scheduled to be completed by the end of February or the first of March.

Parking is partnering with the BOC (Billings Operations Center) on purchasing a sweeper/scrubber. Parking will pay a third of the cost and use it on the weekends. Parking also needs to have an update on the software used to control the garages. Depending on the urgency, the software can either be budgeted in FY14, as an amendment, or FY15.

Saree advised the Board if they had any suggestions for the budget to bring them to February's meeting because it will be the final input for FY15 budget.

Parking should be receiving the results from the condition audit soon and determine when to start and begin the process. There were no emergency results that needed to be addressed right away.

The parking strategic plan will be a budget amendment for FY14. There will be a supplemental budget request on the maintenance items.

- Empire Parking Garage Update

Deck 4b, which is a major pour, is currently being worked on and Deck 4c will follow. As the floors get higher, there will be more street closures. The State is closing North 27<sup>th</sup> Street completely, which will be a one day closure. The tower on the west side is going up. Sletten is doing their best to keep up with the weather.

**Information Items:**

- Northern Hotel/1st Avenue North Parking Meters

Kelly Addy sent a great letter to the State. The attorneys are talking back and forth, and are attempting to lay some ground work for the future.

- Minnesota Avenue/North 27<sup>th</sup> Parking Lot Layout

There were a couple of spaces from the crosswalk on South 26<sup>th</sup> Street that were removed because of visibility issues. There will be three written quotes and the striping and signage will be combined. The completion date will hopefully be spring.

The North 27<sup>th</sup> Street lot process is waiting on a break in the weather. Bruce spoke with some of the area property owners, and they are supportive, but ask to use the option that loses less number of parking spaces.

#### **Downtown Alliance Report (Lisa Harmon):**

- Snow removal is keeping them busy.
- Spare Change donated \$13,000 to four entities.
- Tony Nichols replaced Harley Cagle.
- The New Year's Eve party was a success, with approximately 5,000 attendants.
- They are collaborating with Dave Mumford on another art project, pedestal art.

#### **Public Comment:**

Brian Thompson was present to discuss the meter bag issue that has been going on. Saree advised Mr. Thompson, Parking has revised the meter bag policy, which has been approved. The next step is to implement the new policy. Saree will make contact with the individuals who are abusing the meter bags and confiscate the bags. The new policy will be placed on Parking's website.

Mike Craighill was present to discuss opening up the Empire Garage waiting list to the public, and is willing to help wherever he can.

#### **Agenda:**

- Parking Strategic Master Plan

The presentation was presented to Council at the January 6 work session, and went fairly smooth. The Council, in general, supports the idea of a strategic plan.

The Request for Proposals will be written with the scope of work the consultant will do. There will be involvement with the downtown stakeholders. Parking will present to Council at the February 3 work session the Request for Proposals, including the scope of work, and what involvement the downtown stakeholders will have.

- Parking Manager Replacement

Don said there was discussion at the January 6 work session on whether to hire a Parking Director instead of a Parking Manager. Tina Volek has the final say in hiring a Parking Manager. The Council asked for input from the PAB. The Board discussed whether to hire a manager before the strategic plan process or after. The Board would like to see other parking manager job descriptions. Saree advised the Board the manager position is too important to leave vacant.

The Board approved a motion to hire a Parking Manager as long as the Strategic Plan is approved, along with the recommendation that the manager be hired while the planning is underway.

- Empire Space Allotment

The Board would like to advertise available spaces for the Empire. Saree suggested making an advertisement for available parking spaces in all of the garages.

The Board received a diagram of the space allotments for the Empire Garage. Bill Honaker has 25 spaces, which are on the bottom floor and will not be open to the public. The Northern Hotel has 187 spaces and would like the closest parking to the hotel. Each level of the garage will be split in half, with the Northern spaces being on the western half of the garage, and the City spaces on the eastern half. The Northern spaces will start on the second floor and proceed up until all of their spaces have been allocated. The City will have all the spaces on the sixth level.

The City owns 325 spaces, which there are six handicap spaces within the 325. The 55 spaces on the second level would be best as hourly, which could be adjusted. That would leave 264 spaces to be allocated. There has yet to be spaces allotted for the retail business spaces. Parking will probably oversell the spaces at 120%.

The Board received a handout and discussed the possible criteria for allocating the spaces in the Empire.

The Board would like more research done regarding this item and will discuss it further next month.

- Vacancy on the DBP

The Board will discuss this item next month.

**Adjournment:** 6:03 p.m.