

PARKING ADVISORY PANEL MEETING

The PARKING ADVISORY PANEL (PAP) met on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. in City Space. It was the second in-person meeting since the end of the COVID health emergency.

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Joan Fenton with Danny Yoder and Mike Rodi in attendance. City staff in attendance were Kristie Kraisen-Thomas and Chris Engel.

The Panel approved the draft minutes from their last meeting on February 21, 2023, without any changes, by a unanimous vote.

As it was the first meeting for Ms. Kraisen-Thomas, Ms. Fenton asked each panel member in attendance to introduce themselves. Mr. Engel then provided an overview of the process used to find a new parking manager and introduced Ms. Kraisen-Thomas.

Since beginning work in April her in main focus has been on the two city parking garages and three surface lots while managing the contract with Lanier Parking Services/REEF parking. She has a keen attention to detail and is making efforts to ensure improvements to the cleanliness of the facilities.

Ms. Kraisen-Thomas then introduced herself as having over 5 years' experience in parking operations between MI, FL, and now in VA. She informed the panel that she had obtained her Master's Degree in Public Administration and that her goal had always been to work for a city. She stated that she is excited to be in Charlottesville and looks forward to growing into the role.

Ms. Fenton raised the issue of parking enforcement and the idea of outsourcing the work to a private contractor. Mr. Engel shared that while potentially interested in the concept the City Manager is allowing the new police chief to get acclimated before addressing. He also indicated that currently CSO enforcement is occurring with regularity.

Mr. Rodi brought up the issue of towing from private lots and recalled that the panel had recommend changes previously to allow 'booting' mechanisms to be used instead of towing. Mr. Engel confirmed that the ordinance change had occurred but to date he was not aware of any property owners using the technique.

Ms. Kraisen-Thomas then discussed the repairs currently being made to the Market St Parking Garage and the Water St Parking Garage which include sealant replacement, overhead repairs and concrete floor repairs. The MSPG repairs should be completed in September and that the 2nd phase of the WSPG repairs are on hold at this time.

In addition, Ms. Kraisen-Thomas mentioned how she is engaging with the operator to ensure the facilities are maintained which involves cleaning of stairwells, railings, graffiti removal, lawn care, and trash collection. She also mentioned the hiring of a new security company who is more visible and proactive in ensuring safety in the garages.

Ms. Fenton raised the idea of incorporating artwork on the walls of the garages to make downtown appear more welcoming to visitors. Mr. Engel mentioned that this idea had been considered in the past and that staff would research it again. He also reminded the panel that the elevator shaft banner at MSPG remains an option.

Ms. Fenton also asked about the term limits for panel members. Mr. Engel said that staff would need to research that item as the PAP transitioned from a council appointed body to a staff advisory body in 2021.

Ms. Fenton asked for public comment, but no members of the public were in attendance. She also asked for new business, but none was offered.

Before adjourning it was decided that the next meeting would be on August 15th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.